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WHAT I THINK OF THE STANDARD LIFE EPISODE

MERGING OUT OF EXISTENCE

By ROBERT H. RUTHERFORD
President, The National Benefit Life Insurance Co.



MR. RUTHERFORD AT HIS DESK

"Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes"—tall Troy's walls and the breaches in them are shrouded in the misty borderland between history and myth but the warning to loo'k out for the wily Greek bearing gifts has not yet lost wisdom or savor.

In the loss to the Race of the Standard Life Insurance Company, through the kindly offices of a group of Southern white gentlemen whose generosity seems not to have been without motive and compensation, we have a modern instance very much in point and one of poignant interest to every Negro.

When Mr. Will G. Harris, one of the group in question and acting head of the Southern Life Insurance Company of Nashville, Tenn., walked into the annual meeting of the stockholders of the Standard Life one day last January holding 1,251 shares (a majority) of the stock of that company and walked out again with undisputed control of the company's policies and operations the great cause of Negro commercial autonomy was dealt a heavy blow.

This situation which brought this about, however, arose from causes by no means peculiar to Negro business man-

agement and in no sense inherent in Negro business psychology. Indeed, the factors underlying it have manifested themselves in countless cases of the sort in every country of the world and every shade of humanity. Solomon observed, in connection with a rather comprehensive survey of the good and the bad in mankind, that "pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall." The management of the Standard Life Insurance Company, if reports speak the truth, indulged in a form of pride which usually draws calamity in its wake. In their case, it eventuated in a familiar concomitant of undue optimism, long ago aptly characterized as "putting too many irons in the fire." Some of these irons were unwieldily, it would appear, others hard to manage, the company became "over-extended," as have many other worthy enterprises not of Negro foundation or management and, as inevitably happens in like case, money had to be found. Who found it? Ah, here we approach the nubbin of the matter. Here might we point our first moral, did we feel the role of moralizer a fitting one. Here must we at any rate set up a sign-post of vital significance on the highway of racial business progress.

Confronted with a crisis, far-reaching in potentialities for harm, with possible loss of control of the majority interest in the stock looming up as a not impossible or even improbable eventuality (for you cannot hypothecate securities without accepting the chance of eventual inability to redeem them) what did the management of Standard Life do? Did they consider the importance of the measures they were about to take with regard to the racial interest in the matter? Did they deal with the matter from the standpoint of racial integrity, with full consideration of the undoubted fact that their company was an asset of the Race, built up with the hard-earned savings of thousands of Negro men and women? Apparently they did not. And this failure to consider the paramount claims of racial solidarity cannot be over-emphasized if we are to profit by this lesson.

Racial solidarity is essential if we, as a Race, are to win commercial independence. The success of Standard Life was itself a case in point. It had, within the comparatively brief period of twelve years, attained a very strong position in its field. It had \$25,000,000 of insurance in force. Computing the value of this on the usual basis, and adding other assets, the company had a total worth of approximately \$3,500,000, if the figures furnished unofficially by the press are to be accepted. No one will deny that the achievement of this very considerable success was due in the main to the loyalty, the sacrifices and the sense of racial integrity of the company's thousands of Negro policy holders, stockholders and representatives. In the largest sense, the Standard Life owed its growth and importance to racial consciousness, to the appeal of mutuality of interest and aspiration. In a very special sense, the company was an asset of the Race, therefore, and not of any individual group within that Race. Consequently, the solution of its difficulties, the maintenance of its integrity as a racial asset, was properly a matter to be dealt with within the Race. The sum required was comparatively small, if again we are to accept the published reports. A group could quite conceivably have been easily formed within the Race to underwrite a loan of this size. Had this course been adopted at the time the first need for money arose, it is at least presumptively certain that the Standard Life would have remained under Negro control. But, apparently, this procedure was not considered. Instead, application was made to white financial interests, and the first wedge of white control of another important Negro insurance company was driven. For it transpires that the loan, ostensibly made by a trust company in the ordinary way of business, was actually made by the gentleman who walked out of the annual meeting of the Standard Life stockholders with the company tucked in the inside jacket pocket of his no doubt elegantly tailored suit. Or, to mention his name again, Mr. Will G. Harris, acting head of the Southern Insurance Company of Nashville, Tenn., a white company which was competing with Negro companies for Negro business. The name of this company will also be remembered in connection with the purchase of the Mississippi Life Insurance Company, a smaller Negro company, control of which was first secured by the Standard Life, approximately a year prior to the events under discussion, and later passed on to the Southern Insurance Company, while other large Negro controlled and operated insurance companies negotiated in vain.

All this "gives furiously to thought."

It is not of vital moment, other than to the pocketbooks of the individual stockholders of Standard Life, that these white gentlemen have succeeded in acquiring upwards of \$3,500,000 in total assets by the expenditure of a small fraction of that sum, if press accounts are to be believed. It is not of world-shaking importance that these gentlemen have a good stroke of business for themselves, whatever their methods.

But it is of the utmost importance that this episode be not permitted to undermine our confidence in ourselves in our drive to attain commercial independence as a Race. And that earnest efforts will be made to so use it there is no possible doubt. "No possible, probable shadow of

doubt, no possible doubt at all," in the words of Mr. W. S. Gilbert whose acrid humor may be introduced at this juncture without other effect than to make the lack of doubt on this point even more pungently definite. Gentlemen of ingratiating manners and insinuating tact will shortly be found in the quiet corners of our Southern territory, and elsewhere for that matter, insisting with apparently faultless logic that nothing could be better than this combination of interests for the common good of both races. In fact, some pronouncement of this sort has already been given space in the newspapers. Its source it is perhaps needless to mention. So far as the beneficent effect of this combination of interests goes, the theme is an old one. It was used with great effect by the lion with the lamb, the results being signally to the benefit of the lion and no less signally to the disadvantage of the lamb. Leading in sooth to the total extinction of the lamb. It is vitally important that we recognize the falsity of this specious argument and that we bring this truth home to every member of the Race, if we can. There is no hope for the Negro in such a combination. No more hope than for the lamb in the other instance.

As a Race, we are big enough now, we are strong enough, to let the Standard Life Insurance defection pass into Limbo with last year's snows, with sympathy for those of our people whose individual fortunes are affected, but without any sense of overwhelming calamity. The episode is over and we can forget it. But we cannot forget, we must not forget, the lesson it holds for us. We must keep our course all the straighter. The polestar of that course is Race-solidarity. The words are interchangeable with self-preservation so far as we Negroes are concerned. There is nothing debatable about the question. The evidences are all about us.

Within less than a generation, our progress has been marked, has been indeed without precedent in the history of the human race, according to such qualified commentators as Lord Bryce. One of the significant marks of it is the widening of the Negro grasp on the professions. Within our own ranks, we have found the means of life. Thirty years ago, when a Negro was sick he called a white doctor. Negro doctors were few and those few had a stiff time competing with white doctors in Negro practice. But does the Negro call a white doctor today? He does not. He prefers his own, and his own are able to treat him with the skill and knowledge formerly considered the sole prerogatives of their white competitors. And the analogy holds in every department of our highly complex modern civilization. Negroes are served by Negroes in every relation of life. We have our own teachers, lecturers, scientists, real estate experts, lawyers, judges, authors, actors, architects, newspapers, banks, dentists, surgeons and nurses. We may even be arrested by our own policemen here in Washington, if we park our car too long on F Street! Negro composers, playwrights and poets have delighted and are delighting not only their own Race but all the world beside.

Without Race consciousness, Race solidarity, this could not have been nor could it be maintained. And the argument holds with even deeper and more instant significance in the world of commerce. If we are to broaden and deepen our business life, we must train an increasing number of our youth to the responsibilities and conduct of business. Where can we do so save in the counting rooms and inner offices of our own institutions? Our young people cannot enter similar establishments run by our white neighbors, except in menial positions, chronically and hopelessly underpaid. Obviously, our future and the future of our children can be made secure for progress only by building up a commercial world within the microcosm of the Race which will be self-supporting, self-extending and self-sufficient insofar as such self-determination is possible in this inter-dependent world. To do this, we need all that we have of material and spiritual resource. We cannot afford that any of it be diverted in experimenting as to the feasibility of the lion and the lamb

(Continued on page 142)

"THESE 'COLORED' UNITED STATES"

No. 18. ALABAMA—Like Miriam

By NATHAN BEN YOUNG

Early Alabama History is rich in its problem of races. Like many other States it had the Indian to contend with. But the aborigines in Alabama were a stubborn lot. Tradition has it that when the wayworn Red Skin came to the territory and beheld its fertile lands and splendid streams, he stuck his spear in the earth, saying "Alabama" meaning "here we rest." Thus the motto of the State. In this land where Nature was so bountiful the Indian did not give up the fertile fields and brimming rivers without tenacity and bloodshed. And so in 1855 lectured a Professor to the Historical Society at the University of Alabama.

"I may however remark," he began the close of his oration, "that the Red Men of Alabama, if properly reviewed, would be found to present more interesting facts and features, upon a more extended scale, than any other American Tribes. The peculiarities which had ever invested the character of the Indian with so much romantic interest, making him a chosen child of fable and of song, were here exhibited in bolder relief than elsewhere. In numbers; in their wide and terrific wars; in intercourse and traffic with the whites; in the mystery of their origin and migration; in the arts, rude though they were, which gradually refine and socialize man; in their political and religious forms, arrangements, and ceremonies; in manifestations of intellectual power, sagacity and eloquence; and all those strange moral phenomena, which mark 'the stoic of the woods, the man without a fear'—the native inhabitants of our soil surpassed all other primitive nations north of Mexico."

And then the erudite Professor injected a pregnant sentence which must have sparkled from his lips, for today it burns. Said he:

"Alabama emerged, like Miriam, from the Red Sea of her struggles, and now a new era of growth and prosperity began."

There is room for speculation as to the import of this remark of the Professor. Surely he knew what he was talking about, although the biblical allusion may have passed over the heads of his audience.

Did they or did they not, recall the story of Miriam, sister of Moses, who "spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married"—a Cushite? "And the Lord heard" and "came down in the pillar of the cloud" to rebuke Miriam for her murmuring against her brother for marrying a woman of color. In penalty, "behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow" (one instance where white is not used in a comparison of angelic purity). Smitten with this plague as the result of her prejudice Miriam was quarantined for seven days while Moses besought the Lord to heal her. So when Miriam showed a change of heart she was cleansed of the leprosy.

By 1855 it was from the Indian harassment that "Alabama had emerged." In 1955 and some years thereto will Alabama be emerging like Miriam from the Red Sea of a prejudice more subtle than her early Indian hatred. In a manner it is a riddle of the Sphinx put to Alabama. Any attempt to sketch the State with anything better than a superficial scratching of the surface perforce pictures the "Red Sea of her struggles"—past, present, future.

In fact, in 1836 the Red Men had been shunted westward to reservations. They went in Indian resignation. But life ever substitutes a new problem. Black men, black women were being herded across the Chattahoochee from the east as the Creek and Choctaw were being driven westward across the Tombigbee and the Mississippi. Here was a different racial trait coming—Negro adaptiveness. If the Indians were drones, this black folk coming in

under the yoke were worker bees, right, and being such could not be killed out or driven off.

Permit the Professor to finish the lecture to the Historical Society.

