

# The Messenger

WORLD'S GREATEST NEGRO MONTHLY



15  
CENTS

Vol. VI

FEBRUARY 1924

No. 2

*New; That is Not Re-Hashed and Sec nd-Handed, But Fresh and Up to the Minute*

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# The Messenger

World's Greatest Negro Monthly

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## Bok Peace Plan "Referendum"

This magazine is co-operating with the Committee of Award, of The American Peace Award created by Edward W. Bok, and offering \$100,000 for the "best practicable plan by which the United States may co-operate with other nations to achieve and preserve the peace of the world." This contest closed November 15, 1923.

The prize was awarded and the winning plan announced January 1st. An attempt is being made to secure from the American people a wide expression of opinion on this vastly important subject. Space does not permit our carrying the full text of the plan. But it appeared in all the important newspapers.

Below is the plan in brief and a ballot for the use of those who are interested.

### THE PLAN IN BRIEF

Proposes

I. That the United States shall immediately enter the Permanent Court of International Justice, under the conditions stated by Secretary Hughes and President Harding in February, 1923.

II. That without becoming a member of the League of Nations as at present constituted, the United States shall offer to extend its present cooperation with the League and participate in the work of the League as a body of mutual counsel under conditions which

1. Substitute moral force and public opinion for the military and economic force originally implied in Articles X and XVI.
2. Safeguard the Monroe Doctrine.
3. Accept the fact that the United States will assume no obligations under the Treaty of Versailles except by Act of Congress.
4. Propose that membership in the League should be opened to all nations.
5. Provide for the continuing development of international law.

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*in substance?* No

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- 4 What is the meaning of LIFE IN TEXAS?
- 5 How does a black child grow up in a state like South Carolina or Arkansas?
- 6 How does a penniless colored child get an education, beginning in the land of SEGREGATED SCHOOLS?
- 7 When Texas whites want to commit simple economic robbery against a Negro man, how do they inject the "white woman" question?
- 8 What is the chief weakness, or handicap, of the "Missionary Schools" established for the Negro by Northerners in the South?
- 9 What does a combination of self-respect and courage entail for the Black American?
- 10 What is the plain experience, north, east, south and west, of BEING AN AMERICAN NEGRO?

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## EDITORIALS

### BRING THEM DOWN, INTER-RACE COMMISSIONS IN THE SOUTH, PAPINI SATIRIZES U. S., OUST KLAN FROM CONGRESS, PRESIDENT COOLIDGE'S MESSAGE TO CONGRESS

#### Bring Them Down

Secretary of the Treasury Mellon has proposed a tax reduction. The proposal has created a storm of approval and disapproval. This was to be expected. Quite naturally those who are paying the taxes want them cut down, while those who are receiving them desire that they be kept up.

Careful analysis reveals that only a small number have been getting advantage of the taxes. In many instances, not even the government is getting the taxes. Two flagrant instances of this are the theatres and the confectioners. A theatre sells a ticket for seventy-five cents. The ten per cent tax would be seven and one-half cents and eight cents to round out a whole number. Nevertheless, practically every theatre charges eighty-five cents for that ticket. This is two and a half cents higher than the government asks for the tax, and thirty-three and one-third per cent of what the government gets.

As for confectioners and soft drink vendors, the government probably gets its tax once out of about every one hundred sales, there being no easy method of keeping a record as in the case of theatre seats. So a confectioner sells a ten cent drink, charging eleven cents with the tax, or a fifteen cent drink, charging seventeen cents with the tax. This is almost pure graft by which the people and the government are beat out of millions of dollars annually.

Another robber's tax is the Pullman surcharge. For instance, a person cannot get a berth for less than \$2.50 a night, on which he has to pay a tax of \$1.25, making his Turkish bath "cuddy hole" come to \$3.75. From New York to California one must pay about thirty-six dollars for his Pullman, of which amount twelve dollars constitutes a tax.

These taxes are not only objectionable as nuisances, but they constitute a positive burden upon all except the extremely rich—excepting, of course, the toll-takers. They place an embargo on education and recreation, since people will not travel nor go to the theatre so much as they would were prices lower. And they would be lower without these taxes.

With respect to the bonus, the kernel of the argument of those who favor it is that the men drafted were forced to work for thirty dollars a month while others made five, ten and fifteen dollars a day engaged in civilian pursuits where life and limb were not endangered. It is further argued, with considerable force, that the government subsidized the shipping interests, the railroads and other interests—in short, paid them a bonus. Quite true. Nevertheless, because the government went wrong with the corporations is no reason why it should continue to go wrong with the soldiers. Besides, the failure to pay this soldiers' bonus will give to militarism a stamp of unpopularity just as the paying of it will add impetus to the war spirit and the military craze. Right along together should go the cut in military appropriations, naval appropria-

tions and the soldiers' bonus. Bring all these unnecessary taxes down and bring them down as quickly as possible.

#### Inter-Race Commissions in the South

More and more the white South is beginning to appreciate the social necessity and value of talking things over through the machinery of inter-racial commissions. This is largely an outcropping of the war period and its aftermath. Swept by the great wave of unrest which had its rise in the war and the Russian revolution, inspired by the grandiose phrases about "making the world safe for democracy" and "the self-determination of weaker peoples" and emboldened by the new examples of liberty and democracy they witnessed and received in France, the Negro fought back with a menacing and grim determination in the series of race riots that beset the country just after the war. This was the first great threatening note of warning to the old Bourbon South that a new Negro had arrived. Add to this physical manifestation of manhood, the most potent weapon of them all, the economic blow—the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Negro workers which throttled and paralyzed Southern industry, cotton picking and general commerce—and the reason is obvious for the apparent change of heart among the dominant class in the South. White Southern women even have awakened and issued through certain bodies splendid proclamations condemning the mob method of Southern white men in presumably protecting the womanhood of white women. A professorship on Race Relations has been established in the George Peabody College for Teachers, at Nashville, Tennessee, and a special conference of professors from Southern schools for the study of race problems is held annually at Blue Ridge, N. C., under the auspices of the Southern College of the Young Men's Christian Association. These are notable signs. They are the reflex of the economic changes in the South wrought by the migration of Negro labor. It is potent proof of the fact that what cannot be done by preaching the gospel and moral suasion can be done by a loss in money which the leaving of Negroes from the South effects. Still we commend the inter-racial commission idea; for the mere example of white and colored men and women talking over matters affecting the relationship of the races is of incalculable educational value. We would suggest that these commissions frankly face the questions of the Jim-Crow car and disfranchisement. It is a fact too patent to be mentioned to students of history that Negroes will not always be content to be taxed without political representation. These problems are not insoluble. Our trump card now is merely to keep "leaving." Under this economic pressure, the only argument the ruling class in the South understands, more and better schools will be built; longer terms for students and better pay for teachers will be granted, wages will go up and rent will go down.

### Papini Satirizes U. S.

The celebrated Italian scholar and author of the "Life of Christ" has aroused a hornets' nest of criticism among the ultra chauvinists simply because he styles this country, among other unpleasant things, as the "land of millionaire uncles, phonographs and lynch law." All of which are true. Even President Butler of Columbia University sees that, and with splendid independence, be it said, refused to yield to the misguided protests against Papini's lecturing in the University during the summer sessions. By all means let the Italian savant come over and lecture. Such frank spirits in this mechanized and decadent age are good for the soul. Our task is not to become childish peevish when the mirror is held up to us by foreign critics, but, rather to improve our looks. The critics of our sins are no more to be condemned for pointing them out than is a weather prophet to be denounced for predicting a storm. Remove the blots upon our character which the critics see and there will be no criticism. And it is eminently to the interest of the Negro that he sees to it that American dollars don't blind foreign critics to lynchings, the jim-crow car and disfranchisement, which is quite likely to occur since European intellectuals, in view of the bankruptcy of Europe, are looking for a market for lectures and books. Publishers and lecture bureaus are out for profits. A work or a lecture is profitable when it is widely and popularly acclaimed. Now it is hardly likely that foreign artists and writers will tell the truth about America and the Negro, which is very distasteful to our Nordic brothers, if it entails a loss in dollars and cents—at least, they won't do it very long; for after all, intellectuals too must eat. But it is too obvious that our cause will suffer terribly if the European scholars and artists turn against or ignore the Negro in order to lick their chops off American shekels. It is to be regretted that so able a scholar as Mr. Wells ignored or overlooked this vital question in his "Outline of History."

### Oust the Klan from Congress

Colonel Earl B. Mayfield, the recently elected senator from Texas, is up for investigation for his relations with that notorious band of midnight assassins—the Ku Klux Klan. It is alleged that more than the allotted amount of money was spent to elect him, that he is the spokesman of this hooded gang. Mayfield's presence in Congress is a blot on that body. Let us remove that disgrace. Every Negro and lover of justice should bombard his senator and representative with letters urging them to throw their weight against this national pest.

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**Next month's MESSENGER will display photos of beautiful and distinctive Washington, D. C., colored women. And some others.**

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### The Twenty-Fourth Infantry

It is good to have some real light—first-hand information on the Houston riot, as a result of which the Negro members of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry were convicted for mutiny and murder. Not many Negroes in the South will tell the facts about such matters; not many Negroes in the North can tell because of the difficulty in deducing the truth out of Southern white propaganda and misrepresentation through which they must peer. There is one able and sane editor, however, in the heart of the South—yes—even in Houston, Texas—who dares to tell the truth. Neither daunted nor intimidated by the clay-eating and hookwormed crackers, the red-legged johnnies and the hill-billies of Texas, he tells the truth without fear or favor and points the finger of scorn at every hypocrite in Dixie. We refer to C. F. Richardson, editor of the *Houston Informer*.

*The Houston Informer, Saturday, Dec. 1, 1923*

#### Agitation for Soldiers' Pardon

*The Informer* has not heretofore taken any stock, either pro or con, in the agitation and campaign to secure the pardon or release of the members of the Twenty-fourth United States Infantry, who are now serving sentences in the federal prison at Leavenworth for the part they played in the "Houston riot" of 1917.

But this paper can not permit the statement to go unchallenged that these black soldiers were never given an insult by any member of the white race while camped in this city.

This paper admits that some of these soldiers, while at the local camp, did not conduct themselves as defenders of their country, neither does this paper justify their actions in killing and maiming the citizens of this community; for two wrongs never did make a right and the doctrine that might makes right, while it may obtain and prevail for a season, is a fallacy and predicated upon a false hypothesis.

But the fact remains that, while the civilians generally treated these black soldiers with utmost courtesy and many of them went out of their way to make their stay in this community a pleasant one, the police officers pursued a different policy and here is the source of the regrettable incident that occurred here during that August evening of 1917.

The first mistake the military authorities made was to disarm all their colored military police, which disarmament was in itself a standing invitation for trouble hunters and race-haters to take advantage of their disarmed condition and thus proceed to pick a fuss, not only with the colored troopers during their absence from camp, but to even impose upon said military police of color.

The error on the part of our community was to permit those beer joints and saloons to operate so long in colored residential districts, for they were always a prolific source of trouble between the two races; often serving as the rendezvous and headquarters of the vicious, criminal and trouble-making members of both races.

Another mistake the city made was to maintain men on its police department whose conception of their duty as peace officers was to curse, beat, shoot or kill every colored person that they sought to arrest or who dared say yea or nay to these minions (?) of the law!

These police and constabulary officers had pursued such a policy with and on colored citizens so long with impunity and immunity that they essayed and did execute it on a few soldiers of this infantry and here is where "unadulterated hell" broke loose.

Every truthful person knows that the beating up and shooting at one of the colored sergeants, who remonstrated with a local police officer for the brutal and barbaric manner in which he (the white officer) was treating a colored woman, was really the straw that broke the camel's back.

This incident transpired in the San Felipe section, which beat this black military police was covering on that afternoon.

Two local police officers were taking advantage of a defenseless and helpless colored woman and were placing her under arrest attired only in her house garments—she was virtually nude and even not properly dressed to come out on her front porch.

When this colored military police saw what was happening, it is stated that he suggested to the officers that they permit the woman to dress properly and becomingly before arresting her and carrying her to the police station.

The remarks from the colored soldier only seemed to aggravate and intensify the situation, for the officers immediately pounced upon him with their pistols, employing vile oaths, according to eye witnesses, and when the race military police beat a hasty retreat from his assailants, several shots were fired at the fleeing soldier. He sought refuge under a nearby house and the officers followed him, beat him mercilessly and brutally and then placed him under arrest.

News of this outrage, which occurred in the early afternoon of August 23, 1917, soon reached the camp, where one battalion of the Twenty-fourth United States Infantry was quartered; but, instead of the information that the sergeant, one of the most highly respected and dearly beloved men of the regiment, had been beaten and shot at, the informants told the other soldiers that their soldier brother had been killed.

This attack and news inflamed the colored troopers and it was whispered about the city that the "24th is going to shoot up the town tonight."

The editor of *The Informer*, then serving with another local publication and covering the news of the camp each week for said paper (knowing the officers and several soldiers personally), immediately conversed with the commanding officer over the telephone and inquired of this officer (then a major), if he thought he could handle the situation that night.

The white officer in command of the battalion assured us that he could handle the situation all right and that Housatonicans need have no fear of an armed uprising and attack.

Later in the afternoon we learned from reliable sources that the colored troopers were in a bad frame of mind and that many of them were openly talking of retaliation and reprisal; but that the commissioned (white) and non-commissioned (colored) officers were confident that they could quell the belligerents among the battalion.

Later, that same evening, some one yelled that a mob of whites was en route to the camp, it is alleged, and at this juncture several of the soldiers rushed the store or supply house and forcibly commandeered or seized ammunition, slaying one of their own men in the raid, and then started that march towards the city, with the police station as their objective.

It seems that this same military police, who had been attacked and shot at by city police officers in the afternoon, had been arrested and incarcerated in the local police station, instead of being turned over to the military authorities, and this only strengthened their belief in the rumor that he had been slain by the city police officers.

But instead of making their attack on the police station, these mutinous black troopers fired at every white face that they encountered and when they had finally been quelled, several were dead and a larger number wounded and maimed, some for life.

Local white citizens organized a committee of the leading members of their race and co-operated with the military authorities to apprehend all the soldiers who participated in the raid on the city and citizens.

These soldiers were captured and turned over to the military and their trials were held before a regular army court martial; yet the race woman, whose maltreatment at the hands of city police officers precipitated the clash between the soldiers and police officers, has never appeared before any body investigating the circumstances and incidents leading up to the outbreak, as far as we have been able to ascertain.

*The Informer* stands for law and order, whether by soldiers or civilians, and this paper is firm in its belief that every person that violates the law, especially wilfully, maliciously and with malice aforethought, should pay the penalty for the law's infraction—whether he be soldier, police officer or plain citizen.

But if the criminal courts of the land can take into consideration extenuating and mitigating circumstances when dealing with those brought before the bar for trial, and, if citizens are within their rights to petition the governors and pardon boards of the several states for the release or pardon of prisoners committed to the penitentiaries and reformatories for certain crimes, why condemn, vilify and excoriate a body of American citizens who are merely pursuing a similar course in this cause?

Penal institutions and prisons (particularly such federal institutions) are primarily designed and operated to reform criminals and help them to get back on their feet as good citizens.

The petition for the pardon of these colored soldiers nor the agitation against their release should not be based upon color, but upon the merits or demerits of their case.

*The Informer* does not hold any brief for these soldier-prisoners *per se*, yet this paper knows that, in many instances, society is largely responsible and blameable for the misdeeds and crimes of men, women and children; for it (society) tolerates, sanctions, condones and passively encourages numerous practices and depredations that later prove to be or act as a boomerang.