"Go on, then, Gentlemen, energetically in your noble undertaking, consoled by the assurance that you are collecting the materials that shall illustrate and embellish the annals of your state, in the far-distant, when they shall receive the plastic touch and vivifying truth of some future Xenophon or Polybius, some Tacitus or Livy, who, like the Hebrew prophet, shall bid the dry bones—live!"

Plastic touch! Vivifying truth! Who can do such of Alabama—the South? Who dares the plastic touch, to vivify the truth! Not he or she who remains there!

Before the Indian moves from the scene, a bit of Alabama romance must be recited. It has a contrast value which will be needed later on.

In the early days of Mobile many Choctaws were close around. Into the town often came a young Choctaw girl who for her beauty was known as the "Fawn of Pascagoula." In the winter she peddled trinkets and light-wood and in her rounds had as a customer a young white soldier-lawyer, widely known for his handsome sway over feminine hearts. On each trip to his office with her wares the "Fawn of Pascagoula" had coyly smiled at this proud paleface until one day he had placed his fine physique between the Fawn and the door. (O relentless Mother Nature, why hast thou made sex impulse greater than race instinct?) "A kiss!" he demanded. When shall the truth be known? Was this Choctaw girl right? Or were her darker sisters to follow right?

"Stand off, Mister Howard," she exclaimed in better English than he had heard from her lips. "Me good friend to kind gentleman—but no love! She love young warrior who have heart and skin same color. The Fawn must marry her own people."

And so the passing of the first race problem in Alabama. By 1850 the Indians were across the Mississippi except a few stragglers.

II

The Civil War loomed. Alabama sizzled in hatred against the "highly incendiary" Northern Abolitionist. A Tuscaloosa grand jury returned a true bill against Robert G. Williams, editor of *The Emancipator* of New York "for circulating within our State, pamphlets and papers of a seditious and incendiary character, and tending by gross misrepresentation, and illicit appeal to the passions, to excite to insurrection and murder our slave population."

Forthwith, Governor Gayle of Alabama demanded of Governor Marcey of New York the arrest of Williams until "I can dispatch an agent to conduct him to Alabama."

In his message to the Alabama Legislature that same year the Governor lambasted "Arthur Tappan and the infuriate demoniacs associated with him"—"that unless the Northern fanatics are prevented by timely measures from pursuing their mad career"—"he who believes fanaticism can be put down by public opinion, has a very imperfect knowledge of human nature, and must be deaf to the lessons and admonitions of history—" and such bile he exhorted in a fashion that has clung to the South to these seventy odd years since. Despite the progress the South has made this type of groggy berating is still in vogue, save a few voices sounding in the last decade.

Of course, the editor of *The Emancipator* was not turned over to the Alabama agent. Is there any doubt as to what Alabama would have done with him?

The foregoing excerpts of ante-bellum Alabama would not be worth their space were it not that today the

average, the masses, the holders of political power in the State spew this same brand of snuff.

The Civil War not only loomed, it arrived. The boom of a cannon on Goat Hill in Montgomery announced the conflict to Alabama. And the Civil War ended, leaving Alabama to the whims and passions of reconstruction. Sudden freemen, sullen rebels, mercenary Northerners, hasty adjusters, "forty acres and a mule," gilded ignorance and smouldering prejudice—such was the reconstruction mess of Alabama.

Today, look upon the outworn Capitol in Montgomery and recollect black Carraway of Mobile in there in 1867 demanding upon the Legislature "life imprisonment for any white man marrying or living with a black woman." Was there ever anything more Nordic, more of regard for white supremacy proposed in Alabama than that?

Reconstruction in Alabama was a monster three-ring circus. Some day, some future Xenophon besides Tom Dixon may "bid the dry bones—live!"

From that time until Washington crossed the Chattahoochee in 1895 to recite his soothing syrup simile "separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand" Alabama lay in a coma. This Atlanta speech was the inaugural that moved the Capitol of Alabama's hopes from Montgomery to Tuskegee.

Before judging Tuskegee one should first see it. The place has an impressive personality. Tuskegee has done and is doing a distinctive task, theories to the left, theories to the right, theories to the center volleying and thundering nevertheless.

Its founder, human himself and a keen student of human nature in others, made constructive headway against a current of criticism. His methods of procedure may have drawn question marks but not his accomplishment. No man has yet been right in everything. In his autobiography Washington refers to the Ku Klux of Reconstruction, concluding: "There are few places in the South now where public sentiment would permit such organizations to exist." A clean miss. Did his eternal eyes see crouched armed and ready those teachers and students on the night the hooded Klansmen paraded the highroad that skirts Tuskegee Institute? "Booker T. Washington walked that road last night," someone said the next morning. He may have, for the loosening of a pebble might have made itself heard around the world.

Today, a two million dollar Government hospital and a five million dollar endowed Tuskegee Institute are betrothed, some day to be wedded in the great University of the Southland. Subtract Muscle Shoals and the Coal and Iron Corporations and Tuskegee from Alabama and what is left is equivalent to the State of Mississippi.

III

If you recall the map of the Southern States Alabama has the shape of a coffin; however, a more favorable manner of depicting its topographic outline is to think of it as a sandwich, with Georgia and Mississippi great hunks of bread and Alabama the meat. And Alabama is the meat so far as nature's endowments are considered. Given the rightful strip of West Florida due her with a coast line from Mobile to the Chattahoochee River and you have as fine a State as Missouri for natural resources, as California for generous climate, as Pennsylvania for minerals, with a water power greater than many Niagara Falls. Who would not like to live and die in Alabama if there were no blight, no leprosy of prejudice rampant?

Man invents machines to save hand toil, and the machines turn and enslave the man. At the beginning of the nineteenth century came the fly shuttle and carding machine in the making of cloth, then the steam engine and power loom. Over in Georgia Eli Whitney schemed up the cotton gin and King Cotton ascended the throne. Only the boll weevil has challenged his throneship.

Today, in Alabama black laborers share the cotton fields with the mines and rolling mills and in various ways are slaves to the system, for in Alabama black laborers can and do make money, but it is a money with the purchasing

value depreciated when solid American civic rights and privileges are desired.

Yet, this is a general Southern condition, not alone true of Alabama, but as well of her sister States in misery. The average American, it may be ventured, has the general picture of the South's criminal negligence towards half her population. Alabama is but a part of the picture, hardly any better or worse than Georgia, Florida, Louisiana or Mississippi in the main. Let this sketch be more of a sightseeing trip, which for the lack of space can only be a peep here and there. If only a whiff of that nature-kindled flame that sears beneath the crust or a tang of the bitter-sweet of a viand that is human flesh, if you can register these you will have partaken of Alabama.

IV

Alabama first breaks faith with her shibboleth of "white supremacy" in her towns. Troy, Eufaula, Tuscaloosa, Selma, Gadsden, and Demopolis. There one finds beautiful colored womanhood in its bud and flower. But one soon finds out also that a number of these golden-browns and bronze-creams are *demi-monde*, in many cases not to be seen on the street with men of their own color; one soon learns of families of color that are connected underground to some well-known white families, so that one soon has the anonymous feeling that the race problem "ain't what it's claimed to be."

Be careful here. In these towns not all is miscegenation; all is not a paradox; nor is it a matter of percentage. It is simply a condition you find, just as you find cotton growing in Mississippi and sugar cane in Louisiana.

The larger towns (for there is but one city in Alabama) are Mobile and Montgomery. Both are old. Mobile going back to the early French and Spanish settlements. Montgomery, first called New Philadelphia and founded by a Yankee, holds in prided memory its label "Cradle of the Confederacy"

Negro Mobile, like many other Southern towns, has a handful of grab-bag local leaders. The rank and file have no solidarity, no rigidity that makes itself felt. Mobile has a tinge of caste due to the foreign influence. In short, the Mobile Negro is not essentially the Alabama Negro. New Orleans, Louisiana, Mobile, Alabama, and Pensacola, Florida, so to put it, are three black-eyed, raven-haired sisters doing a fandango to a jazzed La Paloma.

On the other hand Negro Montgomery is a representative slice of Negro Alabama. Here there has always been some sort of captaincy, either a fearless preacher, a keen business man or a thoughtful educator. The Montgomerian has somewhere about him a spark of group pride. His short-coming has been a type of social inebriety. The ailment reaches way back, when Montgomery the cotton center of the rich Black Belt, harbored the aristocrats and wealthy merchants whose slaves were not field hands and plantation equipage, but butlers, footmen, maids. So when ante-bellum Montgomery had its far-famed balls and soirees these servants echoed in follow-up affairs of their own. Southern hospitality in Montgomery has always had a crust of society on it; and today, colored Montgomery spends much of its potential force in social outlet, never fully developing that pride and vision it possesses.

V

The magic city Birmingham is a hybrid of Northern money and Southern "cussedness." Here are eighty thousand colored people with an "Emancipation Day Celebration" leadership, if any at all. Here are gathered citizens of color from every section of Alabama, many of whom are merely making their first stop between Chicago and Detroit and Cleveland. Here are twenty thousand children of color, brown, black, cream, pale, brown, brown, brown, hungry for schools that accommodate and inspire and truthfully and thoroughly teach. Here is the meanest Jim Crow street car system in the world. Here is a

(Continued on page 140)

EDITORIALS

The Next Black Step

The recent failure of the Standard Life Insurance Company of Atlanta has suggested to us the necessity of discussing the Negro's next step in modern business. Quite naturally and properly Negroes have been organizing and building businesses run exclusively by themselves, owned by themselves and catering primarily, if not exclusively, to colored people. Business leagues have been formed nearly everywhere with the slogan, as a rule, "Patronize your own."

Yet progress implies change, and just as every other thing is going through a process of revolution, so must it be with Negro business.

In the school system we recognize that one as best which is the mixed-teacher, mixed-pupil school. In industry we colored people clamor for the right of our men and women to work as employees in every kind of factory, mill, mine or business; which means that we must recognize that the ideal form of business from the racial point of view is the mixed-employer, mixed-employee business.

More than that, we have got to give up the cry of "Patronize your own." If any white business man were to broadcast such a slogan, there is hardly a thinking Negro who would not go up in arms. Yet we who are least able to maintain our position constantly advocate a foolhardy slogan. Large numbers of Negro businesses are already maintained by white patrons. This is true of nearly all the Negro commission merchants, like the James & Son, of Charleston, W. Va., Charles Anderson, of Jacksonville, Fla., C. W. Jordan, of Suffolk, Va., King, the butcher, of Norfolk, Va., Jonathan, of Richmond, etc. Many of the most successful Negroes have earned their wealth through barber shops run exclusively for white patrons. Witness the cases of A. F. Herndon, of Atlanta (founder and president of the Atlanta Life Insurance Co.), John Merrick, of Durham, N. C. (founder of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company), Miles Debris, and Peyton, both successful barbers of Richmond, Va. Then too, how about colored shows? How did Shuffle Along, Running Wild, Chocolate Dandies, Dixie to Broadway, Alabam Fantasies, Liza, manage to stay on Broadway from ten weeks to fourteen months? Not off Negro patronage, because in no one of the large cities—New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Indianapolis—in no one of these do Negroes maintain a full house for a show two weeks. The only reason these shows live, pay hundreds of actors and musicians, is because of their white patrons. The Negro musician is also dependent upon white patrons to employ him frequently and to pay him high. And is this not almost true of the mechanics?

To what end have we asked these questions and made the foregoing observations? This: we feel that just as in every Negro community the white people, controlling from eighty to ninety-five per cent of the Negro businesses, cater to Negro trade by the use of colored employees to act as decoys—so the Negroes should begin to cater to white business by similar methods. For instance, white agents will work for a Negro company just about as readily as the Negroes will work for a white company, and the Negro insurance company could sell policies to white people just

the same way white companies today sell most of the colored people policies. Sometimes the white companies use their white agents; yet, if necessary, the Metropolitan and all of them employ colored agents. The Negroes are a little more happily situated than the whites, because unless they want to do so, they don't have to go outside of the race: they may use *white* Negroes for their white patrons and *colored* Negroes for their colored. The importance of this injunction should be manifest from the position of white business men. If ninety per cent of the population (the whites) would cater for ten per cent (the Negroes) why should not ten per cent cater for the ninety? A big white business man in Chicago, some months ago, remarked to us, "Do you know why Negroes fail in business so often? It is because they don't have the opportunity to work at the business before going into it." Negroes have to get their experience experimenting on themselves and, not infrequently, by the time they have gotten their experience, the business is gone. So just as we insist on having Negroes sit with white people in legislatures, as assemblymen, senators, congressmen, magistrates, aldermen, city councilman, members of the board of education, so they should sit around the business of commerce, as well as the business of government. Coming years will undoubtedly see Negroes and white men full-fledged partners in business.

We do not mean to pass over the so-called merger of the Standard Life with the Southern Life Insurance Company without considerable reservations. This is the case of a lamb and a lion lying down together, but the lamb is in the lion's belly. A prudent man will select his partners. There are some with whom he will not combine. A business must assume the same attitude. A real merger would be the case where the Southern Life and the Standard Life gave employment upon a basis of equality. To illustrate: if the Standard has one-third as many policyholders as the Southern Life, about one-third of the clerks should be colored men and women, who would work in the same offices and receive opportunities for advancement upon a basis of merit; but everyone with a grain of brains knows that nothing of this sort will happen. He knows that the only places of employment open to Negroes in the Southern Life office are porters, janitors, scrub women and menial jobs. Instead of a merger, the relations of the Southern Life and the Standard Life are those of the conqueror and the conquered, with the result, a conquest. Before Negroes should pay their hard-earned dollars to maintain such a morganatic relation, they should call for the cash surrender value on their policies and take out new policies in such thoroughgoing and solvent companies as the National Benefit Life Insurance Company, of Washington, D. C., which has headquarters in twenty-six states and eighty-six cities, employing one hundred and twenty-five young colored men and women in the home office alone, and over two thousand agents and supervisors throughout the country. This is the only intelligent way in which to view the next black step in business.

The Negro Trust

Within recent years large scale businesses among white people have been steadily combined to form still

(Continued on page 141)

DON'T

By WILLIAM MOORE

A story of the chance meeting of two men who came together in the startling darkness of one long night and formed a friendship of doubtful constancy and wavering faith that finally ended, amid the orgies of an underworld festival, in the death of the one who was too weak to withstand the temptations of the flesh.

"Don't do that!"

The voice came like a sound out of space. To the dark brown faced fellow, resting on his knees rifling the pockets of the prostrate figure of a shabbily dressed man stretched to full length on the sidewalk, it was like the sound of near thunder.

He raised himself on one foot half stunned by a jarring fear, half moved by an all impelling passion and made ready to spring on the not too clear outlines of the one who had commanded him to "Don't." And then he as suddenly sank back to his knee when he recognized that the order had found being in the voice of Sandy Smith, his pal in many a dirty job.

"Why?" he sullenly retorted. "He's my meat. He's drunk. I didn't spill 'im."

"I know," came Sandy's reply, "but he's a poor stiff who can't stand the push. We'll find some game more worth the trouble before the night's over. Come on!"

Jim Jackson arose somewhat slowly from beside the heavy breathing drun', brushed briskly his knees with either hand, looked uneasily about the surroundings and then blurted "Where?"

Two rough hewn figures harshly brushing aside the soft, caressing shadows of the night walked briskly eastward and were soon lost in the darkness.

A half hour later two slouching figures could be seen skulking in the shadows of the Water Street viaduct about where the pasty murk of the South Branch of the river gurgles in mystic dissonances its song of a thousand mystery nights.

Jim had followed Sandy this far without getting so much as a grunt in answer to his sullen "Where?" They had walked on through the night, these two waifs of a thousand shifts of the winds of fortune, aimlessly perhaps, yet each with the dim outlines of a curiously conceived resolve in his mind to rid himself of the other before the night was gone.

It was the workings of a strange fate that had brought them together—this black and this white. They were each "comin' North." They had met in the night. The only signs of light about were the quiet glimmerings of the far-off stars and the swift fading red of the danger signals that clung to the rear end of the disappearing train on which they had been denied a further free passage by a hostile train crew.

"Damn 'em, I only wanted ter git inter Louisville," ejaculated the white to himself, totally ignoring the presence of his companion in misfortune.

"Dere ain't nothin' ter do now but walk it, I reckon," half laughingly rejoined the black.

"You reckon dere ain't, eh? Well you let er train hit through heah and I'll show yer how much I'll walk ter Louisville. Where you goin'?"

"Up Norf," answered the black, drawing closer to the white. "Whar yo' headed for?"

"Same place, I reckon, as you be."

By this time they each had concluded an inspection of the other, mixed, perchance, with something of that distrust which ever keeps at an instinctive arm's length diverse elements of the race, yet savoring of those measures of a common sympathy that draws humans together whenever they stand face to face with loneliness and a common danger.

"Mah name's Jim Jackson, w'at mought be yourn?" ventured the darker hued of the two.

For a moment the white man quizzically eyed the in-

quisitive Jim and then grimly replied, "Sandy Smith is w'at they call me down my way."

"Well, Brother Smith, I'm kinder hungry. W'at yo' say if we mek er fiah an' eat er bite?"

"EAT? W'AT?" almost shouted the startled Brother Smith. "Where you goin' ter git somethin' ter eat around this God forsaken place?"

"Got er match?" sententiously asked the redoubtable Jim.

"I reckon so," replied Sandy, "I did have some." In a brief moment or so he brought out a small, half filled box of matches from somewhere about him and handed it over to Jim.

"But where's the eats?" he curiously inquired, "where's the eats?"

Jim, however, was now giving Sandy small heed but was busy gathering up small pieces of dried wood and heaping them into a pile of considerable size. This done he struck a match on the sole of his left shoe and proceeded to fan the pile into a blaze of reasonable proportions.

This done he turned to a bundle, hitherto unnoticed by Sandy, and began to unwind a stout string finally laying out before the astonished sight of his companion a veritable feast of fried chicken, bread and butter and six or seven boiled eggs.

They ate in silence but with a very evident relish the meal Jim's foresight had prompted him to prepare before he had left Birmingham the night before.

All the details of this chance meeting were running through the minds of the two men as they stood within the shadows of the viaduct and watched the turgid flow of the river below.

They had come over many miles together. They had formed a close union in which thievery, heavy drinking and the rampages of coarse revelry had combined to cement the bond of a rather more than odd companionship of spiritual contentions, for they were as unlike as the tempers of lead and steel.

They distrusted one the other, and yet they each had nothing else to lean upon. There had come moments, to each of them, when the sight of the lifeless body of the other would have glowed like flowers in a summer garden. But common needs and common dangers had stayed the wayward hand.

And above the stars shone, and below the river sang and from beyond, off to the East, there came the faintest thunder noises of the surge and storm of the unnumbered variations of a great city's life.

But Jim and Sandy were gazing in silence into the fluid depths of the lazy river. Suddenly they raised their heads. Their eyes met. They shuddered as though they had awakened from a dream in which pain and horror had stalked where devastation and death spread the waste of the wildest passions. Or may it not have been the touch of that instinctive lust for blood that had come down to this moment—of race and race—through the centuries cruelly wrestling with the shapeless emotions of the night.

Sandy was the first to break the silence: "Well, we'll have to ter git erway f'om heah. Which way?"

"Ennyway suits me," replied Jim, "ennyway, jes so we don't run inter enny cops w'at's lookin' fer us."

"Let's go over ter Mushroom's an' shake a few lines o' dice."

"Dat's jes whar I ain't goin'. Does yer t'ink I'm foolish wid er fever? We wouldn't be in dere five minnits 'fore we'd be nabbed. No Mushroom's fer mine," returned Jim with an emphatic shake of his large, long head.

"I reckon we'd better be gittin' off o' dis damn bridge 'fore some nosey cop grabs us fer certain," vouchsafed Sandy as he dubiously peered into the darkness behind them. And suiting the action to the word he led off

toward the greyer shades at the east end of the viaduct.

Jim turned with him. When they reached the street at the first break of the viaduct they crossed the street car tracks and, after sharply looking about them, Sandy started down a long wooden stairway that led down into what looked like the very bowels of the earth.

Jim stopped. "I doan't want ter go down to 'Memphis Mary's,'" he muttered, "we'll git inter trubble, shuah."

"Aw, come on. Suse won't be there, dis is Friday night," coaxed Sandy.

"I doan't want ter go down dere, I tell yer, 'cause I doan't want ter git inter no trubble," persisted Jim.

"Dis is Friday night," rejoined Sandy. "I knows yer thinks I'm after Suse, but dis is Friday night, Jim, an' she's never out on Friday nights."

Jim hesitated a moment longer when the sound of voices coming out of the darkness on the viaduct on the west side of the street impelled, as a matter of discretion to follow Sandy down the stairway.

There was light in plenty at the foot of the long wooden descent. The hoarest sounds of bold, brazen music came suddenly to the ears. Lurching men and women went in and came out through swinging wicker doorways in rapid succession while Jim and Sandy threaded their way, familiarly, along the underground yellow way.

But Jim lagged sullenly in the rear. Sandy turned about, at odd intervals, and gave him vehement urge to close up ranks. But with small success, however. Jim lagged, somehow.

"W'at yer got, lead in yer shoes?" querulously ventured Sandy. "Ennybody would think yer was goin' ter er fun'ral."

"Yer all right, ain't yer?" retorted Jim, and when Sandy nodded an assent, continued, "well, go ahead den, I'll be dere as soon as yo' will."

"I know, but I thought yer mought be sore 'bout somethin', an' I doan't want yer to be sore 'bout nothin'."

"I doan't feel good. Ain't dat enuff to mek er feller walk slow? I jes doan't feel good, yo' go ahead, I'll be there soon enuff."

And so they went on until they came to an open door where the lights were brighter, the music more insistently loud, and where the crowd was larger, more motely and more highly charged with exuberant, turbulent emotions.

This was "Memphis Mary's" place, the undisputed "Queen" of the "Tunnel."

Death stalked as familiarly as life in this strangely ordered underground resort. And what a motley crew the crowd is! Black, white, the young and the grizzled and the grey—men and women—mingled as waters mingle in the sea and with as little thought of the reason.

Into this vortex of unwholesome odors and sheer degradation plunged Sandy sullenly followed by the reluctant Jim. They were both at home. Everybody knew Jim and Sandy. They were good spenders and this constituted them welcome figures whenever they found it convenient to make the place a visit.