But whether the president pardons the 24th Infantrymen or not, let both sides tell the truth and let principle and not prejudice be the guiding and determining factor.

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### The Reform Wave

The reform wave and the crime wave have hit us at the same time. That the whole country needs a cleaning up no one but a blind man will deny. Dens of crime flaunt themselves in open defiance on every hand, especially in Negro sections—and with seeming police protection. Out of these hateful holes of disease and filth, crime waves of frightful menace and peril are bound to rise. But what is the remedy? Not merely bibles and sermons, though they too may serve their part. Even some of the reformers need reformation, at least, in thought, if the reform wave which should effect a social and political renovation, is to be effective. We must have social cleanliness without blue-law puritanism or irksome censorship, which is the misguided objective of such psychopathic missionaries as the Sumners and Bryans. This can only be achieved by an enlightened and alert community opinion on civic, social and racial matters. And may we add that no reform program will get at the roots of our social diseases which does not seek to enhance the economic well-being of the Negro family and the education and recreation of its children. Turn on the light of publicity. Crooks and gunmen play their nefarious deeds in the dark. Throw the light on those higher up. Some one is making profits out of the business of breeding criminals. Turn the light on our politicians, Republican and Democratic. Smoke out the hush-money receivers, black and white.

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### Bok Peace Award Causes War

Instead of creating the conditions for peace, the Bok Peace Prize Award, has produced war, that is, in these United States. Already threats are flying thick and fast to institute legal action against the awarders of the prize for the best practical peace plan. Charges and counter-charges about propaganda for the League of Nations are unceremoniously hurled to and fro. Hard-boiled isolationists and bitter-end irreconcilables are thundering their anathemas in the forum of Congress against the plan, styling it a trick and a hoax. This discussion alone which it has created, regardless of the merits of the plan which received the prize *per se*, is evidence of the educational value of the idea. Our own peace plan, however, is to take the profit out of war, and make those fight who declare war.

### Heywood Broun on Roland Hayes

We were indeed pleased to note the fine and discerning criticism by Heywood Broun, special column writer for the *New York World*, on Roland Hayes, the noted Negro tenor. He did not play up Hayes' singing of the spirituals, although he remarked upon the dignity with which he executed these musical end-forms of Negro life, but stressed his ability as a rare artist in the technique of singing of the most difficult pieces. Not that the singing of Negro spirituals is not a matter of art. Not at all. But all Negroes are supposed to be able to sing spirituals, that is, by white Americans. Now we don't think that Mr. Hayes is any wonder in singing spirituals; we have heard his equal before by both white and black singers. Where he is distinguished, however, is in his German and French numbers, the numbers in which Negroes are expected to show least ability. As a singer of the works of the old masters, he will go down in musical history as an artist of international renown.

### Negro Commission to Virgin Isles

An all Negro commission has been appointed by President Coolidge to investigate the situation in the Virgin Islands. There are six members of the commission headed by R. R. Church, the Tennessee banker. Let us hope that they will make a thorough and honest investigation and report the facts. Already we have heard from the indefatigable Mr. Rothschild Francis something of the indescribable crimes being perpetrated upon our brothers in the little islands recently purchased by Uncle Sam. This thing must be stopped. Agitation will focus public opinion upon it, and an enlightened public opinion will ere long right it.

### Dubois Appointed as U. S. Envoy to Inauguration in Liberia

Dubois has been named to represent this country at the inauguration of President King in the black republic of Liberia. This is a fitting honor to one of the distinguished citizens of the country and one of the leaders of the race. Let us hope that this bit of political flattery will not make him less outspoken, if that's possible. President Coolidge is up for renomination and is playing the game with a deft and sure hand. Negroes, watch your step, less you be vouchsafed the shadows and miss the substance.

### The Fundamentalists vs. The Modernists

The war of the theologians is on. It is not new. The Middle Ages saw the same battles wage around the same questions of dogma. Who has not heard of Luther's stand for the doctrines of "private judgment"? The Reformation superficially was a creedal struggle, at bottom a fight between the princes of the blood, religious and national, against the old iniquity of taxation without representation. The rulers of France, England, Germany, Sweden, etc., smarted under the economic exploitation of Rome. Today, this creed conflict has an economic basis. It is a reflex of our world-wide economic chaos. In every domain of human thought and action dissension over

forms social, political, theological, ethical, in literature, art, science and philosophy, have risen and rent in twain long established institutions and movements. Under the impulse of democracy inspired by the World War, powerful ministers whose parishes are economically independent, as the barons of old opposed the kings, are denouncing the ecclesiastical despotism of bishops. The bishops, in the main, are the representatives of the thought of the mighty financial and industrial kings in America, while the ministers are seeking to articulate the aims, aspirations and hopes of the small business interests, the farmers and trades peoples who are in revolt against the oppression of the money oligarchs. As to the merits of the controversy? Well, discussion is generally useful.

### Protect the Migrant

In the midst of winter, times will be harder. It will be more difficult for our Southern brothers and sisters, unaccustomed to the ways of the north, east and west, to make ends meet. They must be protected from robbers on the job and off. Hundreds of thousands of people coming into sections that are new to them are bound to create new problems which they cannot solve unguided. Hence they need the protection of the sober and intelligent citizens of their race. Our religious, social, civic and economic bodies must render that protection, else the exodus will prove to be a curse rather than a blessing. So far it is a blessing.

### Publicity and Peonage

Mrs. Jennings of Jacksonville, Florida, Vice-President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, says:

"The Florida Legislature of 1923 enacted more prison reform law than has ever been enacted by any other State in any one session. The convict lease system was abolished.

"Because the case of Martin Tabert of North Dakota was of such wide concern and brought things to a climax in Florida I must beg your indulgence further. It is heartbreaking that vital reforms have to come at the cost of such sacrifice, but this seems to be the history of such accomplishments.

"The Putnam Lumber Company, incorporated under the laws of a sister State, was the company to whose camps the Tabert boy was sent for stealing a ride on a train. The Sheriff of Leon County, who was said to have received a bonus of \$20 for every prisoner turned in to the company, was removed by the Governor, and the Senate removed the County Judge. The whipping boss who administered the lash was indicted on a charge of murder, tried and convicted of second degree murder.

"The whipping boss, the Judge and the superintendent of the lumber company are under Federal indictment charged with conspiracy in connection with sending an aged Negro to the camp. The lumber company has had to pay the Tabert boy's family \$20,000, on account of his death."

Such is the result of the brilliant expose of the Martin Tabert case by the *New York World*. And of course, the exodus is doing its part in changing the South. Only recently two Negroes were lynched in Jacksonville. Page Mrs. Jennings.

### Next Month

*Page after page of unique and attractive Washington women and girls, photographed by the famous Scurlock Studio.*



# SHAFTS AND DARTS

By GEORGE S. SCHUYLER



MR. SCHUYLER

*Beginning with the March number, Mr. Theophilus Lewis will collaborate with Mr. Schuyler in the conduct of this column.*

## The Monthly Award

We had almost decided to withhold the prize this month. The extraordinary competition nonplussed us—there were so many fine specimens of who-struck-John? from which to choose. Worn and haggard from wading through the usual reams of editorial drivel in the Negro press we were about to give up in despair and disgust. Then we ran across the following dose of flubdubbery, culled from a diatribe against the bonus by Mr. Floyd J. Calvin, the prolific columnist of the *Pittsburgh Courier*:

"They (the ex-soldiers) would be surprised to hear that their greatest compensation is the fact that a president is still our chief administrator, and the chief authority of the government is still vested in the people."

This is so good that in addition to the usual prize (a handsomely embossed and beautifully lacquered dill pickle), we also award Brother Floyd the lavishly decorated tissue-paper overcoat.

*In the Headlines*—While only a few American troops were stationed in Italy during the late "war to end war," it is evident that the land of Garibaldi, Mazzini and Spartacus has been made safe for democracy. The *New York Times* of December 31st carried the following headline over a despatch from the land of Mussolini: "Thief of Ancient Relics Burned Alive in Italy. Mob Catches Him Leaving Church and, After Beating, Applies Gasoline and Match." The Ku Klux Klan will be jealous of this act!

Another headline, "100 Dry Agents Fail to Stop Drinking as New Year Dawns," seems to indicate that there are brave men even among Prohibition agents; or else all the post-Volstead beverage does not hail from the sawmills.

It was reported in the press of January 1st that the Ward Line had failed for \$2,000,000. This company operated between New York, Havana, Bahamas, Central and South American ports, owning 18 ships, 6 tugs and 29 lighters. The ill-fated Black Star Line was also supposed to cover this field. The question arises: If a company *with* ships was unable to stand the strain of post-bellum maritime inactivity, is there any wonder that a company *without* ships never had its efforts crowned with success? Would that Gilbert and Sullivan were alive to do justice to the U. N. I. A. fleet. Only another Edgar Allan Poe, however, could properly write of the mystery of the "*Phyllis Wheatley*," phantom flagship of America's greatest collector of antiques—Marcus Garvey.

The press of January 8th reported that Senator Lodge, the eminent reactionary from Massachusetts, read in the Senate a letter from Cardinal Trotsky to the American (?) Negro Communist, Claude Mackay, urging the training of black agitators to spread the faith among Americans of sable hue. This requires considerable funds, however, which probably explains why Menelek Post, No. 105, African Blood Brotherhood, has started holding Saturday night dances and Wednesday night whist contests. For fear the uninformed may be misled, we might say by way of enlightenment that this number "105" does not mean that there are 104 other posts of the A. B. B. When read according to the secret Muscovite key, it means one American citizen, no funds, and five aliens.

It is not necessary to emphasize that the Negro clergy will not discuss the Fundamentalist-Modernist question of which we have read so much in the papers lately. The last thing desired by these gentlemen is discussion. It might start the herd to thinking!

*Caucasophobia*—Many of the leading thinkers of the nation "view with alarm" the growing prejudice against Caucasians.

No intelligent Negro should fall victim to this dastardly form of race prejudice, based wholly on a certain group's lack of pigmentation.

Contrary to all of the pernicious propaganda circulated by black supremacy advocates, the Negro is in no way superior to the Caucasian. In any consideration of these uncolored people, it should be kept in mind that they are in this country through no fault of their own. The great majority of them were kidnapped in their home countries and sold into slavery in the colonies just as our ancestors were. Others were brutally torn from the jails of England and sent to this wild land, while a few were run out of Great Britain because of fanatical religious beliefs. It takes time to civilize such poor stock.

With only about three thousand years contact with any kind of civilization they have done fairly well. Because the great civilizations of our ancestors flourished in Africa while the white people were living little better than the animals whose pelts they sought for covering, is no reason for our looking down on them. Many of our African tribes are almost as savage as the inhabitants of England whom Julius Caesar took back to Rome as curios.

While the Caucasians have originated nothing, they have shown great ability to adopt, adapt, and so become adept. They took over bodily our Egyptian pantheism and made a pretty fair religion out of it. The system of notation and the fundamentals of mechanics our ancestors worked out ten thousand years ago have enabled the Caucasians to construct the marvels of engineering we see all about us. They have almost equalled the pyramids, obelisks, and magnificent tombs erected by Jewish labor under our supervision long centuries ago. History shows that the Greeks very skilfully copied and improved upon the civilizations of the darker peoples whom they displaced. We must be big enough to give credit where it is due.

Physically, the Caucasian compares very favorably with us. The statistics of the 1917-18 Draft show that the white soldiers were almost as healthy as the Negro troops. Of course some Caucasophobes will contend that the greatest evidence of the white man's inferiority is his contributing so many devastating diseases to the world. It is true that syphilis, tuberculosis, typhus and measles can all be laid at his door. But under similar circumstances we might have been guilty of the same crime. Then, too, they have put to good use the knowledge of medicine gained from our black ancestors, thus enabling us to combat these diseases.

Many critical Negroes point to the Caucasian's excessive gullibility and superstition, as a further evidence of his inferiority. While no one can successfully deny the white people's widespread belief in witches, ghosts, democracy, banshees, devils, and angles; not to mention the quackery of Mary Baker Eddy, Coue, Bryan, Billy Sunday, John S. Sumner, Emperor Simmons, Gregory Zinoviev and the Mormons,—we Negroes are not entirely guiltless. Many of our weaker minded brethren voraciously devour the twaddle of Marcus Garvey, Black Herman, Ben Davis, "Dr." Harrison, and other mountebanks with equal avidity.

Other Caucasophobes make much of our ability to live and thrive in any climate while the white people can barely struggle along in the temperate zone. In summer, it is said, they are worried by sunburn and in winter by frost bite. However, sweeping generalizations are seldom true. Occasionally one can find a white man in the tropics who can stand the heat as well as a Negro. And in Alaska, Canada, and the Dakotas, the Negro inhabitant often complains almost as much as his "Nordic" brother about the severe winters. I would call these prejudiced people's attention to the fact that Mat Henson had a Caucasian—Peary—with him when he discovered the North Pole!

It should be kept in mind that the Caucasian is quite capable of all the fine sentiments we possess. Their sense of chivalry and fair play is rarely, if ever, equalled, even in the human family. To prove this it is only necessary to call to mind the incident of David and Uriah, the excellent treatment of the Amerindians, the "capture" of Aguinaldo, the *uplift* movement in Georgia and other foreign countries, the sportsmanlike attitude toward Jack Johnson, the friendly occupation of Haiti and Santo Domingo, the recent case of Roland Hayes in Detroit, their great respect for the women of other races, and their

honorable dealings with racial minorities and weaker (i.e. without modern firearms) peoples of "backward" countries: countries without automobile bandits, jails, drug and vice rings, Prohibition agents, Comstockery, film censors, lynching, and "democracy." They often display evidence of very deep feeling, even among the more savage tribes of Florida, Mississippi and Texas. Often they will allow a Negro to kiss his wife and children before kindling the barrel staves and boxes beneath him!

Of course, the Caucasians suffer tremendously from an inferiority complex, as one would naturally expect. This is shown by their fear of Negro children competing with their children in schools and colleges. Their prominent pugilists and baseball teams are similarly afflicted. They are never keen to risk their honors with black competitors.

The fact that Caucasian men are insane about our women, and that Caucasian women infest our sections of the cities, should not lead Negro observers to make invidious comparisons concerning morality. Lower races are continually seeking to mingle their blood with superior stock. Still, it would be the height of injustice to charge a whole race with the misdeeds of a minority.

Lastly, if we would have a better world free from race hatred, we must meet all the arguments of the Caucasophobes with irrefutable facts. Only in this way can race prejudice be scotched.

*The Many and the Few*—One person's fortune is another's misfortune. Seldom is anything good or bad to everyone. For instance, if some alchemist should discover the elixir of per-

petual life; undertakers, casketmakers and grave diggers would rend the air with their lamentations.

Think how many state executioners would be out of a job if capital punishment was abolished!

If sin, evil and crime were to disappear, and naughty people all hustled off to hell, wouldn't the clergy, lawyers, bondsmen and police besiege the employment offices?

A return to the days of B. V. D. (before the Volstead Disaster), would be a tragic blow to bootleggers, delicatessen proprietors, Prohibition (sic) agents, wood alcohol vendors, undertakers, raisin growers, malt manufacturers, and other beneficiaries of the Eighteenth "Commandment."

We can imagine no quicker way to bankrupt doctors and druggists, than to have a sudden wave of extreme healthfulness sweep over the nation. We would have more bootblacks, dishwashers and elevator boys than work could be found for.