"Memphis Mary," herself, was the first to give greeting to the pair. "Hello, Jim, hello, Sandy! Whar yo' bin so long? W'y bless yo' heahs, missed yo, honey. I suah did," she insisted, as Jim, deprecatingly, begged her to "Off wid de bunk."

The woman led the two wayfarers over to the far side of the big, square room where a painted and guadily attired waitress hastily pulled chairs for the party.

As Jim sat down he cast quick, shifting glances about the room at the groups seated at the various tables and gyrating in unseemly rhythmic contortions in the rather small space that was given over to dancing. Then settling back in his seat murmured, "W'at yo'll have ter drink?"

"No yo' doan't, young feller," interposed the ever watchful Mary. "dis one's on me. See w'at de gen'lemen want ter drink, or to eat. Come, git busy," she closed, with a flurry of the hand.

Mary had opened the floodgates of a wild night. Drink flowed like the quick waters of a mountain stream. Sandy danced often with the "Queen," but Jim sagged on the

table and clung to his seat with a gruff refusal to take any part in the dancing end of the feverish festivities.

"Nothin' doin'," he protested, in response to the vigorous endeavors of Mary and Sandy to get him on his feet. But it could be seen that he grew more and more sullen and that the light in his big, full black eyes was turning to a baleful green deepening as each round of drinks was emptied into the maw of the fast and furious ribaldry of the festering hours.

"Aw, let 'im alone, Sandy, an' let's have 'nother dance, he's all right." Whereupon Sandy ceased his tugging at the bulky form that had now thrown itself, head flattened on the top of the table, half across its uncomfortable resting place, seemingly dead to the turbulent adandon of its surroundings. Sandy and Mary went on with the dance.

The dance ended; Sandy again renewed his efforts to get Jim to "Open up," as he put it. With no clearly defined reason for which he could give an accounting, Sandy was a bit uneasy. He did not like the look in Jim's eyes, nor their shifting of color. He wanted Jim up on his feet, laughing, dancing and drinking, if you please.

"An' w'at if the cops should come in on us?" he whispered in the ear of Mary during a slight lull in the flare and hot rush of the time.

"Aw, dey won't be here," quickly responded her "Majesty," "tomorrer night is pay time an' enny how, dey doan't bother us down here so long as we pay."

But Sandy was obdurate. He scented danger of some sort and his dully alert and sometime slow working mind kept insisting that, "Jim isn't playin' fair ter night."

"W'at if de nigger is totin' er grudge. I doan't like de look in his eyes. He didn't want ter come down here. Ever since dat first time I patted Suse on de back, w'en he's drinkin' he acts like he's mad 'bout somethin'." And thus Sandy had been musing, under his breath, all through the two hours or more he and his able companion had been "hittin' 'em up" in the place where "Memphis Mary" ruled as Queen.

Yet Jim gave no outward sign of the tumult which Sandy feared was rocking the inward recesses of his big, black, bulky body. He even laughed—a coarse, heavy guffaw, it's true—when Mary twitted him with, "Aw, youse all in, dat's w'at's de mattah, yo' jes ain't got 'em, enny more."

'Twas thus the hours wore on. Jim, a seemingly dull-witted participator in its patter and aimless flutter; Sandy, awed and part stupefied by a flood of turgid emotions filling him with a dread he could not clearly see; Mary, hawk denizen and master mind of this underworld hell, craftily watching both men with a whole belief that she knew the cause of the storm that was about to mark the end or a chance meeting; and then the crowds of whatnots, surging, swaying, sweltering in the fetid atmosphere each, in their separate ways, tempting death out of the hollowness of a shuddering, empty night.

Some minutes before the "Queen" had ordered the front doors to be closed and the lights in the front windows to be lowered. But the dancing went on and the drinking continued.

Startlingly one of the front doors is flung wide open. A tremor of passionate fear sweeps through the place as visions of the police and the aftermath of a raid seized the minds of the revellers. All save three—Jim, Sandy and "Memphis Mary," herself. They each recognized the tall, dark, slenderly formed and flaming, black eyed woman who had swung open the door and stood, impudently defiant, surveying the consternation she had unceremoniously created. Turning swiftly in her tracks she closed the open door and then walked quickly over to a table and sat down.

"Suse!" muttered Sandy and he turned whiter than a fresh washed sheet.

"Suse, damn her!" cursed the "Queen" as she turned curiously inquiring glances first in the direction of Sandy and then in the direction of Jim.

Jim turned in his seat and calling to a waitress who was standing near, said, "Bring me er little whiskey."

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THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

THE DAYS OF '61

By EUALALIA O. PROCTOR

"Gee, but I'm tired of doing the same old thing," and Bobby threw himself down under the nearest maple tree and kicked viciously at the roots which ridged the rich loam.

"Me, too," chimed Jojo, truthfully, but with an utter disregard for the new "rules" which she had laboriously acquired in "Language" class at school. (Jojo, let it be said, was a sprightly young miss of eight summers, two years Bobby's junior, who had been named Jo for a beloved uncle, Joe, but who had been affectionately dubbed "Jojo" by Bobby, who had a fancy for changing the established order of things.)

"But what is there to do around here, we haven't done? I never want to dig another fishing worm, or bait crawdads with another grasshopper. Phew! the smell is still on my fingers," and he regarded the stubby tips ruefully.

"And my toe hurt-t-t-s!" Jojo's gaze was also rueful as she hugged a foot and gingerly removed the stocking to gaze at the bandaged "dew sore" which ornamented and anguished her large toe.

They might have gone on comparing woes for quite a while, for the summer vacation had held a sameness to date that was disappointing to two youngsters fresh from the never ending variety of the metropolis, if Grandfather had not appeared enroute to the house from the field. Grandfather hailed them cheerily and after a keen glance at the drooping faces, dropped down on the roots beside them.

Grandfather was 71 years *young*, and was tall and broadshouldered with a sturdily knit frame which displayed a military bearing in spite of the slight droop which age brought to his shoulders. Grandfather was ruddy of cheek and twinkled of eye, with his skin a fine network of crevices from which the grizzled

beard and moustache sprang on chin and lip. Grandfather's hair was thick and blond with grey streaks through it, and his arms were still strong enough to fell a tree, to guide a horse drawn plow—or manipulate the noisy tractor. Grandfather's lineage might have been Scandinavian, certainly Irish—but the whole town of Reedfield remembered the day (when Grandfather had been a younger man), when *back* to the saloon door, he had felled man after man with a railroad tie, until the last of the drunken rioters had slunk or been carried away, because one unwise loafer had ventured to make reference to a "yellow nigger!" That had been when Mother was a little girl, and she had often told Bobby and Jojo of Grandfather's coming home, the black mare white with foaming sweat, his knife unsheathed, to tell his brothers of the fray.

Seven of them, there had been, all tall enough to eat hay off the beams of the low-raftered sheds, all sturdy as the oxen which they had once driven, all fiery of temper and swift of blood—and all sensitive to that epithet—"nigger"! And Mother could bring awe to the eyes of Bobby and Jojo as she retold the scene—six men dropping hoe and plow handles; six horses being saddled, six handwoven leather whips thrust to the saddle strap—a dozen or so silent big-eyed children gathered to watch their fathers and uncles depart—the women folks with piteous entreaty in their eyes, but with tightly pressed lips, neither wishing nor daring to attempt staying them, and their father, also tall and sturdy of frame, leaning tensely in the doors while he glanced from sons to the road beyond as they galloped away. And there was always a long drawn sigh of relaxation as Mother told how

(Continued on page 147)

MISS ROSE O'NEIL
Dancing Pupil



MISS MARGARITA BARBA
Musician and Singer



MISS TERN YVONNE GREMMER
MASTER BYRON JONES



A GROUP OF CHILDREN FROM CHICAGO

SHAFTS AND DARTS

A PAGE OF CALUMNY AND SATIRE

By GEORGE S. SCHUYLER and THEOPHILUS LEWIS

The Monthly Prize: We award this month the handsome cut-glass thunder-mug, with the Lothrop Stoddard ribbon of The Nordic Complex, to His Eminence Prof. Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, editor of *The Crisis* and one of the three Negro members of the Pan-African Conference. We thus honor the literary giant of Aframerica for the following biblical quotation appearing on the cover of the February *Crisis* (quite natural for the ofay King Solomon but a strange selection for a Negro), which illustrates the prevalence of Caucasian beauty standards, even in the "Souls of Black Folk":

"I am black *but* comely, O, ye daughters of Jerusalem (*italics* ours). This line is especially illuminating when "white" is substituted for "black."

Experientia docet stultos!

GARVEY:

I aint gonna steal no mo'
I aint gonna steal no mo'

UNCLE SAM:

Stay in a cell 'cause we can't tell
That you aint gonna steal no mo'.

Like Napoleon, Garvey has seen his star sink, along with his ships. Well, he's down (South), but not out! He's *in!* For the second time in three or four years the Emperor of the entire continent of Africa is paying a visit to Atlanta, capital of the Empire State of the South, and of the Invisible Empire. Georgia being near the center of the Negro population in the United States, it is only fitting that the ruler of all the Negroes should be in the heart of his populace—among his people.

His first visit was of brief duration: this one will be a little longer. The first time he went to *see* a great big cracker; this time he was escorted *by* a great big cracker. On his first visit he entered the sanctum of the Klan; this time he entered the sanctum of Uncle Sam. Then he wore white cuffs; this time he wore handcuffs.

* * *

The first time Marcus went South he said the Negroes had done nothing in America; this time he protested to America that he had done nothing. The last time his stay in Atlanta was only four or five days; now he's going to loiter around there for four or five years. Last time it cost him a lot of money for food, clothing and shelter; this time he gets those necessities absolutely free. Formerly his voice rang through the halls of Klan; now his mop will be wrung in the halls of the Can. While his first anthem was "Greenland's Icy Mountains"; his present one is "Marching Through Georgia." Garvey was known, especially by those who assailed him with judgments, as a man of great endurance. He is no longer great but he is in durance. First time nobody counted; now everybody around him, including himself, will be counted.

Once his mobile face was always in print; lately his nimble fingers were imprinted. Now that the Association of Ex-Garvey Officials are likely to be deprived of their maintenance, I advise them to find out what number Garvey gets—and play it. Once Garvey only had Negroes backing him. Hereafter there will be at least one white man in back of him. Garvey advised his sable supporters to become proficient in industry. Now Uncle Sam—a very accomodating fellow—is giving the great Indian (W.) an opportunity to practice what he has been preaching. The "Honorable" Marcus advocated a Black House; but he went to the Big House. While the end of the world, as prophesied by a certain sect of the Seventh Day Adventists, did not arrive; Garvey felt that it had.

* * *

It is reported that it was the habit of the Emperor to eat his meals in silence—it is the one habit he won't have to break. Once he saw visions of himself in the Hall of Fame; now he'll saw wood until he's lame. He screamed for a separate country; they gave him a separate cell. He began his career in a print shop; he may end it the same way. He floated paper bonds; only to end up in iron bonds. After all, you now, there are bonds and "bonds." Last summer we saw Marcus on Seventh Avenue swinging a stick; this summer we venture to say he'll be swinging a pick. Once he cried for liberty for Africa; now he wants it for himself. As Brother Amos of the Department of Justice closed in on him at the railroad station Garvey yelled: "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"—he's still a little hoarse! He complained of his arrest on such short notice but we notice he's getting a long rest.