And lastly, if the dreams of Sir Thomas More, Campanelli, St. Augustine, Bellamy, Plato, William Morris and Karl Marx were to suddenly come true, and the old struggle between the Haves and the Have-Nots cease forever, what would become of the host of union officials, "industrial adjusters," professional revolutionists, and company "guards"? Many would be unable to take their annual vacation to Europe, or bask 'neath the palms of Palm Beach, or inhale the invigorating atmosphere of the Adirondacks. The honest gangsters of the Lower East Side and Hell's Kitchen would find unemployment staring them in the face.

In short, such miracles would bring great joy to the majority but much sorrow to the few. Well, such as life! We can't have *everything!*

## THEATRE

By THEOPHILUS LEWIS

### The Tri-Arts Club

The evening of December 20th, in the Y. W. C. A. auditorium, the Tri-Arts Club presented a program of three plays. To my mind it was the most significant theatrical event that has occurred in Harlem since the departure or disintegration of the Ethiopian Art Theatre. The plays were: *The Lady of the Hairpins*, a Japanese tragedy, by Mary Fenellosa; *The Criminal*, by Leroy N. Jorgensen; *The Wooing of Frazee*, by Frederick Hogan.

\* \* \*

"*The Lady of the Hairpins*" is the story of a scarlet lady who immolates herself for God, love and her native land. It is substantially a good play. The dialogue is rather cumbersome and quite a bit of shoddy sentiment obtrudes itself into the action, but the framework of the play is sound tragedy. That I withhold the adjective "fine" is solely due to the fact that I am an extremely cautious man.

But when I turn from the play itself to the way it was acted I cannot restrain myself. The acting, with a single exception, was simply atrocious. The way Arthur Tayler interpreted the role of Prince Toro was even worse than that. I am convinced that if one of the Mikado's spies had been in the audience Mr. Tayler would have been assassinated forthwith.

According to the story, Prince Toro, scion of a noble house, gets so sweet on a tea house flapper that he is even willing to marry her. Papa and Mamma object, but the prince is so headstrong that they have to appeal to the Shogun to restrain him. The Shogun simplifies the matter by commanding the Prince to choose between giving up his sweetie and death. The Prince promptly, but tacitly, chooses the latter alternative. He decides to spend one glorious night with his love and die in her arms in the morning.

It may be a conceit of mine, but somehow I cling to the notion that a scion of old Japan, after making such a heroic resolution, would conduct his final wooing in the grand manner. If he thought his nerve would not be equal to the occasion he would get about half liquored up before putting in his appearance. And he would bring plenty of *saki* along to keep his spirits up. Instead of waxing morose over the matter he would pretty effectively feign to consider the whole thing a rather neat joke on the Shogun.

From Mr. Tayler's interpretation of the character the dash

and insouciance of the two-sword man were altogether absent. In their stead was the maudlin drooling of a Baptist deacon sneaking into a buffet flat with one of his wife's female lodgers. Even if I imagine such a fellow entering Madame Sen's establishment I cannot imagine Kodzue falling for him. It would have been superfluous. She had the materials for Lesbian love closer at hand. Furthermore, if any of Hideyoshi's huskies, or the descendant of one, ever acted that way, it is a sure thing that the ruling Shogun decreed the man's immediate destruction, denying him honorable extinction by *hara-kiri* but commanding the most convenient mob of *hinin* to beat him to death with clubs.

Mr. Tayler's fustian was to a considerable extent offset by the sensible acting of Marie Santos, who played Kodzue. Miss Santos' performance was not without blemish, but it was a good one. She was rather reserved, perhaps; still, she brought out with a good deal of the glow and animation such fiery particles as the principal characters of the tragedy would naturally display. Toward the end, however, she seemed to forget that the chances are that a girl brave enough to die for a cause would be too brave to pull a long face over it. I rather think Kodzue went out laughing, even if she didn't mean it. In fairness to Miss Santos, it must be pointed out that the manuscript did not give her much latitude. This is one of the places where the dialogue becomes unwieldy, and the soggy denouement, perhaps, was not her choice.

\* \* \*

"*The Criminal*" is a play based on the occasional quadrangle. The central character is a prig who is rewarded with the true love of his Hindu serving maid when his wife transfers her affections to a cad. The action occurs at the moment when the old love is packing off via the front door while the new love is shuffling in from the kitchen. The whole thing, in brief, is trash. The only reason why I do not press for burning the effigy of the author is because his play gave me a chance to see the second best performance I have ever seen by a colored actor.

As Leighton, the prig, Ruppert Marks gave a performance that deserves everything implied by the adjective "good." No doubt a technician could point to many flaws in the way Mr. Marks handled his role but the only fault apparent to my lay eyes was his tendency to become florid. Without reserva-

tion, I put Mr. Marks in the grade A class of colored actors.

Anna Wales, who was not at all good in "The Lady of the Hairpins" did fairly well in "The Criminal." Lillian Mattison and John Wilson, while they did nothing to distinguish themselves, earned favorable mention. On the whole, the cast was just a little better than the play. I would like to see them in something more deserving of their talents.

\* \* \*

I did not see Mr. Hogan's play. If "The Wooing of Frazee" compares favorably with "The Lady of Hairpins" or received acting as good as that of "The Criminal," I missed something interesting.

### At the Lafayette

As folks in the provinces like to go to bed early, "Come Along, Mandy," which played at the Lafayette during the holiday fortnight, ought to be a big success as a road show. It delivers its punch in the first act and gets the thing over with.

The show is a rather entertaining development of the Charleston motif, and in forty-five minutes it presents a leading lady possessing quite some pulchritude, half a dozen snappy tunes, some pretty lively hoofing, culminating in an uproarious Charlestonfest, and, last but not least (left hand on my chest, right index finger pointing Godward), the theatrical sensation of the decade—colored girls in the chorus! You can see it all and be at home winding the clock by quarter past ten.

Of course, if you want to see Miss Jean Starr's Gallic limbs some more you can stay for the second act; but you will only see what you have already seen in the first act, minus the Charleston spree. The girls come out and dance and withdraw to the dressing rooms to change costumes and then come out and dance some more. As the evening wears along this becomes a little tiresome.

The show places the heavy work of divertissement on the chorus. Whatever histrionic ability the principals possess is not called forth. The chief thing Miss Starr, the leading lady, and Miss Louise Levine have to do is look pretty. This requires no effort on their part, as the President of Paradise made them that way.

There is no outstanding song in "Come Along, Mandy," but as a whole the music is decidedly livelier than the music of any show I've seen since Leubrie Hill's first edition of the Darktown Follies. They are not the kind of songs you will hum to yourself a week after seeing the show, but they sound mighty satisfying while you sit in your orchestra seat, especially the ditties in the first act.

Oh, yes, there is something they call comedy connected with the show. It is a rather vague to-do about the Island of Boo-boo, which is near the Island of Poo-poo, which is near the Island of Boo-boo. This cargo of guano is unloaded by a detail of sad stevedores, with Slim Henderson acting as straw boss. As they proceed with the business rather gingerly the smell is not so offensive as you might expect. Besides you can hold your handkerchief to your nose or go out in the lobby while the gals are off stage. Outside of that the show is well worth your dollar or whatever they soak you for a seat.

\* \* \*

I admit that the mind of the nation is pretty well occupied just now, what with the canonization of St. Andrew of Pittsburgh, gypping the heroes of Chateau Thierry out of the bonus we promised them and trying to decide which clown to make president next year. Still we ought to be able to find time to pay a mite of the honor he deserves to the greatest benefactor of the American people since the dawn of the Twentieth Century. Therefore, I suggest that a committee of best minds meet to consider setting aside a day of national jollification, preceded by a subscription drive to erect a monument in memory of the unknown genius who invented the Charleston rhythm. Hey! Hey!

\* \* \*

My Hall of Fame now contains two busts. In the niche of honor reposes the head of Morris McKinney, and next to it

stands the animated likeness of Ruppert Marks. The committee is considering the claims of Marie Santos.

\* \* \*

While it is obvious that I am not to be compared with Esaias or any of the major prophets, still, by virtue of much fasting and prayer, I manage to keep in tolerably close touch with Yaveh of Hosts, the God of Abraham, Trotzsky, Gimbel, Grimke, Wanamaker, Billy Sunday and other sound business men. There are times when the Spirit descends on me and I seem to divine that the ghost of Shakespeare, so long cock of the walk in English literature, is experiencing some nervous nights. No, it's not Kipling that's making him jumpy, as Dr. Harrison rather absurdly hints at times; nor is it Bernard Shaw I'm thinking of. The two moderns I have in mind are Thomas Hardy and Eugene O'Neil.

\* \* \*

Writes one J. A. Jackson, in the *Baltimore Afro-American*, concerning "Come Along, Mandy:"

"... the substitution of another in the house of 'Mr. Jackson, owner of Bugaboo Island,' as his wife, is a bit of filthy stuff that would not be tolerated in organized burlesque for one minute."

This, unless my eagle eye has overlooked something, is the first turn from criticism that is mere boost blurb, which has hitherto prevailed in the Negro press of the East, to criticism that is snobbish, snotty and ignorant Puritanism. If this stricture on "Come Along, Mandy," contains a grain of sense, then Sophocles, Shakespeare and Shaw are lascivious rascals whose manuscripts should be rigorously blue penciled and perhaps fumigated before being presented in a theatre for the delectation of "family audiences." And certainly no God-fearing head of a household would permit their smutty stuff to occupy space on his bookshelves which might otherwise be devoted to the sweet and pure literature of the Uplift.

\* \* \*

Which reminds me that Slim Henderson's competent handling of the rather naughty "Girl with the Polka-dot Hose" inclines me toward Rabbi Dougherty's opinion that this harlequin could acquit himself right nobly if he were provided with genuinely funny lines or situations.

\* \* \*

It was no mere gesture of politeness when I observed that the program of the Tri-Arts Club was the most significant event that has recently occurred in the Negro Theatre. More significant still is the work this organization has outlined for itself. Among other things, the Tri-Arts Club is undertaking to remedy the paucity of drama that afflicts the Negro Theatre. Writers of one-act plays desiring to have their work produced are invited to submit their manuscripts to the secretary of the Tri-Arts Club, Mr. Samuel Blount, 10 Fleet Street, Brooklyn. In the near future, perhaps in the March MESSENGER, I shall discuss the important work of this organization at length.

\* \* \*

I shall also have something to say concerning Roseanne, now playing at the Greenwich Village Theatre.

\* \* \*

Certainly I shall animadvert on Negro criticism as soon as I get my terms of abuse in order.

\* \* \*

I am going to be a busy man during this year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and twenty-four and of Calvin, the Dumbbell, the first.

\* \* \*

*Note: Since The Messenger is beginning to specialize in the theatrical field, this department will be glad to receive notices and communications from members of the profession, especially from authors and persons connected with little theatre movements. Address: The Dramatic Critic, The Messenger, 2311 7th Ave., N. Y. City.*

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**NEXT MONTH: A Review of Roseanne; a play of Negro life, staged by white actors.**

# "THESE 'COLORED' UNITED STATES"

## X: WEST VIRGINIA

By T. GILLIS NUTTER

Secretary-Treasurer, Mutual Savings and Loan Bank of Charleston, W. Va.; Grand Chancellor, K. of P.'s of West Virginia; President, Pythian Mutual Investment Association; President, Charleston Branch, N. A. A. C. P.; two years as member of the West Virginia Legislature, representing Kanawha County, and author of bills establishing Insane Asylum for Colored People, Industrial Home for Colored Girls and Industrial School for Colored Boys.  
Practicing Attorney

**W**EST VIRGINIA is rich in history and tradition. According to State history, the first and the last battles of the Revolutionary War were fought at Point Pleasant and Wheeling, October 10, 1774, and on September 11, 1782, respectively. The first boat propelled by steam was built in West Virginia by James Rumsey in 1784; the first electric railroad in the world, built as a commercial enterprise, was constructed between Huntington and Guyandotte; the first brick pavement laid in the world was laid in Charleston in 1870, by Dr. J. P. Hale, at that time mayor of Charleston. He also introduced English sparrows into the United States about the same time.

West Virginia has an area of 24,022 square miles; the extreme length of the State is 225 miles; the extreme breadth, 200 miles, and it is divided into 55 counties.

The highest recorded temperature is 110 degrees Fahrenheit and the lowest, 37 degrees below zero. The rain fall ranges from 35 to 40 inches. The lowest point is 240 feet above sea level and the highest point 4,860 feet above sea level.

West Virginia is fifty miles from Washington on the east; extends twenty-five miles north of Pittsburgh; reaches beyond the middle of Ohio on the west; and is twenty-five miles south of Richmond, Virginia. It is referred to as the most northern of the southern states; the most southern of the northern states; the most eastern of the western states; and the most western of the eastern states.

It has a population of 1,463,701—native whites 1,315,329; foreign born, 61,906; Negroes, 86,345; Indians and others, 121.

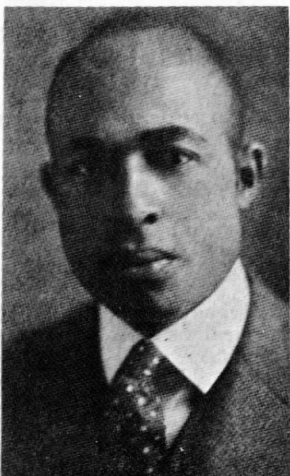
West Virginia takes first rank as a coal producing state and has more unmined bituminous coal than any state in the Union. There is being produced about 80,000,000 tons annually and at that rate it will take 2,000 years to exhaust the supply. This state is the heart of the greatest coal field in the world, the Appalachian; ten thousand miles of her area are underlaid with coal, and twenty-nine seams are mined commercially. There are 1,287 bituminous mines, and 125,000 miners, 20,781 of whom are colored.

There are 27,363 petroleum and natural gas wells, producing 202,000,000,000 cubic feet of natural gas, and 230 natural gas plants. Timber products were valued in 1919 at \$34,419,523.

The miners live in mining towns which differ from other communities in that they are strictly industrial. The only reason for their existence is for the production of coal. The change from isolated mountainous condition to well regulated towns is phenomenal. The log cabin of one and two rooms has been replaced by



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Charleston, W. Va.



JOHN C. NORMAN  
Prominent Architect  
Charleston, W. Va.



ANDERSON H. BROWN  
Prominent Realtor and Capitalist  
Charleston, W. Va.



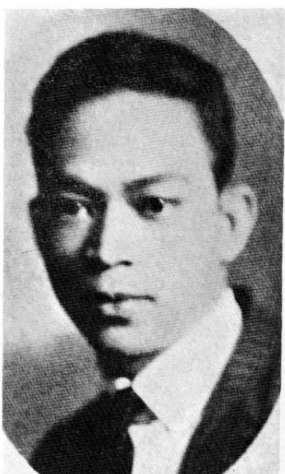
C. H. JAMES  
Senior Member of C. H. James  
& Son, Wholesale Fruit and  
Produce Co.  
Charleston, W. Va.



E. L. JAMES  
Junior Member C. H. James  
& Son, Wholesale Fruit and  
Produce Commissioners  
Charleston, W. Va.



C. E. MITCHELL, C.P.A.  
Pres. Mutual Savings and Loan  
Bank, Bus. Mgr. W. Va. Coll.  
Inst., Member of Commission  
to Virgin Islands  
Institute, W. Va.



E. T. DUMETZ  
Photographer  
Charleston, W. Va.

comfortable homes of four, six and eight rooms that have modern conveniences; such as electricity, water, gas, fenced yards, and gardens. Social, educational and religious activities, and sanitation are superior to those found in the usual small town.

The average miner earns seven dollars and upwards daily. They set a splendid table and dress well. It is a common occurrence to see miners riding in their automobiles after work hours and on Sundays.

Prohibition has wrought a wonderful change in these sections. Miners who used to spend their money in riotous living are now buying homes and banking their money. Pay day used to be very much dreaded in mining camps when the saloon was in full swing, but since the passing of the saloons, pay day is just as quiet as any other, and law and order prevail as in other well regulated communities.

West Virginia is looked upon by many solely as a coal, oil, and gas section. While it is true these are her greatest wealth, yet she is rich in agriculture and manufactures. Her 87,289 farms are valued at \$496,439,617, and the crops produced on these farms in 1919 were valued at \$96,537,459. The same year there were 17,010,367 bushels of corn, 2,809,398 bushels of potatoes, 7,578,052 pounds of tobacco, 2,442,090 pounds of wool, poultry and eggs worth \$12,728,178, dairy products \$11,390,329. There are 5,554,731 fruit bearing apple trees and 2,049,867 fruit bearing peach trees. Some of the most delicious apples and peaches in this country are grown in the part of the state known as the Panhandle, where is found the largest peach orchard in the world and the only school for packing apples.

There are only 504 Negro farmers in the state. In some sections the Negro owns large tracts of land, but in most instances he does not produce enough on his farm to meet his needs. However, he is beginning to use better methods of cultivation and seed selection, and is rotating his crops.

The educational system of West Virginia has been of slow growth until recent years when a more liberal attitude towards public school education has been quite manifest on the part of the law-making bodies of the state. The writer, as a member of the House of Delegates representing Kanawha County, assisted in piloting through the House the first million dollar appropriation for rural schools in the 1921 session. Fifty years ago there were only 431 public schools in the state taught by 387 teachers who received the munificent salary of \$7,772.90. Today there are 7,419 schools with 12,869 teachers receiving salaries amounting to \$22,209,813.

One is able to obtain some idea of the growth of the school system of this state when it is recalled that fifty years ago there was not a high school in West Virginia; while today there are 205 modern high schools, 1,441 high school teachers and 24,624 high school students.

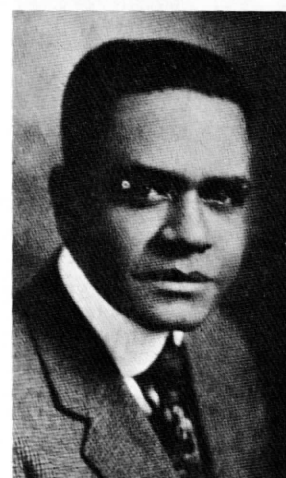
The following brief summary indicates the facilities provided for the education of Negro youth: One-room schools, 289; two rooms and up, 132; junior high schools, 24; first-class high schools, 7; second-class high schools, 7; high schools below second class, 6. Normal school teachers, including presidents, 53; classified high school teachers, including principals, 84; elementary teachers, 641. The estimated number of pupils in high school grade is 1,350 and the num-



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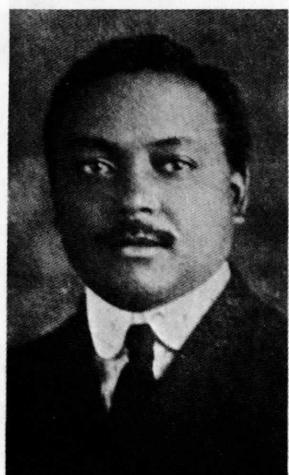
O. L. SPAULDING  
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**JAMES ARTHUR JACKSON**  
*State Librarian of W. Va. for 3 years, Assistant Librarian 16 years, Assistant Clerk Supreme Court 4 years*  
 Charleston, W. Va.



**C. C. BARNETT**  
*Founder of Barnett Hospital*  
 Huntington, W. Va.



**T. EDWARD HILL**  
*Director State Bureau Negro Welfare and Statistics*  
 Charleston, W. Va.

ber of pupils of college grade is 394. There are 23,880 Negro children in school of which number 17,226 are in the first six grades.

The salary paid elementary teachers in 1922 was \$686,122.20 and that paid to high school teachers, \$66,049.48. The average annual salary of teachers in normal schools, other than presidents, is \$1,587.30.

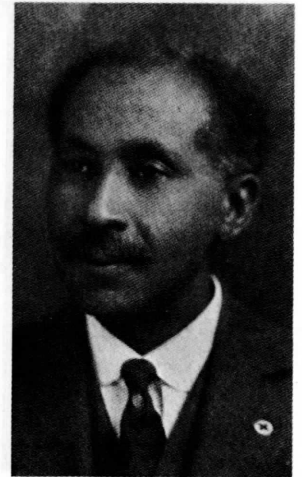
W. W. Sanders, Supervisor of Rural Schools for Negroes, in speaking of the educational advantages offered to the Negro in West Virginia, makes this statement: "An item which indicates the increased educational sentiment of our state towards the Negro is that in one county boards of education have expended within the past two years \$450,000 in the erection of school buildings for Negroes."

There are two state schools for colored youth offering normal training course, and one, the West Virginia Collegiate Institute, offers a normal and a collegiate course. The most expensive state building ever erected in West Virginia is now being built at this Institute; namely, the administration building, costing \$380,000. Appropriations amounting to nearly \$2,000,000 have been authorized by the last three legislatures for the Institute. It has a wonderful foundation for a great school.

Teachers of both races in the rural schools receive the same salary. Prof. William Davis, one of the pioneer teachers in West Virginia, was the first teacher to be granted a number one certificate in a uniform examination.

The Constitution of West Virginia provides that white and colored children shall be educated in separate schools. The spirit of this constitutional provision has been adhered to in all state and county institutions, with the possible exception of jails and the state penitentiary. The colored leaders, recognizing that to all intent and purpose separate institutions were being maintained for white and colored persons, but invariably under the control and management of white officials, have demanded the establishment of a number of state institutions to be under the control and management of colored citizens. As a consequence, we have a separate Orphans' Home, Old Folks' Home, and a Tuberculosis Sanitarium managed and controlled by colored men. The 1919 and 1921 sessions of the Legislature authorized the establishment of the West Virginia Insane Asylum for Colored People, Industrial School for Colored Boys, Industrial Home for Colored Girls, and a Deaf and Blind School for Colored People. The writer was author of the bills creating the Insane Asylum, the Industrial School for Boys and the Industrial Home for Girls; while Honorable Harry J. Capehart of McDowell County was author of the bill creating the Deaf and Blind School.

Politically, the Negro is the balance of power in the State and this fact is recognized by the two great parties. As a consequence, in no other section of the country does the Negro wield the power and enjoy the political prestige of the colored voters as he does here. He sits in the councils of the party and helps to map out and dictate its policy. He holds more state offices than in any other state in the Union. He boasts of a State Librarian, State Supervisor of Rural Schools and a Director of the Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics. In 1919 there were three colored members in the House of Delegates; in 1921, two, and in 1923, one. There is at least one Negro on the pay-



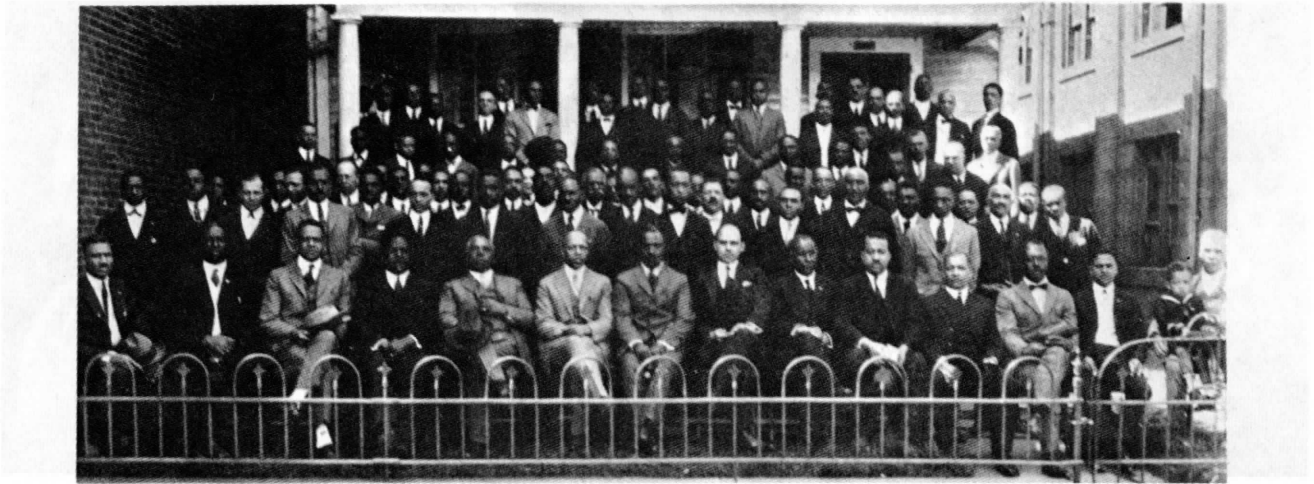
**PROF. C. W. BOYD**  
*Supervisor Colored Schools of Charleston, W. Va., Grand Keeper of Records of K. P. of W. Va.*



**JOHN W. DAVIS**  
*President the West Virginia Collegiate Institute*  
 Institute, W. Va.



**J. F. J. CLARK**  
*Principal Garnett High School*  
 Charleston, W. Va.



*Men's Bible Class, First Baptist Sunday School, Charleston, W. Va.  
Hon. T. G. Nutter, Teacher •*



**DR. R. L. JONES**  
*Secretary State Medical Association  
Charleston, W. Va.*

roll in each department of the government, filling responsible positions. There are three members of the Advisory Council to the State Board of Education. In different parts of the State are found Justices, Deputy Sheriffs, Constables and City Councilmen. A number of colored men are connected with the Federal Government, including postmasters and quite a number of mail carriers and mail clerks.

The Negro in this state is fast solving his economic condition by the acquisition of wealth, valuable real estate holdings, business institutions and beautiful homes. There has been a marked change in that respect in the last ten years in every section of the state. He is fast learning that he must be a producer as well as a consumer and he is entering into every avenue of business.

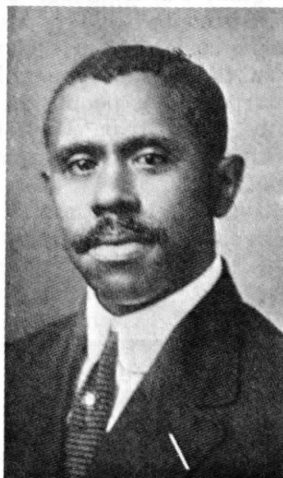
This group is being greatly encouraged in this upward stride by the happy relation existing between the



**HON. HARRY J. CAPEHART**  
*Third Term Member of W. Va. Legislature. Owner Capehart Hotel  
Welch, W. Va.*



**J. H. G. EDWARDS**  
*Contractor and Capitalist  
Morgantown, W. Va.*



**M. T. WHITTIER**  
*Proprietor and Editor  
McDowell Times  
Keystone, W. Va.*



**W. W. SANDERS**  
*Supervisor Colored Rural Schools, Chairman Advisory Council State Board of Education  
Charleston, W. Va.*



**RUTH STEPHENSON**  
A. B. Teacher of English  
Charleston, W. Va.



**MRS. T. G. NUTTER**  
Charleston, W. Va.



**MAUDE WANZER**  
Director Wanzer's School of  
Music and Musical Dept. of  
Garnett High School  
Charleston, W. Va.



**W. W. SANDERS**  
Prin. Secretary to Supt. of  
Colored Rural Schools  
Charleston, W. Va.

racess, which is quite evident in the mining sections as well as other parts of the state. They work side by side and are members of the same union. It frequently happens that colored men are presidents of the local unions and direct the policy of the union. They meet on a common level and fight for a common cause.

Charleston is possibly the most progressive section of the state—it being the capital and magnet around which gravitate all activities of the state. Here you find the Negro engaged in every walk of life. In this wide-awake city there are bankers, wholesale commission merchants, real estate men, merchants, contractors, carpenters, brick-masons, lawyers, doctors, preachers, and what not. Here one will find the best appointed Negro hotel in America, the Ferguson, owned and managed by Captain G. E. Ferguson, a veteran of the World War. Some of the most beautiful homes owned by Negroes in West Virginia are located in this city.

The idea of home ownership is spreading over the entire state and magnificent homes are owned by our group in Huntington, Parkersburg, Wheeling, Bluefield, Keystone, Fairmont, Beckley, Morgantown and other sections. The social life of the people is of the highest order. In these cities you will find as progressive and enterprising a people as is found anywhere. It is truly stated, that "West Virginia is the garden spot of America for the Negro."



**F. H. HUSKINS**  
Field Agent State Board of  
Children's Guardians  
Charleston, W. Va.



**A. H. BROWN**  
Auditor Mutual Savings and  
Loan Co.  
Charleston, W. Va.



**HAZEL K. LUCAS**  
Secretary Charleston Branch,  
N. A. A. C. P., Secretary to  
Hon. T. G. Nutter  
Charleston, W. Va.



# CRITICAL EXCURSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

## THE STATUE OF LIBERTY AND EUROPEAN IMMIGRATION

By J. A. ROGERS

"EUROPE sends us her worst classes," complains Prof. Osborn, president of the American Museum of Natural History.

If Prof. Osborn is right Europe is evidently taking America at her word. The inscription on the Statue of Liberty issues the following invitation to Europe:

"Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shores."

\* \* \*



J. A. ROGERS

There was a time indeed when America, hungry for population, welcomed "the wretched refuse" of Europe, as a pauper a morsel from the garbage can. But America is rich today, and what pauper, become wealthy, but would scorn the idea of gathering a meal from a swill-pail?

\* \* \*

It may be remarked, parenthetically, that many of our blue-blooded gentry are products of that "wretched refuse," who took a new lease of life when brought into the rejuvenating environment of the New World. Georgia, for instance, which today chants the loudest of the glory of its Anglo-Saxon origin was originally settled by thieves, thugs, prostitutes, counterfeiterers, and other "refuse" from the English prisons. Time and food glorifies that "refuse" however, and thus may be explained the tendency to prove that a white person descended from Anglo-Saxon stock, even if that stock be criminal, or otherwise tainted, is superior to one descended from Eastern European stock, however worthy. We have something of that kind also in the case of the Negro.

\* \* \*

Prof. Osborn, by the way, hails from Connecticut, which also received a considerable portion of that "wretched refuse." Many of the best New England families come from white slave stock, as that from which came Grover Cleveland.

\* \* \*

Most of the arguments in favor of restricting immigration are that the present type of Europeans is unassimilable.

Peculiar argument when one remembers that the Indian is the only original American. Some of the loudest objectors, like Gino Speranza, are either immigrants themselves, or have been here but a generation or two. It is an evil bird that befouls its own nest.

Suppose the objectors try instead the following arguments:

The United States is pretty well-developed at the present time, and needs or will need elbow-room.

Europeans could come here in sufficiently large numbers to transfer to this country the very conditions from which they are fleeing.

America's duty is to solve her own race problems and this she cannot do as long as the limited labor market is flooded with cheap European labor.

European immigration, in our opinion, should be cut off for ten years, at least. That would give an opportunity to much under-populated "white men's countries" like Australia, Canada, and South Africa, to get filled up. Pioneering, besides, would have the added advantage of distributing population, as well of limiting the birth rate, not only for the thickly congested countries but the world at large. Man is a commodity as any other, cheap where plentiful.

### Are Negroes Physically Inferior to White Persons?

Just as one is about to sit back with the assurance that the last word has been said someone believed to be in the know, starts in again with the alphabet, as it were. This time it is the Ku Kluxish, 100-per-cent-American "*World's Work*."