* * *

For five years Marcus cried for ships; finally they shipped him to Atlanta for five years. The authorities didn't bar him FROM Atlanta the first time; but they sure barred him IN Atlanta the last time. Last summer he went down the streets of Harlem in a striped suit; this summer he'll wear one with broader stripes, but not in the streets of Harlem. In Georgia, Atlanta is the seat of the capitol. It is also a capital place for Garvey to be seated. If Marcus had gone to Africa as he advised the dark brethren, he would still be at large, but his bankroll wouldn't be so large. Last summer Marcus accused the Deity of being a Negro! No wonder luck went against him! For one month last summer the venerable financier mopped his brow daily in the closeness of Liberty Hall; he'll mop halls daily for many months hereafter, but he won't be at liberty.

* * *

Well, it just goes to show that history repeats itself: The Spanish Armada sank; so did Garvey's. Debs went to Atlanta; Garvey follows in his footsteps. King Solomon had five

hundred wives; Garvey is also having domestic difficulties. David stopped Goliath with a stone; Uncle Sam stopped Marcus *with* a sentence. Russia has exiled Trotsky; America has exiled Garvey. A triumvirate rules the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic; a triumvirate also rules what is left of the Universal Negro Improvement Association. Congress turns out lame ducks while Garvey turned out lame boats. Rockefeller goes South for the winter; so does Garvey. Ponzi got five years; Garvey was equally favored. Justice is blind!

* * *

The days of royalty seem to be doomed, even black royalty. First, Franz Joseph of Austria died. Then his son Carl was given "the gate." Third, Kaiser Bill hastily leaped into oblivion, followed a few years later by our old friend King Constantine of Greece. Now ("tears and flowers, flowers and tears" as J. Otho Gray would say) the Supreme Potentate slips out of the public eye into a public institution. As Julius Caesar remarked when his breakfast egg was boiled too long: "It's hard, but it's fair."

* * *

As the "screw" slammed the barred door on the President of the Universal Factories Corporation, the Universal Grocery Stores, the Universal Tailor Shops, the African Communities League, the head of the D. S. O. E. (Distinguished Service Order of Ethiopia), K. C. O. N. (Knight Commanders of the Nile), and the Royal African Legion, a great darkness fell over Atlanta. Many of the old prisoners in Garvey's corridor were heard to say, "We are in for dark days." However, Marcus has decided to do whatever he can to enliven the existence of the guests who will share Uncle Sam's hostelry with him for the next half decade. He feels that as America's greatest comedian he can do much to make the annual prison show a success. They have already scheduled him for a monologue which begins in the usual Liberty Hall style: "Fellow Members of the Negro Race, Greetings! etc." In his second act he will sing his very clever version of the "West Indies Blues":

When Ah wa-as a leetle bye
Folks said Ah'd be a wahnder
But now that Ah'm behind the bars
Ah see they made a blahnder.

Ah've dahn lahst my bastest jahb
Ahs the champeen Negro fakah,
And when Ah leave this big stun
how-se
Ah'm gwine bahck to Ja-maica.

Chorus

Ah'm gwine bahck, shuah as yuah
bahrn.
Ah'm gwine bahck, tho the time IS
lahng.
Ah'm gwine bahck, shuah as yuah
bahrn
'Cahuse Ah got the Wast Indian Blues.
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THE LETTERS OF DAVY CARR

IV.

Pervasive Caroline. A fair lady's parlor. Enter a fascinating brown girl.

Washington, D. C.
October 23, 1922.

Dear Bob:

Caroline is the most pervasive personality I have run across lately. She has the faculty of being under foot at the most inopportune times, and yet, what is one to do? She has quite taken possession of my quarters. I don't recall if I have mentioned it before, but she uses some special kind of perfume, and whenever I come into my room I can tell if she has been there recently. There is something strangely alluring in this kind of intimate contact with a pretty woman, and yet, somehow, I resent it as an invasion of my privacy. If she were ugly and unattractive, I suppose I should close my door and thus shut her out, and of course if her mother knew how much time she spends here, she would soon put a stop to the practice, or try to. Most of the time, naturally, I am out of the house, and as Caroline knows my hours pretty well by now, she times herself accordingly. Today's experience, for instance, was typical.

I came in about five, and found my French dictionary open on the table, the inkwell open, a penholder, blotter and several sheets of monogrammed paper scattered about, in the midst one of Caroline's dainty little handkerchiefs, and pervading the whole room the very faintest trace of that wonderful perfume which I am beginning, by some occult psychological process, to associate with her personality. I had a moment of irritation, for you know how I like to have my personal things for myself, and you recall how often the folks at college used to say that I was not a bit southern in some of my ways. My irritation increased considerably when I saw that my pet copy of Amiel's Journal, the one I bought in that queer little shop in Geneva in the spring of 1919, was lying face down on the rug beside the couch. I swore softly, stooped to pick it up, and then suddenly changed my mind. So I left everything just as I found it, and went out to dinner. I met Reese, who now and then eats where I do, and after our meal was over we walked around the block while he finished his cigar. When I reached home it was about seven.

My room was straight, the table in perfect order, and the two books back in their respective places. Resting against the base of my lamp I found this note:

"Dear Old Bear:

"I really did not mean to be so careless, but the phone rang for me, and then Mamma sent me out on an errand, and I forgot to come back and straighten up. But I am usually very careful, indeed I am. Your Amiel must have slipped from the couch, for I certainly did not throw it on the floor. But it was mean in you to leave it there—as a reproach! You owe me an apology.

"Caroline."

The note made me laugh, of course, it was so characteristic, and I settled down to a cigarette and an hour's reading in my very comfortable chair. A few minutes before eight in breezed Caroline. She had on something extra fetching which I should set forth in words if I could, but I am aware that the angels weep

when I try to describe a lady's gown, so I shall refrain, much as I am tempted.

"Going to the show at the Howard tonight," she said laconically, as she sat on the corner of my couch and reached for my cigarette case. "Let me take a dozen puffs while I am waiting for the others. They won't be here until after eight. Well, why don't you tell me I'm 'the class'? Where were you brought up, anyway?"

I laughed. I guess I had been *looking* my approval, for she was smiling contentedly. Then I said:

"Well, you are 'the class'—whatever that means. That's an awfully pretty rig, and not badly placed, either."

"You don't use a trowel, do you? But thanks, anyway, even for small favors. But look me over, Old Bear, for I am so afraid you might some day be really displeased, and actually give me that—ah—chastisement you spoke of the other day."

"You are all right, little girl. I have no criticisms to offer. If I had a sister, and she looked half as well as you do, I should be proud to acknowledge the relationship."

"Be careful there, or you will compliment me before you know it."

Then she stood up to go, and I arose from my chair. She came over close to me, and looked up in that superlatively devilish way she has.

"See, Old Grouchy, there's not a tiny bit of rouge."

And she took my hand, and rubbed my fingertips over her velvety cheek. It was true, as she said, that she was not rouged, and Heaven knows she did not need it.

"Why don't you?" I asked, hardly knowing why.

"Why don't you wear spats?" she asked, with seeming irrelevance.

I laughed.

"Because I can't endure them," I answered.

"Well, I don't rouge for the same reason. Maybe some day necessity may overrule choice, but for the present, Old Grouchy, you can kiss me without the least risk of being poisoned."

Then with mischievous determination in her eyes she took a step toward me, and said, "I have half a mind. . . ."

Involuntarily I stepped back, startled, and she gave a merry laugh and ran down the stairs. Why I am unable to stand my ground against her, I cannot for the life of me determine, but she always manages to startle me, to 'get my goat,' as she would put it. I swore softly over my lack of poise, and sat down to write to you.

But the real purpose of this letter was to tell you about my Sunday evening tea at Barton's. I wish I might show you Lillian Barton's parlor, for I am sure I cannot describe it adequately. I am like the actor who made you laugh so hard that last wild night on Broadway, and who sang—don't you remember it?—a silly song with the refrain:

"I cannot sing the old songs,
For I do not know the words!"

That is just my trouble. I don't know the words. Now if I had Leroy's command of the King's English and his vocabulary of modern art terms, I could make you see a perfect picture.

In a few undistinguished words, it's an old house,

a rich man's house, made over, and redecorated on modern lines—some ultra-modern, I should say. Dark walls, with a few good paintings; heavy furniture in keeping with the size of the room; a wonderful rug; and a big fireplace with a real fire. Altogether it is the most attractive room I have been in—as a guest—and you know I have seen most of our handsome houses between New Orleans and Boston, and as far west as Chicago. Most of our pretentious residences are too ornate, or too luxurious, and the element of conspicuous expenditure is somewhat too pronounced. But here there were evidences of intelligent planning coupled with a cultivated individual taste. It was pleasing to the eye, and would have rejoiced your heart, I know. Somehow—and I suppose you would have said that this was the final test of the room—it seemed a perfect setting for Miss Barton.

There were, including our hostess, just six of us, the others being the Hales, Reese, of course, and Verney. We had a most delightful tea served in a sort of library-dining room, which was quite as attractive in its way as the parlor, but we spent most of the evening seated in a semicircle around the most hospitable hearth, in the glow and warmth of a fine wood fire. It was perfect!

We told stories, sang songs, and discussed everything in this mundane sphere, ending, of course, where we always do, with the race question. Verney made one or two statements which stimulated debate. He contended that this generation is not going forward, except in the conspicuous, showy ways; that our progress is more apparent than real, except in the matter, perhaps, of mere intellectual training; and that even there we are vastly outpointed by the Jews and the Japanese. He holds that we read only those things which concern us *directly*, and that we have no interest in the story of the past politics of Europe and Asia; while, on the other hand, the Jews and the Japanese seem to feel the absolute necessity for understanding completely the civilization of the Western European races which now dominate the world.

He said, further, that our most prosperous class takes little real interest even in the race question, but that many of the women think only of "getting by" the color line by painting their faces, while the men, for the most part, studiously avoid it, and live strictly within their own self-sufficient circle; that better incomes are making us more cowardly, rather than more bold, for we can now procure in our own circle the satisfactions we once could get only outside, and so we shut our eyes to what we do not wish to see, and then assert that it does not exist; that we love pleasure too much, and that we will spend more both of time and money in following it than any other struggling race in the world.

But I shall not unduly burden this letter with the details of his contention. Of course, there are rather obvious answers to most of the assertions advanced by Verney, but for every answer made he had a telling rejoinder. Some day I am going to draw him out again, for I am interested to know what is the basis of his claims.

But let me get back to our Sunday evening tea. Reese, whom I noted especially on this occasion, seemed to assume a distinctly proprietary manner, and certainly would give a stranger to think that the story of his engagement to Miss Barton is no mere canard. He is a cool, rather unimaginative chap, and I can quite believe what they say of him, that he is a fine man of business, who has already accumulated a

snug fortune. He is a pretty good imitation of a Yankee money-getter, and, from all I can hear, he is regarded as a man of the highest integrity, whose word is as good as his bond.