The editor brings up the three-hundred-year-old argument that the Negro is physically inferior to white people, that this is not his climate, and that he will soon die out. He says:

"That Negroes as a people are much frailer physically than the white population will probably surprise most observers."

Oh yes, we readily agree that most observers will be surprised when they learn the real truth, particularly those whose prejudice creates their perspective. To save words we refer the *World's Work* to "The Second Report on the Operations of the Selective Service System to December 20, 1918: Provost Marshall's General's Office," page 193.

It says in part: "For every 100 men examined physically the ratio of colored men found qualified physically for general military service was substantially higher than the ratio for white men by just 5 per cent, viz., 74.60 as against 69.71; this difference in physical qualifications, therefore accounts for the remaining excess of 5 per cent of colored registrants over white registrants accepted for full military service."

Again, two army experts, Love and Davenport, in "The Proceedings of the National Science" (Jan. 15, 1919) say: "He (the Negro) seems to have more stable nerves, has better eyes, and metabolizes better. Thus, in many respects, the uninfected colored troops show themselves to be constitutionally better physiological machines than the white men."

And that's that, as Lee said to Grant, handing over his sword.

### Disappearing Races

The *World's Work* also in predicting the disappearance of the Negro, says:

"Is Nature with her usual ruthlessness taking vengeance upon a race that presumes to live in a different environment from that specifically set apart for it? The Negro is the natural inhabitant of a tropical country and moving him from the African jungle to the temperate zone is physiologically a violent act. That he cannot stand the strain is apparent from his increasing mortality."

Very good, Mr. Editor, the Indian is disappearing, not in theory, but in fact, and has a higher mortality than the Negro. How are you going to explain him? Perhaps you will be able to dig up his record, and convince us that this was an original "white man's country," after all. Following close on the heels of the vanishing Indian is the next oldest stock and the most degenerate, the Anglo-Saxon. What of him also? The latest move is to corral the Anglo-Saxons into "clubs." Pretty soon they'll be putting them into preserves like buffaloes. In that bourne from which no disappearing race returns, the Negro will have plenty of company.

\* \* \*

In less than sixty years the Negro population has more than trebled itself. Besides, how can the Negro die out when the white man himself is contributing to his increase?

\* \* \*

The same editorial says: "American Negroes are transferring themselves from the country to the town at a frightful cost to themselves."

The Negro death-rate is higher than the white death-rate for the same reason that that of the poorer whites is higher than that of the well-to-do ones. In the severe struggle for existence the Negroes and the poorer whites die off, all but the most physically fit, as among the lower animals.

And speaking about housing conditions North and South we'd sooner take the word of W. A. Saunders, a white Southerner, writing in *Collier's Weekly*, who said: "Compared with these (the wretched Southern cabins) the squalid brick tenements of the North are verily mansions in the sky."

The greatest enemy of the Negro and the poorer whites as well is tuberculosis. For each one of either that gets this disease because of climate, a thousand contract it from economic strain. Put the white man under the same strain as the Negro, and how long would he last?

Among publications of this sort dumbness on any subject is usually regarded as a sin against efficiency, except in the case of the Negro-Caucasian question, when it becomes an adorable failing. There is some reason for this "thickness" after all. This publication is apparently flirting with the cotton trust, peonage, and the exploiters of Negro labor, and wants to keep the Negro South.

#### "Black Shadow" Frightens British Lion

In proportion as the Negro advances he must expect to see many of those who formerly championed his cause come out against him. One of the latest of these is H. G. Wells.

Wells, English first of all, is quaking in his boots at France's development of the Negro. In the *Sunday American*, December 15th, he says among other things:

"That white France which so many Americans and English love like a second motherland, the white France of the great revolution, Lafayette, Mirabeau, Voltaire, Anatole France, Pasteur; France, the propagandist of liberty, equality, fraternity, throughout the world; France, the guardian of art and personal freedom, of the gracious life, passes into eclipse beneath this black shadow. Black France is ousting her from men's imagination and sympathies."

Yes, this is the same H. G. Wells, who spoke so

eloquently for justice to the Negro in "The Future of America," and who so strongly decried race prejudice in his articles on the Disarmament Conference. Why the change of heart? France's development of the Negro menaces England's supremacy. It is all right when England uses black troops to extend her empire, as she has always done. When France does it, however, it becomes an unpardonable crime in the eyes of H. G. W. and others like him.

And by the way, Mr. Wells, what about the France of the three Dumas?

\* \* \*

It is significant also that Mr. Wells said nothing about the problems of the American Negro and of India in his "Outline of History."

\* \* \*

The future of the Negro lies with the Latins. France wants to use the Negro, just as America and England do. But there is a great difference between her method and theirs. France is like the man who works his horse but cares for it, while England and America are like the one who not only works it, but uses the poor animal as an instrument on which to vent his vicious instincts. France sees that it is to her advantage to give the Negro the fullest opportunity for advancement—intelligent self-interest.

France's black colonies send members to her Chamber of Deputies. They thus have a hand on the French governmental machine. Britain's 550,000,000 dark subjects are voiceless in imperial affairs, and utter but a whisper in their own. In America, be it said, that there is no Negro in Congress is the fault of the Negroes, at least those of the North.

#### Assimilation

Two writers in the *World's Work*, French Strothers, and Gino Speranza—who from his writings you'd guess to be an Anglo-Saxon—re-utter the same old hash that there is an unbridgeable chasm between Negro and white American, that the former can never be assimilated, or will ever be a 100 per cent American.

Thanks for the flattery! Particularly after reading that two citizens were lynched in Oklahoma because they ignored the order: "Nigger, don't let the sun go down on you." In many parts of the South a Negro dare not even alight from the train.

The ideal of this nation is expressed in the Constitution. A citizen, therefore, is assimilable in proportion, as he lives up to this ideal, isn't he? But to the most American portion of the population—the people of the Southern States—the Constitution means nothing. A 100 per cent thoroughly assimilated American is a native, white, Protestant, gentile. All others don't belong. The Constitution has no such provision, however, therefore thanks again, Messrs. Strothers, Speranza, and others of your tribe.

Speranza insists that the Slav and the Latin are unassimilable in Anglo-Saxon institutions, and should be barred from this country. Friend Speranza, being an Italian, may know what he is talking about. When it comes to English history, however, he wins the glass carpet-beater. Wasn't it the Latin, Julius Caesar, who laid the foundations of Anglo-Saxonism when he woke the Celtic cannibals of Britain from their savagery? Take away Latin from the English language,

and where would Anglo-Saxons get even the word "assimilation," for instance.

### Lady Astor's Logic

The Viscountess Astor, M.P., in an attack on Socialism, says: "I am rich. I am not ashamed of it. If I lost my wealth tomorrow I might or I might not become rich again. I don't know. The one thing I do know is that I should not waste my time in self-destructive envy of the rich."

"If—" She is basing a certainty upon a pure hypothesis.

Let's psycho-analyze the lady—since she has made a personal matter of it—in an attempt to see what she really would do.

Now Lady Astor is the mother of several children, five, we think. She spends her time agitating for certain principles she believes right. This means that though rich, she has a discontented nature—call it divine discontent, if you will. Now imagine the same lady, plain Mrs. Astor, without the money, but with the children, and working as a scrubwoman or a seamstress to support them. Would this woman with the militant, discontented nature be satisfied to see the rich living off the surplus of the wealth that she helped to produce—the surplus that ought to have gone to the support of her suffering children?

\* \* \*

More logic from Lady Astor. She says: "Every man and woman who has a saving is a capitalist."

Good! We're going straight to the bank, deposit a dollar, and be a capitalist in Lady Astor's class.

She goes on: "So far as I am concerned, I wish every man and woman had wealth."

Perhaps she'd like to see every Englishman and woman a viscount or viscountess, also. Old Astor or Langhorne certainly wouldn't have subscribed to that.

If everyone else had money they would have cornered something else more valuable as bricks or shells.

Lady Astor proceeds: "There is not a woman in the world—if she has borne children—who does not know that there is no such thing as equality in the world."

Precisely, and because there is none the law steps in and declares: "All men are created free and equal." "The strong shall not take advantage of the weak." Consequently the law is not functioning when it permits the idle rich to live in ease off the surplus of the workers.

Lady Astor, F.F.V., in her argument for inequality reminds one of the saying about the beggar on horseback. Many of the F.F.V.'s are also descended from "wretched refuse." After her ancestors have lived for generations off the poor blacks and whites of Virginia advocacy of inequality comes with good grace from this titled dame.

### Fundamentalist and Modernist

It is the eternal struggle between Age and Youth, Youth wishes to push on. Age to stand still. And don't forget that many young persons have aged, inert, fundamentalist minds. Fundamentalists and Modernists exist in every walk of life.

There is not a single issue in this religious discussion that has not been fought out already, as the public would see if it went more generally to the public libraries. To the student of biology, or to an observing visitor at the American Museum of Natural History, many of these so-called modernists in religion are but fundamentalists.

Imagine an organism that never threw off any of its excrement, and you have a fundamentalist.

The fundamentalists are suffering from constipation of the brain.

## A REPUDIATION OF WAR

By FANNY BIXBY SPENCER

(Continued from January number)

While these blind political policies and oppressive economic conditions are laying the foundation stones of world wars and violent revolutions, the people go on placidly embellishing patriotic and militaristic features in the common social life, oblivious of their utility in the superstructure of war. Not least among these snares is an organization which stands high in public approval, but which is making militarism a part of the psychology of the people by a most subtle and effective means. Avowing the highest ideals of virtue and service, and no doubt practising many of them, the Boy Scouts of America are taking boys of adolescent age, forming them into troops, dressing them in military uniform (allowed by a special act of Congress), acquainting them with the essentials of army camp life, subjecting them to the partial discipline of soldiers, teaching them a warrior's code of honor similar to the medieval codes of chivalry, and demanding of them unthinking obedience to the commands of their officers. Sponsored not only by the business interests, but also by the churches, Sunday schools and women's clubs,

this movement is swaying the youth of the country into martial rhythm and will no doubt continue to do so unless the peace desiring people of the land wake up to the menace of this kindergarten of war.

Not only the Boy Scout movement, but also the public schools, as at present conducted, are planting the seeds of war in the hearts of our children. In many of the high schools the government has established Reserve Officers' Training Corps, under the direction of regular army officers. Even in schools which are free from the curse of military drill, the military temper is being stimulated daily by war songs, war pictures, war memorial tablets, and particularly by the military salute to the flag, which together with its spoken ritual forms practically a morning prayer for the public school system throughout the country. Although it is against the moral and religious convictions of pacifist parents for their children to take part in this act of implied war, they are forced to submit to it. On some occasions the pledge of allegiance requires the pledging of the lives of the children to the flag.

The reading books of the schools are filled with stories and verse which glorify war as the noblest of human adventures. The sentimentalism of "The Man Without a Country" and the effervescence of "Sheridan's Ride" are typical of the false light in which war is pictured. Drake's "American Flag" is the climax of melodramatic appeal. This literary claptrap is given as a "memory gem" in the higher grammar school grades, and the salacious lines, "Ere yet the life blood warm and wet has dimmed the glistening bayonet," must pass into the consciousness of every child going through the public schools of California. Parents who do not wish their children prepared for the future use of the bayonet would do well to consider the insidious education to this end that is being foisted upon them.

General John F. O'Ryan, a Major General in the United States army, who served during the World War, makes this observation in regard to the teaching of war heroics in the schools: "In order to breed a race for war the school books should always laud the warrior. I think, for instance, I can trace my own military career to Barnes' history with one particularly inspiring picture of Bill Sheridan waving his hat and yelling, 'Turn, boys, turn. We're going back!'"

We play with the war spirit in every-day life as children with fire, and some day it will burn us to ashes if we do not grasp the inner meaning of some of our most popular creeds and change some of our most approved social customs. For example, a group of people comes together to sing. Someone picks up a song book from the piano and opens to the old stirring melody of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." With patriotic enthusiasm the company begins to sing:

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored,  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword,  
His truth is marching on."

Here is the idea of holy war expressed in poetical imaginery with such ferment of feeling that one not on his guard against war intoxication immediately begins to glow with it. The war god has crept into the heart of men and carries them on in religious transport.

"I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel,  
As ye deal with my contemnors so with you my grace shall deal,  
Let the hero born of woman crush the serpent with his heel,  
While God is marching on."

Let us go into a comparative study of our emotions as excited by "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and the emotions of the Turks when they go out to kill the Armenians. They, too, have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel. As ye (Moslems) deal with my contemnors (Christians, infidels, scorners of the prophet Mahomet), so with you my grace (the grace of Allah) shall deal. Let the hero born of woman (the Moslem) crush the serpent (Christianity) with his heel, while God (Allah) is marching on (with the unsheathed scimitar).

If "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" is a true interpretation of the religion of Jesus Christ, then the Turks are right in saying that Christianity, both in theory and in practice, is a religion of blood. The Sermon on the Mount would seem to disclaim the doctrine of "as ye deal with my contemnors so with you

my grace shall deal," but the Sermon on the Mount is against the law in war time, as proved in 1918 when a dissenting Christian minister in America was sentenced to prison for distributing these chapters of Matthew in pamphlet form.

The deadly parallel between forging the cannon for the next war and singing "The Star Spangled Banner" once a week in the High School Assembly does not occur to the average peace loving citizen, but it is there. As there are two elements to preparedness, material and emotional, it is of no use for the foundries to turn out the mammoth guns unless the minds of coming men are primed to use them. "The Star Spangled Banner," like Drake's "American Flag," was written during the War of 1812, which was a war of consummate spite on both sides. During the World War one verse of this, our national anthem, was officially censored for the duration of the war, because it would hardly be polite for us, on the march with our English allies, to sing, "Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution." To the tune of "The Star Spangled Banner" several million people stand, either in reverence or through the coercion of mob law, and each succeeding generation is placed under the thralldom of this barbaric war whoop.

The meaning of patriotism varies continually in substance and intensity, for it is primarily an emotion, not an idea. Different minds conceive of it differently. To some it is simple, filial love of country; to others it is hatred of foreign countries and foreign people. In general it is predominating love of country. It connotes subjection to national authority, rather than responsible civic co-operation. It is not synonymous with citizenship, nor indispensable to public morality. It is more inclined to manifest zeal for existing models than the fervor of reform.

To exalt patriotism without exalting war at the same time is something like going out to swim without going near the water. In the pursuit of patriotism one must either follow it into the deep waters of war passion, on the basis of "my country, right or wrong," or remain on the shore of these deep waters in an equivocal position. Back on the terra firma of humanitarian service, it soon amounts to a denial of itself, for as it grows it leaps over its national hedges, becoming international and losing its identity as patriotism.

Tolstoy, who is generally acknowledged to be one of the greatest teachers of modern times, condemns patriotism unequivocally as "the root of war." In his essay "Patriotism or Peace?" he says:

"Therefore to destroy war, destroy patriotism. . . . Patriotism cannot be good. . . . Seas of blood have been shed over this passion; and will yet be shed for it, unless people free themselves of this obsolete relic of antiquity. . . . It is needful either to show that patriotism is so beneficent that it redeems all these terrible sufferings which it causes to mankind; or else to acknowledge that patriotism is an evil which instead of being grafted upon and suggested to people, should be struggled against with all one's might, to escape from it. . . . It must be understood that, as long as we praise patriotism and cultivate it in the young, so long will there be armaments to destroy the physical and spiritual life of nations."