He does not act as if he had much sentiment, though maybe his own special virtues are more dependable. Somehow I foresee that, while Miss Barton is rather inclined to act the grand lady with everyone, if she ever assumes the matrimonial harness, it will be the old story of Greek meeting Greek. Men of Reese's type have rather a fashion of letting a woman deceive herself all she pleases regarding their eagerness to meet her every wish, but after the ceremony they quite frequently uncover a very complete assortment of wishes of their own. Reese is probably unimaginative, as I said before, and not over-shrewd or over-observing, in social matters in which he is not deeply interested, but, if I am any judge, he is nobody's fool, and he is going to be nobody's slave.

I have seen nothing to indicate any effusive affection on either side. That "catty" little Miss Clay, whom I mentioned in a previous letter, said that Miss Barton was interested only in Reese's prospects, and that he would see it if he were not stone blind. I am wondering if this is true. Of course, you are wanting to know how she treated *me*. Well, I'll tell you. I have indicated that she is unusually interesting, which means, in other words, that she says and does interesting things. Every time I have talked with her she has said something to whip up my interest.

When we were all standing up to take our leave, for one moment it happened that I remained alone in front of the fire, while the others were in the next room putting on their wraps, Reese helping Hale on with his coat and Verney assisting Mrs. Hale. Miss Barton left them quickly, and came over to me and held out her hand. As I took it she said:

"Do you know what I have been thinking as we looked into the fire tonight? I have been thinking that we two could have some wonderfully interesting times together. What do *you* think, my friend? It has been so nice to know you."

Then, without another word, she turned to greet her guests coming from the other room. I am afraid that I stood open-mouthed, an attitude in which few men are conscious of looking their best. Now, Old Fellow, I ask you—what do you think of that?

As we left rather early, Reese remained behind, and we four—the Hales, Verney and I—walked home together. They invited us to come in, but we declined with thanks, and went on to his quarters, where we smoked and talked for a while. I had an impulse to draw him out about Miss Barton and Reese, but thought better of it, and decided to watch for another opportunity.

When I reached home the house was full of company, as it usually is on Sunday evening. I slipped upstairs, hoping to find time for a little reading or writing before I retired. I had just settled down to work when I heard my name called from below, and, on answering, was invited by Mrs. Rhodes to come down to supper. Don't you wish you had a landlady like mine? I went to the head of the stairs, and thanked her as nicely as I could, giving as an excuse for declining that I had been out to tea. She said something my being welcome anyway, if I wished to come down. I thanked her again in a non-committal fashion, and went back to my work.

In a few minutes I had become so absorbed in what

(Continued on page 143)

ATHLETICS

By E. B. HENDERSON

Following our great war, the flaming spirit of fight finds outlet through the channels of competitive games. From the days of the Marathon runner, from Leander who swam the Hellespont down to Howard Drew, Hubbard, Gourdin and the padded warriors of modern gridirons, young men have practiced war in peace times. An innocent corked, filled or inflated ball often serves as the bubble for victorious play that causes men to spend tons of brain directed energy of brawn on play fields every year.

Millions of people in the stands are thrilled by the deeds done on the athletic fields. Millions of dollars change hands. Babies and grandmothers, corner ruffians and our president, sinners and saints gather, enjoy the contest, thrill with victory or suffer in defeat. Grange of Illinois, Drew of Amherst, Byrd of Lincoln, Irving of Morehouse, and the four horse-men of Notre Dame are on the lips more often than Pershing, Coolidge or Foch. What does it all mean? Is it worth while?

When a civilization tends towards lives of ease and comfort and leans away from the development of the rugged physical qualities, it is wending its way to moral deterioration, upset of harmonies of body and soul, and physical destruction. Sparta of the body for a long time balanced Athens of the mind and spirit but after a while Greece tottered and fell. The same with Rome, with Babylon, Persia, and all others. President Coolidge, thought never a devotee to play for himself knows his history. The calling of a Recreation congress, his seat at baseball and football indicate his desire to save America if possible. Let the minds of young men remain too long on government, on social conditions, and our colleges and the radical part of each generation will be forever wanting to know the reason for many of our useless, needless, selfish, out-timed institutions in society.

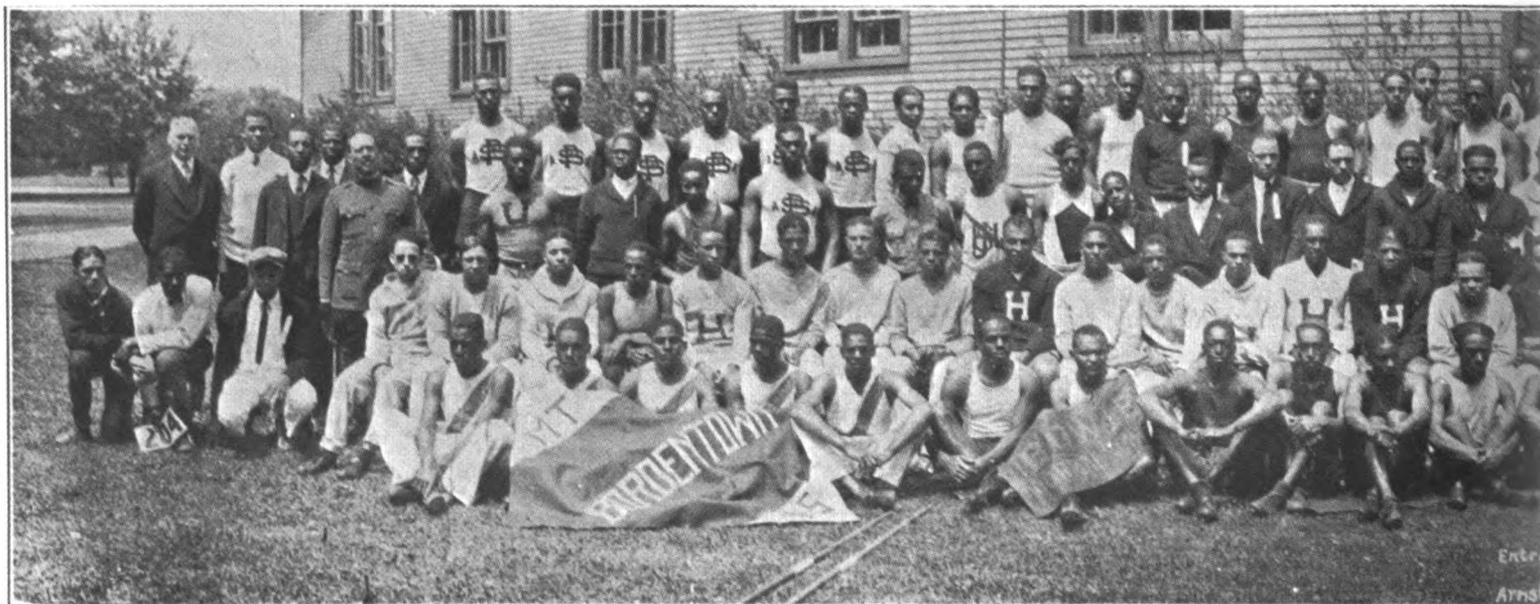
Athletics makes for better citizenry. It substitutes for vicious moral depravity or non-satisfying attempts at recreation, gratifying pleasure accompanied by construction physical benefits. To weld dissimilar units

and groups into typical American citizens, nothing has suited so well as American games and sports. Whether it be the immigrant Jew, Pole or German, or islander of Hawaii, the Philippines or Porto Rico, American English is spoken faster and American ideals assimilated sooner through the medium of our plays, games and athletics.

Some school heads and college presidents are fast recognizing the wonderful educational advantages accruing from proper athletic development and control. For years in the south so much religious asceticism pervaded the walls of many institutions that play, the idling that made for development was tabooed. Now at Morehouse, Lincoln, Wilberforce, Clark, and Morris Brown the Christian warriors meet on the gridiron, diamond and court and battle for the Lord. Athletics now ranks in importance with the religion, fraternalism, and politics in developing leaders with the "punch" or with dynamic resistant qualities. Lessons of fair play, inhibition, quick-thinking, accurate judgement, subjection to rules are taught. Men of character affected by the type of coaching received, and the influence of the kind of sportsmanship taught at their schools are entering the world of works. As they played the game in school so will they play the game in business or in society afterwards. You will see the straight forward good sportsmanship and fairplay or the dishonest mucker methods used in business, in the practice of professions, in politics, in society, that were practiced on the field of football or sport.

We have ended football for this year. Its victories and defeats are mere memories. Its heroes still live. Each player feels a hero to himself which stimulates him to greater efforts in his next field.

Standing out among the more prominently mentioned gridiron stellar players of the season are the following in the order named at the various schools: Lincoln University; Lancaster, Byrd, Crudup, Goodman, Morgan, Lee, Taylor—Union University; Barksdale, Carrothers, Jackson, Merritt—Tuskegee; Stevenson, Tadlock, Jennings, Joyner—Atlanta Univer-





DR. EDWIN B.
HENDERSON

*Head of the Department of Physical
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ington, D. C.*



sity; Leake, Lamar—Morehouse University; Irving—Hampson Institute; Coleman, Pindle, Gunn, D. Jones, J. Jones—Virginia Normal; Coles, Brown—West Virginia Institute; Cardwell, Gough—A. and T. of Greensboro, Coleman, Patterson and Cole—Howard University; Doakes, Miller, Brooks, Martin, McLean, Smith, Brown—St. Paul; Wheatley, Pierce—Va. Seminary; Byrd—Paul Quinn; Morgan—Wilberforce; Williams—Talladega; Edwards, Shaw, Michell.

In their respective sections, Tuskegee, Paul Quinn, West Virginia Institute, and Lincoln University, A. & T. College of Greensboro led the field.

Charles Drew of Amherst College, a product of Dunbar High School of Washington, D. C., adds to the lustre shed by Amherst men of days of yore — Sherman Jackson, Bill Lewis, Ed Gray, John Pinkett. He is the first Junior ever to have won the Ashley Memorial trophy awarded the most valuable football player. By the Boston *Herald* editor, Drew was selected as the best of the backs of the smaller New England colleges. By winning the Pentathlon in his freshman and sophomore years he has won permanent possession of the Pentathlon trophy. His failure to be selected captain of the football

team for next year incited many articles of rebuke against the method employed to deprive him of the chance for this honor written by the students and the editor of the Amherst *Student*. Drew nearly won a place on the Olympic team as a high hurdler and if he recovers from an injury sustained in football will probably be elected captain of the track team.