"Patriotism today is the cruel tradition of an outlived period. . . . Patriotism is slavery. . . . Patriotism promises nothing but a terrible future, but the brotherhood of nations represents an ideal which is becoming ever more intelligible and desirable to humanity. Hence the progress of mankind from the old outworn opinion to the new must inevitably take place. (Continued next month.)

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# SEVEN YEARS FOR RACHEL

By THEOPHILUS LEWIS

## What Has Gone Before

*Sam Jones, a married man, living in a small Maryland village, develops a passion for Rachel Pettus, a young girl just coming into full womanhood. When circumstances bring them together one night he discovers that she requites his love. As their religious training will not sanction an illicit love, they pledge spiritual fidelity to each other and agree not to meet again. But Sam cannot stand the strain of separation and finally decides to consult a hoodoo man, hoping for a way out of his perplexity. After hearing his case, the witch man tells him that the only thing to do is to sell his soul to the devil. For a while Sam was unwilling to resort to such an extreme method, but after a period of wretchedness he weakens and performs the rites the hoodoo man prescribed. A short while later Sam's wife dies. Presumably this is the devil's way of putting him in a position to marry Rachel, which he does after a brief form of mourning. But no sooner is he married than his conscience begins to trouble him, urging him to confess to Rachel how their marriage had been made possible. Each time he begins his confession, however, something occurs which makes the moment inopportune. Finally he decides to put it off indefinitely. Now go on with the story.*

He avoided the bright lights of Randall Avenue, and tramped through various dark streets until he reached a fringe of forest which bordered one side of the village. The gloom and silence of the place at once soothed and stimulated his mind. For a few minutes he leaned against one of the tall trees and mused on the elusiveness of human happiness and its incompleteness and instability when secured for a brief moment. But his mind did not soar among generalities long. His thoughts soon descended to the consideration of his present dilemma.

The thought of coming down with consumption while the Infernal held a lien on his soul filled him with terror. To knowingly place himself in danger of infection, he reasoned, would be tantamount to self-murder, which, according to local tradition, was one of the unforgivable sins.

Still, to safeguard his own health he would have to sacrifice Rachel's. To refuse to sleep with her without telling her why would leave her mind the victim of its present false impression; to tell her why would grieve her even more. In either case the doctor's "no worry" dictum would have to be violated, which would aggravate her disease and perhaps hasten her death. Already guilty of complicity in the murder of one wife, he was loth to add another blood crime to his growing list of iniquities.

"Shucks! I oughter tol' her when we was fust married," he soliloquized. "Den she would er left me an' I wouldn't be in dis fix now." Then he heeled the tree trunk viciously, and fumed in disgust, "Dog-gone hit! 'Pears like I's jes' got to figger ever'thing out wrong."

A fit of desperation seized him then, and he decided to make himself the he-goat of sacrifice, feeling that after all it did not matter much, as either alternative he chose was almost certain to be the wrong one. When he lay down beside Rachel that night his heart was heavy with the conviction that he was turning his back on salvation. But he knew it would have felt no lighter if he had made the opposite choice. As it was, the consciousness of noble self-sacrifice

consoled him and, in a way, compensated him for the increased peril of his soul.

Rachel's consumption grew worse—rapidly. Time came when she realized that her days on earth were numbered. She was not terrified at all, for she knew that long, long ago, her Saviour had gone to prepare a place for her; and she even began to anticipate the inevitable with a mild impatience, certain that crossing Jordan would be but a blissful moment of passing from this world of sighs and sorrows to a land of everlasting joy and light.

As the end drew nearer, these anticipations of celestial bliss were communicated to Sam, mainly in the form of nocturnal discourses after he had gone to bed. At times, in long monologues rich with phrases from Holy Writ and embellished with quotations from Wesleyan hymns, she would dwell on the ecstasy that would be hers when she met her Saviour face to face, to praise Him and glorify Him for ten thousand times ten thousand years. At other times, she seemed fascinated by the prospect of eternal felicity awaiting her and Sam and Amelia in the Aiden where human passions and jealousies are not and they neither marry nor are given in marriage.

"I's happier ever' day 'cause we didn't anger de Lawd by breakin de Seventh Commandment," she frequently declared, with monotonous reiteration. "Now we kin meet Amelia in Heaven 'thout nothin' ter be 'shamed of. C'ose she'd er forgive us anyhow, even ef we had sinned. But hit's so much better not ter need no forgivin'."

Those were days that flayed Sam's soul. Daily he was confronted with the treasure he had exchanged Salvation for wasting away to an ashy skeleton with cloudy eyes, sunken cheeks and lips parched and shriveled like dead leaves the Autumn winds pluck from maples; while his nightly repose was disturbed by the cracked voice, no longer sweet, ironically forecasting joys he would never know. Anon, these nocturnal monologues became sources of terror to him. In the darkened room, when he could not see her face, her weak voice seemed to come from a vast distance, as if from beyond the grave. It was as if the croak of some invisible spirit were taunting him with his folly. Some nights this creepy feeling became so vivid that he would get up and light the lamp, to assure himself that Rachel was still alive and talking.

Sam's wretchedness was ameliorated, however, by the knowledge that it was partly voluntary. That he was doomed to perdition he was quite convinced. Still, he could have cut loose and gone to hell a-gal-loping. He had heard of others doing so and enjoying a world of fun on the way. But he preferred to continue his gentle ministrations to his wife, religiously adhering to his determination not to cause her the slightest worry, just as religiously concealing from her the haunting fears and chronic despair which tormented him incessantly. That was a labor of love, and it was not relinquished until, in the exhaustion that followed a hemorrhage, Rachel dozed off in the long, long sleep that lasts forever.

The day set for Rachel's burial began with a raw, murky morning filled with an impenetrable fog. As the hours advanced the fog changed to a fine rain which descended without sound but with such persistence and in such volumes that the landscape was soon saturated. When the little cortege started for the Methodist church the roads were immaculately clean and fresh in appearance and uncomfortably soggy in condition, while the darker surfaces of the landscape, sheathed in myriads of needle points of water, wore the warlike lustre of burnished iron. The weather had not perceptibly changed when the procession left the church for the cemetery. But before the interment was completed the prevailing east wind became violent, suddenly smote the earth with a terrific force that stripped the trees of their glistening mail, and swept a deluge inland from the coast.

Most of the mourners sought the shelter of their vehicles, which was none too ample, as most of the conveyances were buggies and buckboards. Sam declined even this slight protection from the fury of the storm. With a few faithful sympathizers, he stood bareheaded in the downpour until the last spadeful of earth was placed on the mound over that parcel of dearer earth which had been to him all the Heaven he would ever know. Ever devoted to her while she lived, he gave the last full measure of tenderness to her memory. He wanted people to say, "She must have been a good woman, because her husband loved her so and grieved so hard when she died."

He was soaked to the skin when he reached home, and cold to the bone. After changing to dry clothes, he started a roaring fire in the kitchen range and sat close beside it. As he absently added fuel from time to time he was vaguely conscious that he seemed unable to get warm. What he was vividly aware of was the spectral stillness and loneliness of the house—an unearthly stillness it was, which the hiss and crackle of the fire and the occasional scampering of a mouse over the floor made to seem more oppressive. And the loneliness was as persistent as the silence. Not even the fact of his boys being in the room relieved his utter desolation. His feeling of isolation triumphed over their presence just as the implacable stillness of the room prevailed over their low, furtively cheerful conversation.

While he sat huddled over the stove, unable to get warm and shrinking from the spectral silence, there came to him, like a sunbeam suddenly shining through a rift in a thundercloud, one of those cheering thoughts which often come to comfort men in their most despondent moods. It occurred to him that perhaps the taking off of Rachel was Heaven's way of releasing him from his servitude to Satan. When the thought first came it struck him with the force of Gospel truth, and his heart filled and overflowed with thanksgiving. Then came a moment of doubt. What had he done to deserve Heaven's reprieve? He had not even prayed for it. Had such mites of virtue as his contrition after Amelia's death and his daily sacrifices during the long illness of Rachel earned clemency for him, even though, like the publican, he had not presumed to lift his eyes toward Zion? He feared to answer these questions, lest hope mislead rather than discretion guide his judgment. Still, he would not wilfully turn his back on the ray of hope, the act

might be an unintentional spurning of Heaven's proffer of peace. The only escape from this new quandary was to consult a mind abler or, at least, less perplexed than his own. Although it meant divulging his secret to the world, he determined to seek enlightenment of his quondam pastor on the morrow.

But the fire . . . Why did it not heat the room? He stirred the blazing fagots in the stove, threw in fresh wood and wrapped himself in a blanket. But even then he could not get warm.

The next day he was unable to carry out his determination to consult the parson. Pains in the head, chest and limbs, accompanied by a high fever and a racking cough, kept him confined to the house. Late in the afternoon a neighboring housewife came in and administered hot toddy and quinine and advised him to go to bed. "Dat's er graveyard cough," she warned him. "You kotched hit when you got wet in de buryin' groun'. You better be careful with hit."

Sam was careful with his cold. A fortnight passed before he ventured outdoors. The pain had gone and the fever was not perceptible then, but the cough was as bad as ever, and he had lost an alarming amount of strength and weight. He was so weak that the light overcoat which the bright, cold weather of early winter required was a considerable burden. He left home with the intention of making his deferred visit to the parsonage, and had gone about half the distance when he met the homunculus Zeb hobbling through the village.

Sam's first impulse was to shun the conjurer, who, in a way, was the author of all his woe; but a swift second thought suggested that he might glean from him the information he was going to seek at the parsonage. As they drew near each other, the witch man seemed to eye the wasted frame and feeble steps of the whilom stalwart Sam with malevolent satisfaction.

"Did you hear I los' my wife?" Sam asked, when they came within conversing distance.

"I didn't hear 'bout hit, but I knows hit jes' de same," Zeb replied.

"Well den, bein's I los' her befo' de seven years was up, specs de Devil ain't got no mo' claim on my soul," Sam observed, in the most offhand manner he could affect.

"How come you specs dat?" Zeb demanded. "Didn't you get de gal yo' heart was sot on?"

"Sho I did," Sam admitted.

"Did you ast ter keep her seven years when you make de bargain?"

"I didn't think of hit den," Sam replied, truthfully.

"Den, ef you only ast ter *get* de gal an' didn't ast ter *keep* her, hit 'pears ter me like de Devil has kep' his part of de bargain, an' you has got ter keep yo' part," Zeb declared. And without further ado he hobbled on his way.

To Sam, Zeb's opinion seemed an undue stressing of the letter of the law at the expense of its spirit; nevertheless, it was an extremely sad sick man who appeared at the parsonage a few minutes later.

"I ain't seen you in chu'ch fo' er mighty long time," the preacher observed as he admitted his visitor. "Specs you's become er backslider."

"I *has* sorter fell f'om grace," Sam confessed. "Dat's what I's come ter 'sult you 'bout."

"Hit's er step in de right direction," the preacher

commended him. The preacher was a venerable cotton-headed patriarch of the old school—that is to say, he was a morally upright man whose theology was a quaint mixture of local superstition, hangovers from African fetichism and the Bible taken literally. He gave a patient hearing to Sam's story of his dealings with the Devil and the resultant complications. Then, although awestruck by the revelation of greater depravity than he had suspected, he preserved an aloof and severe ecclesiastical poise while he delivered his opinion of the case.

"Hit 'pears ter me dat sellin' yo' soul ter de Devil was 'quivalent ter sinnin' 'gainst de Holy Ghost?" the parson declared. "An' dat's er unfo'givable sin. I don't say fo' certin, but hit 'pears like dat ter me."

Sam's hope, which had been buoyed up by the preacher's patient listening to his story, fell to zero again. "I thought mebbe de Lawd was punishin' me when he took Rachel," he said, "an' at de same time deliverin' me f'om Satan." The probability that

Heaven had annulled his covenant with the Infernal by depriving him of the emolument he had received was his last hope and he clung to it desperately.

"Hit don't 'pear like dat ter me," the preacher rebutted. "Yo' sins is too many. When you lusted after Rachel while you' fust wife was livin' you broke de Seventh Commandment by committin' 'dultery in yo' heart. Den you's guilty of 'plicity in Amelia's murder. Wust of all, you sol' yo' soul ter de Devil. Has you any right ter spec de Lawd ter f'give you fo' all dat?"

"Den dere's no hope fo' me?" Sam cried.

"I don't say dat," the preacher extemporized, in gentler tones. "De mercy of de Lawd is infinite. But I don't see how you kin offer him yo' soul when hit b'longs ter de Devil. Mebbe when de seven years is up you kin be saved, but dat's between you an' yo' God." He went on in this manner nearly an hour longer, doing what he could to console Sam but holdin' out no definite hope.

## SNAKES

By ERIC D. WALROND

Lloyd is a West Indian. I say this because it is vital if I am to get over the idea of this sketch. I remember the hot tawny days when he used to do reportorial chores on the *Jamaica Gleaner*. Chores that led him to Raccoon or down to that blistering spot, West Street, on a bullish scent for a "big tree" owl-man. Then the war came. And Jamaica sent its black sons to France and Mesopotamia. There he also went. Gory tales drifted back to this isle. One I remember clearly. It had to do with a furlough party from the B. W. I. Regiment and some white American troops bivouacked in London. How true it is I do not know. Some English Red Cross lady, I think, started it. On the breast of one of the black soldiers was V. C. . . . and . . . well, but those were emotional days and under such conditions a woman is likely to do almost anything. So before you knew it there was a bunch of cockneys making an idol out of this black boy. Soon there was a snort of disgust, a commotion in the rear and somebody—several of them—let it be known that there was "goin' to be some bustin' done." Of course it really did not come off; it simmered down to an affair of scalps, and after that one was never asked whether Negro colonials were wards of civilization.

"I wonder where I can borrow some money," Lloyd whispered to me. "Gee, I'm up against it."

I always shake my head and smile at the absurd goatee that adorns the tip of his otherwise cleanly shaved chin. Of a rich bronze tint is the color in his face. Smoking one of those grotesque corkscrew pipes, he likes to draw his straw hat, with the Oxford band around it, down so that it looks as if it were grazing the upper edges of his shaggy black eyebrows. Add to that a pair of large, keen, searching, almost searing eyes of the richest sparkling emerald. A stubby, neatly trimmed mustache, very black, decorates thin tightly compressed lips.

In addition to a Lord Mayor of London stride, a

freely gargled throat, tweed jacket and the white flannels, there is a walking stick, picked up on the banks of the Orinoco, that exaggerates to a highly envious point, to me, at any rate, the ancestral heritage of my mulatto overlord.

We were going up on the Riviera of Little Africa, Lloyd and I, one hot summer's night. In the wringing tropical months Harlem is exotic. Out of darkly deserted flats comely black and yellow girls tread the teeming polyglot streets. Up to the roof to bask in the syphilitic glow of moonlight or to send forth shadows, echoes, yawns, golden, mystic, languorous, from the guts and crevices of goat alley.

"I like fat women," he would puff over to me. "I hate scraggly, scrawny wenches."

By us the resistless tide of black folk—consumed by feverish longings—ebbs and flows. Examine their comely upturned faces. Salt tear stains; centuries of toil and drudgery obliterated magically. Tomorrow at sunrise as they bolt like herded cattle for the subway—plenty of time for that.

Now is night. And night is everything in the life of a Black Belt.

Again I am being fed on cockney tongue twistings. The nuances of speech are a great study to him. I am sure if I stick around him long enough I will soon be a past master in the dialectic arts of Essex, Lancaster, Surrey, Soho.

"Gee! I must get some dough——"

Near us is a crowd around a little bow-legged black girl doing the "Charleston"—a weird twisting outward of the heels and toes to the weird strumming of palms and ukeleles. On we pass.

We were about to turn a corner, Lloyd and I, when a man, a large black man, with huge, dragging feet, white, rolling eyes, swung around the corner.

"Oh, *maca fu' te'*," he cried, falling about Lloyd's knees, and hugging them, "Oh, I know you'd come."

I side-stepped. I think I saw Lloyd's brows cor-



rugate. In his eyes came that sharp, piercing, skeptical look that I knew so well.

"Get up, what's the matter with you, crazy?"

"Oh," bawled the man, loud as a bull, "Oh, the snakes! The snakes in me belly!"

Gnawing at the very oxygen, rending his clothes, the man undid his vest, savagely tore away his lavender silk shirt, and showed us his black, whirling belly. The frosty rays of the street lamp made it possible for us to see the very hair stalking out of his navel.

"Oh, mista, charge me anyt'ing you like. Only cure me! Cure me! Charge me anyt'ing you like. Only take the snakes out o' me belly."

"Here," he said, putting his hand into his pocket and taking out a roll of bills, "Here, mista, take it. Two hundred dollars! Tak' de snakes out o' me belly."

Grotesque phantoms danced and leaped out of the night, smiting our consciousness as his face widened at the imaginary (?) pain caused by the wriggling snakes in his belly.

"I go tell you," he said, looking at Lloyd, sweat streaming down his black, black face, "I was in Haiti, *oui*. I was a road maker, me and Napoleon Francois. I live wit' 'im, I eat wit' 'im. I lov' Napoleon Francois. Then I go to the mountains and leav' Napoleon Francois wit' my red-headed woman. I lef' 'im wit' her. In my hut I had under the floor—under the boards, you know—over \$30,000 in bright gold pieces. Three big canisters full, *oui*. I made that gold in San' Domingo. I leav' Napoleon Francois wit' my red-headed woman. In three months time I come back. I come back and I find no money. I look, I ass my woman, I ass Napoleon Francois. They say I crazy. I had no money. I say, 'What, I crazy? I no have no money? After the six year' I spent in

San' Domingo? I have no money? I crazy?' They laugh at me and say I crazy.

"Now I t'ink Napoleon Francois is crook. I no want fight wit' him for he is big man. I leav' my wife and I go to nedder hut. I no slep' mo' wit' my red-headed woman. *I hate him!* I go to some house in the woods. Night time I feel somet'ing crawlin' on me. I look. I look at my foot. *He grow big! Big foot! Sacre gache!* I see three million shining snakes! Snakes in my bed. You know? I sleep on snakes!

"Napoleon Francois—I scream—I run—I try fo' run. I no can run! I no can run! They come in my belly—the snakes—feel—put yo' hand, feel I say, put yo' hand. Feel the snakes in my belly—feel I say—"

And, to my astonishment, Lloyd, taking the corkscrew pipe out of his mouth and frowning with the air of a physician diagnosing a hopeless case put his hand on the man's belly and felt it. He kept it there for a minute, took out his watch, finally shaking his head in despair.

"You can't cure, my friend?" cried the man eagerly. "You can't—"

"How much money have you got?" Lloyd asked, frowningly.

"Oh, I have plenty money. Here, you tak'! Two hundred dollars!"

After making sure that the bills were genuine Lloyd put them in his pocket, scribbled something on a bit of paper, and bade the man go to a West Indian apothecary's on Lenox Avenue.

"That," he puffed over to me as we resumed our walk up the avenue, "is a prescription for ten cents' worth of aloes and scrutcheoneel—it ought to do the bastard some good."

## MUSIC

By W. ASTOR MORGAN

*Mr. Morgan is founder and head of the Arrow Music Publishing Co., 2305 Seventh Avenue, New York City. He has written hundreds of songs, works for the piano, violin and 'cello. He has made a specialty of transcribing and arranging Negro Folk Songs.*

### "Blues Music"

The editors of the MESSENGER, like great men of other ages, have turned from their regular routine and permitted a new angle of discussion to enter their pages. This is appreciated. This subject is highly important to all thinking Americans, for in it, heretofore, has been a false condition brought to bear on the minds of the public by two great (?) classes. One, the masses, who move without thinking; the other, the few, who cuddle the well known prejudice which strives to discredit Black Folk in every worthy achievement.

In a music store where our songs are being sold, the "blues" in large numbers, a Jewish woman asked us, "What is the meaning of 'blues'?" Our answer was and is, It is an expression of sorrow, of gloom, of disappointment, of a heart sick with troubles, of a soul in distress. An expression of a devoted love cast aside—all these expressed in musical form. Nothing more or less. Yes, from a crude people, perhaps,

for the most part, from an illiterate people. Maybe, people equally compared with ancestors of Abraham Lincoln. "Blues," the outward expression of an inward depression, something relative to conditions between sweethearts, etc., hoping for a better life among themselves. "Folk Songs," the outward expression of an inward depression—something relative to conditions between different sets of people with a hope for the best, only with God. Blues in the original makes its appeal to human beings. Folk songs made their appeal to the Eternal. A line in Handy's "Beale Street Blues" runs thus: "I'd rather be there than any place I know." A line in the folk song "Deep River" runs: "Deep River, My Home is Over Jordan." The young girl appeals to her lover, the old woman to her Maker. In the "blues" we find one longing to return to an alley in a town in Tennessee because of circumstances in her material life. In the folk song is a longing to cross the great divide because life was almost unendurable in this Christian country.

We have drawn this parallel because the Negro folk song is now in favor and demand over all the civilized world. But Mr. H. T. Burleigh says, when he first sang the folk songs, he was laughed to scorn. Boston and Washington newspapers and critics published and cited the most deplorable comments, denouncing the song material and his judgment for their use. Chiefly our own people did this because of pride (false) and aspirations to imitate other folks, and to relieve themselves of things others condemned. They overlooked the fact that they (the folk songs) were our only known creation of art. And even now, most people do not understand that "blues" music is a part of that creation. Perchance, some will say, "The disgraceful lyrics of 'blues' songs make them unfit for a decent home." We admit that *some* are unfit to be heard, but do we not discriminate in other matters? What can we say of Shakespeare? Do all of his plays bring out characters we would like to emulate? When he carries (in his story) a man into a bedroom with another man's wife, is the picture beautiful and forceful or helpful to our moral lives? But the world recognizes him as a master. The good and evil are brought together for a purpose, for good always triumphs. His power as writer and thinker is called art, that stamps him master. What would we think of the President of the United States if he sent a man to the trenches for the purpose of gaining that man's wife? That's what David did; and still we cling to the Bible. We discriminate. We accept the good, and refuse the evil, at least we claim to. Paraphrasing, there is so much good in the worst of things and so much bad in the best of things, that it hardly behooves any of us to exclude all of anything.

For all some may think, and without apologies, "blues music" is a distinct contribution to musical art. This is denied by some because it is a known Negro creation. Yet with all that goes against it, it is pushing its way to the top. The largest firms in the world are handling it in sheet music form, player rolls and records. One "blues" song, written by W. C. Handy, has been recorded as many as seven times by one firm. Why?

It is original. A creation. An expression of love, longing, struggles, sacrifices and bereavement. Real "blues" music has quality, dignity and beauty which carry a purpose.

The portion which some detest is just the portion which gives "blues" its being. Crude expressions, yes, but how could they be otherwise unless created by the educated? To be educated must give the best developments, but oftentimes the greatest creations and originalities come from the lowly. Have you heard any of the Gypsy, Norwegian, Spanish or French folk songs? Many of these are beautiful, yet all combined do not attract the notice of a few "blues" songs. We say the "blues" are crudely expressed for they have not been developed, and all things are crude where development has not been applied. What would the steam engine, electricity, the telephone, the phonograph, or the aeroplane mean to us in this day of progress if the genius of educated scientists had not been employed?

"Blues" is recognized, always, by its characteristically weird melody. Its most unique possession is one of longing, and what is more beautiful than a pathetic

longing for something good? No one should be misled by the Negro's constant yearning for things and rights and privileges. Great critics, whom the masses are silly enough to believe and follow, say a continual hoping exemplifies weakness, but we say it shows the greatest strength. Weakness pines away while strength, rightly directed, abides forever. In the composition of "blues" we find a unique difference, that something which cannot be described, that most living quality. Every one wants to be a critic, but few study sufficiently to criticize. Many are willing to press forward the weaker qualities, but who is willing to point out the good with the bad? Too many *fault-finders* think they are *critics*.

"Blues," the secular, and folk songs, the sacred are the only musical creations in the states and worth more than any other music, for from them come our foundations for building. Many popular songs written nowadays are built on one of these old themes. We do not believe the writers mean to cheat or steal, but the influences of these beautiful themes dominate with such tremendous power the writers are overpowered. Only time can prove that the influences of these themes are sufficient to drill themselves into every spot, angle and usage of American life. A peep into a volume on Composition and Harmony suffices to say all our music is bosh. True enough, they tell us what to write and just how it should be done, but those who tell most, never write a song. What was best when they said it may not be so well done now. There was a time when surface cars were sufficient for New York City, but now without the subways and "L's" congestion would prove a tragedy. To those who think we shall always prize the music of Beethoven, Handel, Verdi and the like as highest and best, we say, wake up. Music, like other things, is progressive. If we could be led to drop our creations and join hands with the great human flood to establish more firmly the music of others, we would see those same others exalt our music, claiming it as their own. Art cannot be limited to the rules of man. One generation is too narrow and short-sighted to tell the next generation what should be done. We choose a bit from all studies for the collection of ideas, but after he gets the ideas of the world he whirls them all under one brush and sends forth a picture superior to all. He studies the masters, not to imitate, but to gain intelligence of his predecessors, a matter of knowing history, so that he might improve upon what has been done. Beethoven and Wagner, perhaps greatest composers of symphonic and operatic works, respectively, lived for the most part wretched lives because their works were refused by headstrong theoretical critics, but now hundreds of years after they were literally starved from their highest wishes, they live gloriously in our hearts. They, like musical leaders of this age should do, used themes gathered from the common people. It mattered not the depths from where the themes came, who produced them, nor why they came. Only matter the virtue, beauty and glory to whom and for which they could be used.

More beautiful themes than these have not yet been discovered. The foundation, essence, force, power, beauty, warmth and pathos all depend upon the theme of any composition for life. The theme is that part which lingers. It is the part you hum after the concert is over. In the symphony orchestra, with its in-

struments numbering perhaps a hundred, the theme, as we listen, comes from the violin—the most tender, while weak, of them all, and though the others, each in its turn build magnificent harmonies, sequence upon sequence, until counterpoint seems to dominate, we finally hear the theme rising with determination, paramount to all surrounding consequences.

The theme is to a song what the foundation idea is to a business. It is the God-part, and no theme has been or can be used to greater advantage than the "blues" theme. Of course we know that the uses made of "blues" now is as the use made of Negro soldiers in war-time when they were stationed to guard the Capital City—for the value the user derives, and to cast aside the used without credit to its use, as soon as it can be eliminated.

"Blues" music is yet undeveloped, but time will prove that it is more capable of great works, such as song classics, sonatas, operas and symphonies, than many other crude works. If three or four men, without thought or purpose, improvise pleasingly upon such a theme, what could an educated composer do with it? A creative mind has only to hear a "blues" theme and a building is started. Sequences, harmonies, counterpoints—one after and upon the other come without thought of their existence, and it is a known fact that if men were not cowards you would have heard, even before this writing, works more beautiful than the average mind can conceive. There are three outstanding features in "blues" all worth the notice of the educated composer.

Of the first of these we have already written—the theme. The second in importance is rhythm, and that is characterized chiefly as syncopation. We are criticized for syncopation, yet the quartette, "One Morn, If I Remember Well," the outstanding feature

of Verdi's "Rigoletto," rises to its climax where syncopation dominates. In opposition to syncopation, we present Handel's Largo from "Xerxes," straightforward and serene, but who, among the notable critics, has intelligence (?) to say our "Deep River" is not superior? Syncopation is a quality in rhythm which breaks the monotony. It is a unique quality of the Negro folk songs and shows it is a sister to the "blues." The two are similar in melody, rhythm and harmony. Let it be remembered, even though syncopation was used before our day, our syncopation is applied absolutely different and results in a new atmosphere. The third is harmony. The harmony of "blues," weird and unconquerable, shuts out all music, all critics, all masters, all pedagogues, well-wishers and haters alike. The major mode expresses brightness, happiness, joy and contentment, while the minor mode gives us the contrary. But the harmony of "blues" employs both modes at the same time. This is what makes it mournful, yet while the "blues" singer mourns her lines they are enjoyed because the power of the two modes gives us sorrow and joy simultaneously.

"Blues" is a music yet misunderstood. Everything truly great is first misunderstood. Its origin gives rise to the prejudice against it, as everything, black, does. The works of Beethoven were not responsible for the ignorance of those around, and so also is the "blues" not responsible for the ignorance of those who pass it by. But just as we are masters of our own souls and captains of our own fates, even so is "blues," the indomitable creation of the American Negro, master and captain of its fate. So then, if the leading thought among our educated composers does not soon turn to the use of these gems, they will wind their way into the hearts of others who are waiting to use and claim them as their own.

## POETRY

### Sun and Rain

By NAN E. TAYLOR

The red sun rises on mice and men,  
And the warm sun shines on men and lice—  
The fair sun knows no prejudice;  
The golden sun sinks in the pink-purple west.  
And men, mice, and lice lay down to rest;  
And then the fair dawn again.

The soft dew of the April rain  
Kisses the weed and kisses the flower,  
Bathes the scrub and the lofty bower,  
Bathes the mountain and the hill,  
Hides in the brooklet and the rill  
Flowing tranquilly, heedless still;  
And the earth is born again.

### The House by the Highroad

By DAVID P. BERENBERG

Beginning with nothing I labored;  
Built at the cost of great effort,  
Built with no plan,  
No dream of the house I was building,  
Because it was right I should build—  
(So said the elders!)

While I was building  
Voices within me kept singing:  
"Build you no further!  
You are no builder."  
Out in the hills are the flowers  
Green, gold and purple!  
Lie down among them;  
Breathe of their odor—  
Sleep there!  
What are you building?"

Blood-red the sun hung over the hill-top;  
I went on building.

Built at my house in silence and torment,  
Stone upon stone,  
Nail upon nail,  
And all shapeless!  
(It was good so to build,  
Said the elders,  
So have we builded!)

In me were voices  
That would not be silenced.  
"You are no builder!  
There is the sea," they sang.  
"Secret! Tremendous!  
Throw yourself onto its bosom;  
Dream by its waters,  
Gaze at the fine-crinkling foam,—  
At the night-stars,

Till dawn comes.  
Why are you building?"

Silent the last star died in the morning,—  
I went on building!

Shapeless, abortive, my house  
Grew under my fingers.  
The singing grew faint;  
The smiles on the lips of the elders  
Were warmer!

Softly the voices within me  
Sang while I builded.  
"You are no builder!  
Take up a harp,—  
There is the highroad!  
Follow its bending and turning  
Over the hill-top.  
There at the end of the road

Something lies buried!"  
The voice of the elders within me  
Sneered "Gold!  
Under the rainbow!"

I builded!

There stands my house by the highroad  
Ugly! All shapeless!  
The voices within me are dead!

Would I were God!  
With one great blow of my fist  
I would smash it,—  
Bury the ruins in flowers,  
Sweep in the salt tide!  
Then I would take up my harp  
And walk on the highroad  
Out,—into the morning.