* * *

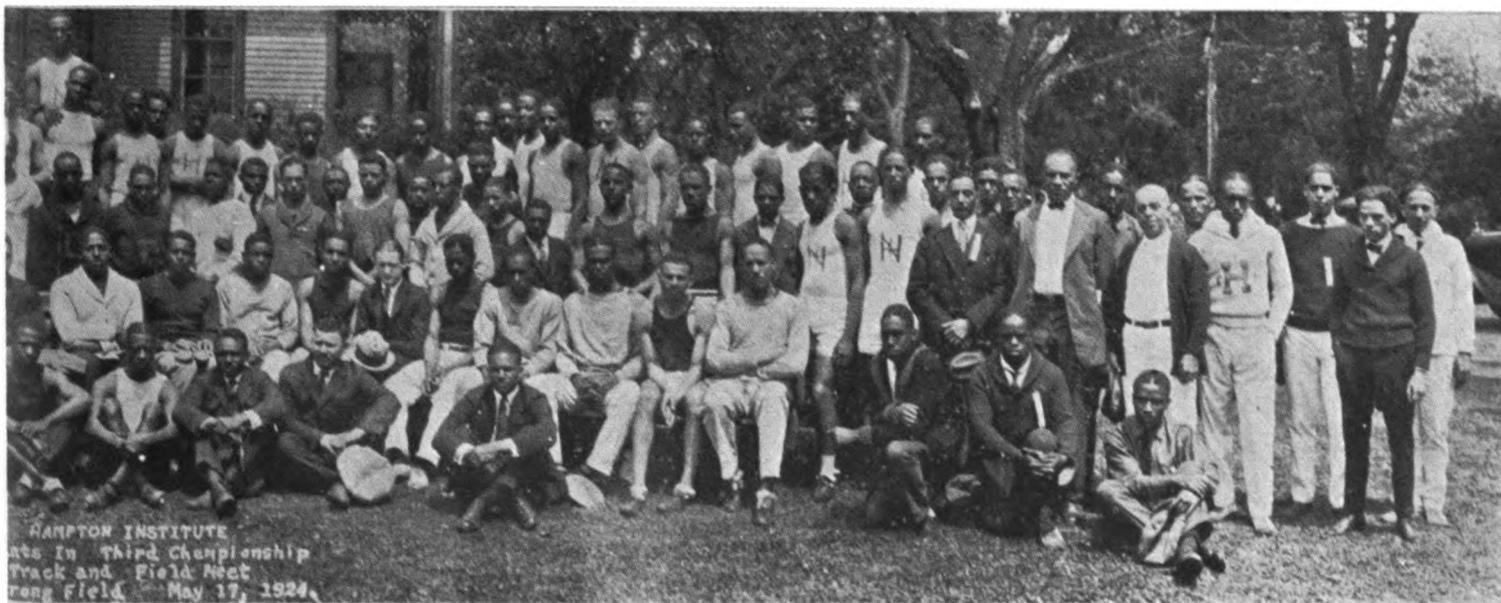
Hampton and Morehouse claim the spotlight in the basketball world. At this date with as many wins as there have been starts they look best in their sections. Harvey's Morehouse team will strike the Tartar lads when they hit the Seaside aggregation at Hampton later this month.

* * *

Nurmi, the Finn, from a country whose people do not outnumber those in the city of New York, is putting records in all events from above the half mile to other miles so high that future runners will be forced to sprout wings to reach. Incidentally, how much do you think this trip will net the amateur, Nurmi? There are amateurs still with us. There are men like Grange of Illinois who is said to have turned down \$2,000 a week to go to school and earn his way by peddling ice all summer. But it is in keeping with the hypocrisy of much of American institutions to let an amateur who is not expected to receive one cent beyond legitimate expenses in travelling earn maybe \$20,000 in one running season. You will hear reformers and moralists say "It can't be."

* * *

A few years ago our college and school teams were coached by any teacher, janitor, or athletic man of the town. But now in the field of educational and amateur athletics what a galaxy of men whose work for good or evil rivals or exceeds the power of college presidents. Among them are: Watson of Howard, Dean Mohr of Wilberforce, Young of Lincoln, Williams and Gideon Smith of Hampton, Burr of Howard, Harvey of Morehouse, Johnson of Clark, Aiken of Atlanta, Martin of Shaw, Harvey of Union and Harvey of Petersburg, Douglass of St. Paul, Johnson of Seminary, Byarm of A.&T. of Greensboro, Abbott of Tuskegee, Law of Morgan, Kindle of Talladega, Findley of Lincoln University, Mo., Hamblin of West Virginia Institute and many others.



HAMPTON INSTITUTE
Athletes in Third Championship
Track and Field Meet
Lang Field May 17, 1924

LA FEMME SILHOUETTE

By EULALIA O. PROCTOR

When the Gods Arrive—

"My encyclopedia of life," she laughed, holding the magazine aloft that he might glimpse the title page. It had the usual tritely risqué frontispiece—a full-mouthed, highly colored miss (a thousand pardons, Madame, it might have been attractive you!) in the barest of underthings, dimpled knees crossed, with the high-heeled slipper on the slender foot derisively tilted, and the usual array of cosmetics and beauty aids on the ivory tinted vanity table.

"Love Stories," he read the title aloud. "So there's where you acquire your technique, little lady! Aren't you a bold young thing to admit it?"

Camille (named Milly at birth) laughed again. When one stopped to consider Camille, one recalled she was mostly a creature of laughter, light bubbly infectious laughter that drew forth an answering smile, at least. Why? Considering further, Camille wasn't a creature of wit or humor—Camille wasn't satirically clever—Camille wasn't amusingly original—why that was it! Camille is laughable simply because she was so obviously—laughable!

He ran his fingers through the curling "bob," suggestively near, so as not to disappoint her. Camille gave her cues nicely, so that the veriest dumbbell could not fail to rise to the occasion. But while his fingers strayed among the curls, his mind was considering Camille farther. After all, considering Camille was something novel—she wasn't the short of girl one would have a headache about, as a result of serious consideration! True, she was attractive! Twenty years, more or less, good looking after the fashion of the frontispiece she had displayed (Come to think of it, all those magazine cover ladies were like Camille, or rather she was like them), from good stock, graduated with authenticity (if not "Magna Cum Laude"), from a reputable college, earning a fair salary in the city schools—conversant with current topics and the latest books (particularly Mrs. E. M. Hull's), never a white elephant at a dance (she had her own innovations for the popular steps which assured her sufficient partners), Camille was spoken of as a "good catch" by the *Criteria*s, (as he had dubbed the clique of matrons and unmarried ladies who bore the self imposed task of sitting in judgment on all comers with admirable fortitude).

And to his the *Criteria*s had assigned Camille forthwith, when he had come to town, set up his blue prints and catalogues and advertised his willingness to be a landscape gardener! He had accepted her cues placidly enough, going forth as a lamb to the slaughter up to the moment chronicled above—but "Love Stories" as an encyclopedia of life was a bit too much for him! Hence this consideration of Camille! But he obediently made room for her in the chair beside him, that he might better follow her scanning finger. He still took cues, even though he was considering Camille, it appeared.

She smiled wistfully, although there was a suspicious brightness in her eyes. "When the Gods arrive, the half gods go!" she said, under her breath and turned decisively away!

He had been back in the city three days now, caught in the rush of new business which proved the success

of his three months' supervision of the grounds of "Clerco," country estate of the city's wealthiest resident. He had not seen Camille or even called her, but he had not ceased considering her. He had contributed a gift to the holiday shower which had been her good fortune. By now she must be fully aware of it—or was she? After all, Camille was Camille!

The cab had reached the door of Camille's parents' home. He ran lightly up the steps and paused with his hand on the bell to glance in the window. Yes, Camille was Camille, for she lounged in the favorite big chair—a vividly bordered magazine cover blazing beneath the bridge lamp's glow, as she read, lips parted, eyes eagerly following her slender finger (Camille would scan the lines so, until the end of the chapter!) Disappointed, he would have turned back had not he glimpsed the chief *Criterion* ascending the steps behind him.

They entered the living room together. Camille greeted him delightedly. The chief *Criterion* edged in her greeting, as he echoed the bubbly laughter. (He was glad to see her again, anyhow!)

"My dear! such radical reading! The way they attack our most sacred social traditions—" it was the chief *Criterion* speaking, as she accepted a cushioned seat, her eyes on the magazine Camille had laid aside as they entered the room. He followed her gaze to the book trough beside the favorite chair. Camille's laughter still tinkled irresistibly forth, but there was a deeper, almost exultant, note to it.

"Your gift was charming—so new and different!" and a slender hand was lightly indicative towards the book trough!

Gone were the familiar volumes from their accustomed place! "Flaming Youth" and "Born Rich" had vanished—"Love Stories" and "True Romance" were out of sight! The only magazine in view was the one Camille had laid aside to greet him.

Without waiting for the cue, he sought the old place at Camille's side, his hand hovering above her head, then sinking sharply to his side as he glimpsed the arresting frontispiece of the vividly bordered cover-page! It was the third issue for the year of *THE MESSENGER*—his gift to her had been a year's subscription!

"My encyclopedia of life!" she said again—but her laughter retained that new and deeper vibration he had sensed with her greeting!

"When the gods arrive—the half gods go!" he was speaking to no one in particular, for his eyes were unaccountably and reminiscently misty, but the chief *Criterion* went—reluctantly let it be said, while unsolicited his fingers found Camille's curls! (At least so the chief *Criterion* reported at the next sitting of her "set.")

Miss Alice Brown

An assistant at the 135th Street Branch of the New York Public Library since February 1, 1924, has been appointed Vocational Guidance Director in the public schools of New York City, with offices at Public School 119. She was born in Plainfield, New Jersey. She is a graduate of Plainfield High School, New York University, and has studied at the Columbia Summer School and the New School

of Social Research. She is successor to Mrs. Elise MacDougald, who was recently appointed Assistant Principal of Public School 89, Manhattan, and with whom she worked a year as assistant. In addition to her work in the public schools, Miss Brown is taking a course in Vocational Guidance at the College of the City of New York.

The Pocahontas Club Camp Fire Girls of New York

To be a Camp Fire Girl is to be one of a comradeship of girls living in every state of the United States and foreign countries; to be a part of a great international sisterhood that is having good times out of doors, cooking over open fires, singing songs around the crackling logs of the camp fire, living the same ideals of work, health and love, giving the same sort of service to those around us; and to join hands around the world with millions of happy girls who are striving to understand one another; to accept one another without prejudice, no matter what language they speak, what God they worship or what country's flag they are under.

No girl under sixteen is allowed to join the Club. Any nice, refined girl who wishes to become a member, may apply to the Guardian, Miss Eloise Richardson, 49 East 134th Street, New York City. The officers of the Pocahontas Club are: President, Miss Annie Middleton; Vice-President, Miss Theresa Walker; Secretary, Miss Florence Taylor; Treasurer, Miss Ethel Stokes.



THE POCAHONTAS CLUB

Back Row, standing (left to right): Miss Julia Adams, Miss Mildred Gadsden and Miss Thelma Middleton. Middle Row (left to right): Miss Norsene Husbands, Miss Annie Middleton, Miss Eloise Richardson, Miss Theresa Walker, Miss Ethel Stokes. Bottom Row (left to right): Miss Bessie Foster and Miss Georgia Cox.



Woodard Studio
Mme. ANITA PATTI BROWN
Chicago, Ill.

Below:
Mrs. CLARENCE MUSE
Chicago, Ill.



Woodard Studio



Woodard Studio
Mrs. CHARLES JACKSON
Chicago, Ill.

THEATRE

By THEOPHILUS LEWIS

Alabama Fantasies

A Real Show Visits Harlem via the Lafayette Theatre

To the accompaniment of the Club Alabam Orchestra, under the able direction of Sam Wooding, the Alabam Fantasies really brought the dark brethren the finest entertainment Harlem has seen in many a moon. What I mean to convey is that for snap, class and finish this latest Club Alabam Review has anything backed off the boards that is appearing on Broadway, and I've seen quite a few from the Zeigfeld Follies on down the line. The scenery and settings leave nothing to be desired. The chorus is as well drilled as any I have seen—and looks just like any other chorus on Broadway; it being an unwritten law in American theatrical circles that a chorus of "Negro" girls must *not* be representatives of all various shades in Aframerica, but as near Nordic as possible. Still the platoon of chickens that cavorted across the boards at the Lafayette Theatre were mighty easy to look at, I'll tell the breathless world! The singing, too, was much better than one hears at the usual review. Of course, with Carrol C. Clark and Abbie Mitchell in the cast, good singing was to be expected.