## BOOK REVIEWS

"THE GENIUS," by Theodore Dreiser. Boni and Liveright, Publishers, New York. Price, \$3.00.

From a small town in Illinois, Eugene Witla, a youth, governed solely by his own moods, sets out to learn life in Chicago. In an amazingly short while, he surmounts all the obstacles that usual genius of story-tale fame encounters, and reveals his exceptional talent for painting. He seeks in New York a wider berth than raw Chicago can yield. There, he takes another flying leap to success and fame. His fortune is not long lived. A nervous breakdown destroys his great promise of unbounded fame. Through years of effort, he arises again, to become a master in the sphere of business through his position, first as an art director, then as manager of one of the largest magazine corporations in the country. He is again snatched from his sturdy place by his lack of practical wisdom, to emerge at forty a tempered artist.

The chief interest of the narrative centers around the sex life of the artist. Whenever Fame and Fortune are most alluring, love beckons and Eugene deliberately dallies in sweet play with her, until these less fickle comrades escape. Eugene is the characteristic polygamist with an insatiable sex appetite. Physical beauty is the prime element in his alliances. As he develops, he demands a corresponding fulfillment of his aesthetic tastes in the responses of his consorts and finally to these qualities must be added intellectual charm, to awaken his intense feeling.

At the beginning of his career as an artist, he makes the mistake of marrying a woman, five years his senior, who is as unmoral in her rôle of practical domestic and strict monogamist as he is in his uncontrolled polygamy. Neither her conduct nor his is governed by intelligence. She surrenders her life to the gratification of his desires and the furthering of his interests, an unsocial and absurd task that could only end in first the satiety, then the contempt of her master and her own inability to find in her enslaved personality any satisfying elements. She resorts to all the stupid weapons of unthinking primitiveness—tears, the appeal to sex, the appeal to the paternal instinct—all of which more thoroughly isolate her spirit from her husband's.

The women that emerge from the pages of this volume are many in number, but scarcely individual enough to awaken surprise or enthusiasm, not subtle enough to provoke admiration, without sufficient virtue to demand wonder or respect or sufficiently immoral to provoke either interest or disgust. They stretch in unbroken line from Eugene's youth to his early forties, which, with him, is scarcely past adolescence. First, he is the simple childlike slave of a schoolgirl's beauty. Then, Margaret Duff, one of the vast army of Chicago workers, amuses herself after her monotonous work and introduces the potential genius to his first physical relationships with women. Angela Blue, country school-teacher, practical unvisionary soul, wins him with her beauty and entangles him for life. Simultaneously, with his adoration for Angela's beauty, he makes Ruby Kenny, an artists' model, the victim of his unlimited emotional impulses.

In New York, he finds a new type. Aesthetic and intellectual charm re-enforce physical beauty and make him their pawn. Swift upon each other, follow affairs with women of temperament, ability and independence which New York affords. Torn between pity for Angela and appreciation of a more intellectual type, he finally yields to his sympathies and marries Angela. Their entire abandonment to sex, together with his arduous ascent towards fame, terminate in a nervous breakdown, which separates him by years from the next stage of his career. As he begins to pull his craft back into the main channels of life, beauty in the form of women again fall by chance in his path. His love life reaches its climax in Susanne Dale, just as he is most certain of material success. Dangerous age—nineteen—meets dangerous age—forty—and all the chemic elements of beauty, high passion, and intellectual zest produce a new situation, terrible in its hold. Eugene follows this ephemeral irresistible, fascinating love until he sacrifices wealth, wife, beloved. At last, he finds himself in the life of the child that Angela bears as a last hope of reclaiming Eugene's love.

Theodore Dreiser's account of the life of a genius leaves me discontent with his measure of genius. His too long extended story is not without its fascination, but the fascination is more in watching what the author will do with his puppet, than in an encounter with realism. The author has given flashes of Mid-Western color that last, but his glimpses of New York, Chicago and Paris, for the most part, pall. As his hero falls short of genius, so the author fails in delivering an artistic creation. I am disappointed in Sumner for not finding something more interesting to suppress. I plead with Heywood Brown for "shorter and more immoral novels."

BY MYRA COLSON.

"THE OCCULT SCIENCES," by Arthur Edward Waite. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. 292 Pages. Price \$2.00. Reviewed by George S. Schuyler.

Lenin is credited with saying, in a moment of exasperation, "Out of every one hundred Bolsheviks, there are ten rascals and eighty-nine fools!" After long observation of the so-called human race, I have come to believe that this statement of the little giant of the Kremlin is equally true of all the sons of Adam. How else can we explain the peculiar hold of religion on mankind all through the ages; the flocking of the yokels to the camps of Billy Sunday, Coue, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, Mormonism, Spiritualism, Theosophy, and a horde of other cults, large and small? How else are we to explain the growth of the U.N.I.A., the Elks, the Masons, the Ku Klux Klan? How else are we to account for the success of Black Herman, the scores of lesser fakirs that infest Negro communities, the conjurers, witch doctors, palmists, astrologists, card prognosticators, and coffee-grounds readers? Voltaire said that Hell is the foundation of Christianity, and the author of this book tells us in one place that "The evokers of the devil must before all things belong to a religion which believes in a devil who is the rival of God."

I have discovered in my weary travels up and down the world, that most of the believers in occultism are recruited from one or the other of the religions that confuse the mind of man. I never met an agnostic occultist.

This book is interesting and informative. Very appropriately it is sub-titled, "A Compendium of Transcendental Doctrine and Experiment." It is just that and no more. It is an inquiry into all of the beliefs and superstitions in regard to the universe, the soul, life after death, angels, fairies, imps, magic philters and black art, that have been held by human beings in the past, are held now, and doubtless will be held until man ceases to infest this *terrestrial* sphere. The author has not attempted to win over converts to any particular belief about the after life, the unseen world, magic, or spirit phenomena. He has arrayed his material for the benefit of serious students of the transcendental and magical, not for the gullible rabble. Indeed, the average reader of *The Pittsburgh American*, *The Tattler*, *The Negro World*, and other such enlightening publications, will find difficulty in reading it. In some places he goes out of his way to state that certain practices he has described are useless, nonsensical (all of them are to me!), barren of results, and even dangerous to the mentality (!) of those who dabble in them. It appears from the authorities quoted that the occult sciences have a vast literature. Probably it would take a lifetime or two to peruse the mountain of books written on these subjects. What a tremendous waste of paper!

The author tells us of all the various magical practices; how to carry them out; who are most fitted to do so; and what one must do to work one's self into the proper state to deal with the forces of the other world. White Magic, Black Magic, Necromancy, Alchemy, Divination, Astrology, Kabbalism, Mesmerism, Spiritualism and Theosophy are all handled in a thorough manner. All the evidence for and against these practices is placed before the reader, and intelligently criticized. You can take it or leave it; accept or reject.

Personally, I was left unmoved and unconvinced by it, although I read every page faithfully and with an open mind. Much of it is interesting—much of it is almost as boring as a speech of Marcus Garvey, to an intelligent person. My belief in the truth of P. T. Barnum's famous saying was greatly fortified. Believers in God, Satan, Hell, Heaven, angels, devils, the soul, reincarnation, lodestones, talismans, signs, omens, portents, miracles, and other such superstitions may find great solace and satisfaction in the practices described. Happily, not being included in this group, my views on the universe and the importance of mankind therein, have undergone no change.

## OPEN FORUM

THE MESSENGER, New York, N. Y.

Editor—Sir: Your happy suggestion that THE MESSENGER should be in every public library has reminded me that long since it has been my intention to place THE MESSENGER and Crisis in our local library.

I am secretary of the local Open Forum and have acquainted

many of our white friends with THE MESSENGER, particularly among the workers' group.

Please find inclosed my check for \$1.50 for one year's subscription beginning with the January number.

The Warren Public Library, Warren, Ohio.

Yours truly,

T. A. CALDWELL.

## Decadence of Southern Civilization

First, it must be frankly admitted that there never has been much that could be termed real civilization in the South. Any place that is dominated by ignorance, prejudice and misunderstanding cannot attain a high degree of civilization. To this day the South allows the above diabolical trinity to take leading rank in all of its affairs; hence there is no way of escape from the darkness of superstition into the light of knowledge, because there is no actual desire for something better.

In the discussion of any topic pertaining to the South, one cannot avoid the race question. There are two races that live in proximity to each other—the white (because it wishes to do so) and the black (because it cannot do otherwise). There is no good reason why these races should not dwell peaceably together, but, because of a guilty conscience, the superior white race is ever frightened by the bogey of domination by the inferior black race. This fear—which has always been man's worst foe—keeps the white race so busy devising ways and means to hinder the progress of the colored people that they do not have time to improve themselves physically, mentally or morally.

We know that "righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." A nation that spends the major portion of its time preventing another from scaling the heights causes itself to retrograde, for we must rise together, or fall together. We should never strike a man who is down. It is mean. Then, too, he might get up again.

The South has become a professional humanity oppressor. It has lost all sight of moral law. No longer can it say, "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn," for it is so given to viciousness that beholding another's woe gives cause for excessive rejoicing. One comforting thing about the whole matter is the fact that a man or nation reaps what he or it sows. And, again, who digs a pit for his brother falls into it himself.

Hypocrites cannot mould a character of worth. The South makes open preachments against social equality, yet it practices more of it than any other section of the country. No one drives, coaxes, or shoves the whites on Negro society, still they push themselves into it without fear or favor, not even caring whether they are welcome or not. Some have been known to fight and die for the privilege of mixing with the Negroes. All this because every Southerner has his Negroes whom he loves, and without whom he could not exist. Were all of the colored people to leave the South, nearly all of the whites would follow to escape a life of dejection and misery.

The convict lease system and peonage have ever been a blot on the very name of civilization. The cruelties practiced by those who are entrusted to drive the unfortunates placed in their care cause them to sink to the level of the brute creation, along with the creatures they control; for the way of the oppressor—like the way of the transgressor—is hard, and he cannot escape the effects of his own acts.

The tenant system is a shame and a disgrace to any partly

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civilized country. It is worse than feudalism, and there is less excuse for it. It is simply arrogance personified. No matter how one abuses his tenants, he can retain them, because they have nowhere else to go, since all landlords have agreed to take no tenants from each other. Usually tenants get no money. They trade at the company store, so that all money shall pass from one white man to another. It is considered dangerous to allow the workers to handle money, for money talks, and it might tell of a way to escape. The men are never able to buy a suit of clothes or a decent pair of shoes, and, although the wife works in the field daily with her husband, she is never able to purchase more than two calico dresses a year.

A very sad picture, this, and the half is not told; yet persons wonder why the poor people leave the South. Try wearing their shoes for a time and you will know how they pinch.

"Industry is the golden key that unlocks the gates of fortune." The Southern people may have heard of that, but since they dislike to work so much, and it takes such a little to satisfy them, they never "trouble trouble till trouble troubles them." Rest is their chief desire, so the whites spend one-half of their time trying to keep the notoriously lazy Negro doing their tasks for less than what it takes to keep him alive, and the other half trying to keep the Negro in his place. Knowing that the Negro is so much more apt than white people are, keeps the proud Caucasian wondering what the black man would do if he had a little opportunity to forge ahead. Civilization cannot grow in such muck. However, "God is in the shadow keeping watch above His own."

The weakest link in the whole chain is the lack of education. Our Southerners are not great book-lovers. So long as the people are allowed to grow up in ignorance, just so long will there be misrule in the land of Dixie. Every white man is a law unto himself now, and soon anarchy will be the supreme law of the land, if ignorance and vice continue to sit enthroned, while truth and honesty are on the scaffold.

Nothing has so retarded civilization as lack of respect for the Constitution. No one feels bound to obey any part of it unless he so desires. The hydra-headed monster—prejudice—shows itself in every form. It stalks about in suitable attire to do deeds that are dark and evil.

Since the Constitution is null and void, where is our "Magna Charta" to come from? What man or men dare be so bold as to plead for, or get by force, if need be, the rights for which our fathers bled and died? Unless our prosperous country wishes to be remembered with many others recorded in history which are renowned only for their lost glory, it must right-about-face, and call upon God while He may be found, and there may be made a way of escape. Never forget that history repeats itself.

MRS. MARY B. OWEN.

Springfield, Ill., November 18, 1923.

Editors, MESSENGER:

SIRS: You deserve special commendation on your splendid November Negro Business Achievement Edition. It is a marked degree of progress in journalism and will have a very good effect.

E. L. ROGERS.

Lander, Wyoming, November 18, 1923.

MESSENGER PUBLISHING Co.,

GENTLEMEN:

Inclosed find M.O. for one dollar and a half for one year's subscription to THE MESSENGER. Your November copy received to-day. It is truly inspirational.

I am very truly yours,

LEO D. JENNINGS.

THE MESSENGER PUB. Co.,  
2305 Seventh Avenue,  
New York City, N. Y.

Bloemfontein,  
Orange Free State,  
September 5th, 1923.

DEAR SIR:

Greeting! According to your letter directed to the head office, I. C. U., which appeared in the *Workers' Herald*, official organ of the I. C. U., please accept my sincerest thanks. Sir, as a native of Africa, I can assure you that the I. C. U. is the first labor organization in South Africa which has accom-

plished wonderful and great things, as far as the black worker is concerned. Please, sir, permit me to state that your desire contained in the *Herald* touched me, as I realize the fact that once the black races of the world form one big union we can easily remove the existing disabilities amongst the great race of bush. Again, sir, give me an explanation whether it would be feasible to you to dispatch to me THE MESSENGER as your agent in South Africa. I think when you can kindly do this it would approach the natives of South Africa to a realization of—we, the black races of the world, let's form a relationship—it is only heritage to our coming generation. Sir, as also a member of the I. C. U., I believe that God will strengthen our organization and lastly free the workers of our race.

In conclusion I beg to express my appreciation to the attempt which has already been made by your valuable organ for the benefit of the Africans in America. Hold the torch burning so that the people who follow must not get lost. I beg to remain and, expecting your reply, I am,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS MOHIKI.

THE MESSENGER STAFF, November 14th, 1923.  
2311 Seventh Avenue, N. Y.

DEAR COMRADES:

Steadily and gracefully THE MESSENGER climbs the ladder of journalistic accomplishments, every issue exploring newer and more refreshing heights and filling a long-felt want in Negro literary life.

As each month begins its weary march to its end, I look forward with boyish eagerness to the coming of THE MESSENGER into my home. Each issue of this truly brilliantly edited magazine, with its vivid and arresting style, its pleasingly scientific and informative interpretation of the various phases of the problem of life, seems to outshine its predecessor, until now one is tempted to inquire: "Is it possible to get out a better issue?" And the answer is given always in the affirmative with the succeeding issue.

Your latest is another of these milestones in the march of Negro journalism, with which intelligent Negroes everywhere are beginning permanently to associate THE MESSENGER and its staff.

This "Business Number" should be read by every Negro who harbors the slightest degree of race pride; it should be kept as a living testimonial, a reference book—to the material and cultural progress of a race just sixty years out of bondage, as well as a mark of highest appreciation for the fine, genuine literary achievement of a group of young Negro journalists who undoubtedly rank with the best in any other racial group, not to mention those in our own.

May the readers of this "Herald of a New Day" increase with the New Year, and may your power for good be so strengthened that before the next year shall have rolled by THE MESSENGER will find a welcome place in the home of every Negro in the land.

I grasp this opportunity to wish you, and the growing army of MESSENGER readers, a merry Christmas and a most successful 1924 in the long, long fight for better times. I am,

Yours fraternally,

FRANK R. CROSSWAITH.

CHANDLER OWEN,

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PHIL A. JONES.

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