Several months ago, and once or twice since, I've seen this Clarence Robinson do his stuff. In the back of my head I made a note of his fine voice and stage manner, and predicted that he would rapidly get to the top. It was rather gratifying to me, then, to see him cast in a leading role. He has a grace and charm that will carry him far. Louis

Simms and Bobby Goins contributed most of the hoofing—and they really hoofed. But for finished stepping, unadulterated by all sorts of gymnastics, the palm goes to Eddie Rector. His stage department is excellent, his personality winning.

A word must be said, too, for Ollie Powers, who assisted the Old Master, Shelton Brooks, in a spasm of delightful foolishness. This Powers fellow is a fine addition. He has a fairly good voice and much grace. As for Shelton Brooks and Johnny Hudgins, well—but what's the use of indulging in a fit of superlatives? These two entertainers are in a class by themselves.

I can't say that I was carried away by the blues singing of Grace Rector. It seems to me that the requirements for a good blues shouter are leather lungs and a whisky voice. As Miss Rector has neither, she falls short of the ideal.

In my day I have seen much hip shaking and muscle dancing, even the incomparable quivering of the Hula dancers at the Mid-Pacific Carnival in Honolulu, but seldom have I seen a more capable twirler than Lillian Powell. Twenty years ago her act would have netted her a short term in the county jail. Hooray! for the Twentieth Century!

The two scenes, "The Story of the Persian Slave Market" and "Harlem in Paris," left little to be desired. I have often wondered, though, why no producer has ever attempted, at least of late years, to portray one of the old honky tonks of the day B. V. D. (Before the Volstead Disaster); the kind that existed around St. Louis, Kansas City, Seattle,

San Francisco, and other burgs. One can picture now the low, smoke-filled chamber with a bar on one side, battered piano, tables and chairs; the piano player, with his John B. Stetson pulled down over his eyes and his box back coat completely hiding the stool he sat on, whipping out of the quivering "groan box" some of the weirdest and most intriguing melodies and strains ever heard on *terra firma*, while the "Rats" and "Tommies" did the Eagle Rock, the Grizzly Bear, the Texas Tommy, and other erotic trepsichorean exhibitions. "Them was the happy days!" The staging of such a scene, just as it was in those old days before the country became so moral, would draw much larger crowds, I believe, than the portrayal of Paris Apache dens.

Well, we can't have *everything!* And the Alabam Fantasies was superlative entertainment. It is to be hoped that the subsequent attendance was greater than that of the first night. Such a show deserves a crowded house. Plot? Does a Revue ever have a plot?

GEORGE S. SCHUYLER.

Sociological Data

There are more taxicabs per block in Harlem than in any other residential section of the city. The women's styles are right up to the latest Paris idea, as interpreted by West 34th Street; and the men's clothes are abreast of the fashions in London, as

(Continued on page 143)



"SLAVE MARKET" SCENE FROM "ALABAM FANTASIES"

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

According to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Mrs. Evelyn Horton, who made a fortune in hair formulas, has planned a \$1,500,000 hotel, theatre and civic center for the race in St. Louis, Mo. The hotel will be known as the Hor-Ton-A.

Newspaper reports indicate that a good many of the Standard Life Insurance Company's former officials are leaving it since it was taken over by the Southern Life Insurance Company, a white organization, and that they are joining the National Benefit Life Insurance Company and other Negro insurance companies.

One of the recent calamities of the Negro is the closing of the doors of Brown & Stevens' Bank of Philadelphia, Pa. The Cosmopolitan, another Negro bank of the same city, also failed as a result of the failure of Brown & Stevens' bank.

H. Adolph Howell has established a modern and beautiful funeral church on Seventh Avenue, at 137th Street, New York City.

First Annual Meeting of the Victory Life Insurance Company

The first annual meeting of the stockholders of the Victory Life Insurance Company was held at the

Home Office of the Company, 3621 South State Street, on Wednesday, January 28th. The meeting was called to order by the President, Anthon Overton, and reports were given by the President, Vice-President and General Manager, I. J. Joseph, Medical Director, Dr. Julian H. Lewis, and the Secretary. The Company has confined its operations only to the state of Illinois, and writes only ordinary life insurance. Business paid for during 1924 amounted to \$753,519 and the amount in force at the end of the year was \$687,739. Report of the Medical Director, Dr. Julian H. Lewis, showed the Company had three death claims, amounting to \$5,000. The report of the Secretary showed that the Company had an income of \$22,121.90 and expenditures of \$22,727.29 which is a remarkably good record for the first year of operations of any company. The Company has \$113,201 invested in 7% mortgages on city property, all of which is owned by Negroes, has \$34,414.66 invested in railroad and public utility bonds, and has handled all its banking transactions with the Douglass National Bank of Chicago, a Negro Institution. Total assets of the Company at December 31st amounted to \$167,140.98. After deducting the required reserve of \$7,145.41 and other liabilities, totaling in all \$9,603.05, the capital and surplus remains \$157,537.93.

Following the report of the President, Anthony Overton, the stockholders voted to amend the charter of the Company, increasing the capital from \$100,000 to \$125,000, and the number of directors from fifteen to nineteen.



Mrs. E. O. PROCTOR

At the left is an excellent likeness of Mrs. Eulalia O. Proctor, our general representative in the thriving city of Indianapolis. Mrs. Proctor is that rare combination of beauty and brains. She has only been in Indianapolis thirteen months. Before that she was in Chicago for a half dozen years during which time she spent three years as a Red Cross worker, after a course of training in the School of Civics and Philanthropy. She has also studied law and taught school. She was formerly City Editor of *The Freeman*, a weekly paper published in Indianapolis. During the late political campaign she took charge of the mobilization of the colored women voters in the anti-Klan fight waged in Indiana. At present she is conducting a public stenographic and notary public office. She is also chairman of the Committee on Public Opinion of the Interracial Committee of Indianapolis. Many prominent citizens of Indianapolis are associated with her in this work. Still, she finds time to superintend the large circulation *THE MESSENGER* enjoys in the city, distributing a thousand copies every month. She anticipates over 200 per cent increase in the next couple of months.

THE MESSENGER wants representatives of this type in all parts of the country. Our circulation is growing by leaps and bounds. Here is an excellent field for dependable, energetic men, women, boys and girls. Write for particulars.

THE CRITIC

By J. A. ROGERS

Science Versus Superstition

Score another victory for Science. The eclipse of the sun came almost at the moment predicted. What a difference between that and the predictions of the churchmen, not a single one of which has ever come true. Still simple-minded folk and even those with supposed intelligence keep believing their rigmarole about Daniel and St. John and the end of the world.

Not so long ago humanity would have been grovelling on its knees as a few of those belonging to the backwash of civilization did in California, that paradise of freak faiths. Now, instructed by Science, man welcomes the phenom, his fear transmuted into admiration.

And we would have been grovelling yet if the William Jennings Bryans and the John Roach Stratoms and their spiritual predecessors still had their way. Get White's "Warfare Between Science and Theology," read it if you have not already done so and you'll be amazed at the tremendous fight Science had to put up in order to bring about conditions in which you are no longer afraid at natural phenomena. Read how the ones who wished to enlighten you were burnt alive, and otherwise tortured; read of the martyrdom of Bruno and Vanani; of the persecution of Vesalius, one of the first to dissect the human body; of the recantation of Galileo, and be thankful that the churchmen no longer rule.

In this book you will also note that in spite of the terrific persecution and amazing cruelty superstition has had to beat a slow retreat all along the line as darkness before advancing light. Attendance on a woman in childbirth by a physician, anaesthetics, dissection of the human body and lightning rods were among the things forbidden by the priest-craft. Mankind is an eagle that would soar in the blue of highest thought but ignorance has been a chain binding it to sordid earth for the benefit of the powers that prey. No one, said John Wesley, who doubted witchcraft could believe in the Bible.

Mere Man Getting Merer

The ladies are demanding equal rights. A proposed 20th amendment to the Constitution reads:

"Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction."

What do you mean equal rights? Women are in the barber's chair. The barber shop has become a bobber shop. Just as the Negro is trying to get rid of his pigment, sign of his servitude, the ladies are ridding themselves of their locks one of the marks of theirs. The Greek soldier cut off his beard, because it was easy for his enemy in battle to get a hold on it in a close fight, and the ladies are trimming their locks preliminary to putting up the stiffest battle for their rights since the days of Hortensia.

And yet there is nothing that the men ought to be willing so quickly to give them. Equal rights mean equality of disabilities too. Women now have privilege. Men take them out, pay their

carfare, take them to theatres and restaurants, paying their bill every step of the way just as if they were children.

In this day of exorbitant cost men ought to jump for the passing and enforcement of that amendment.

We fancy, however, that the strongest opponents of the bill will be the women themselves.

Fancy tipping your hat to a woman judge or congressman or president and taking her candy! That's really a case of eating your cake and having it, too. Mere man is becoming merely the instrument of fertilization the feminists declare he is.

Theodore Roosevelt, the Radical

Somehow I have never been one of those who were magnetized by the personality of the late Theodore Roosevelt. I had always imagined him as a whirlwind of noise, drowning the thinking faculties of the American people and arousing their admiration by sheer bluster, just as one is carried away by anything great as a volcano, a fire, flood, tornado, a Napoleon, a great rogue or anything else sheerly big. But I have begun to see that there is another side to Roosevelt and that he carried on in this spectacular manner because he knew his people only too well.

In spite of the assertions of superiority and the legacy of ten thousand years of civilization Theodore knew that for every one of his people who preferred the soft harmony of a violin a hundred thousand preferred the booming of a bass drum; that for everyone who would admire a painting by Inness, half a million preferred loud-popping fire-crackers; that for everyone who would go to hear a DePachmann caress a piano, almost a million would pay five times as much to see a Dempsey maul the face of another. Roosevelt knew this and acted accordingly, at least that is what the reading of his letters to Senator Lodge has revealed to me.

His bluster was the stage play, the paraphernalia, the American people demanded. Underneath was the soul of one who was a radical in politics, one who would have done something really great for this nation and have cleaned out the big crooks for some time to come, if only he could have been able to lay hold on more power.

* * *

"Kings and such like," said Roosevelt, "are just as funny as American politicians."

Yes, Theodore, but not half so funny as the boobs who keep them in power and are eager to brain you the moment you say anything against either.

And what has the booboisie had in return for the blood and treasure it spends in keeping politicians and kings in power? This, that the cobwebs in its brain won't be disturbed, that it will be permitted to jog along in the same lazy rut. Verily, laziness is mankind's greatest affliction.

Political Corruption

For the 100 per cent Americans and those voters who work themselves up

into a frenzy of enthusiasm and partisanship at election time this letter ought to prove of interest:

The White House, Washington
October 8, 1906.

DEAR CABOT:

I have been more shocked than I can say by the attitude of some of the corporation men within the last two or three weeks.

Last week Jim Sherman called upon E. H. Harriman to ask for a contribution. Harriman declined flatly to give anything. He said he had no interest in the Republican Party and that in view of my action toward the corporations he preferred the other side to win. Sherman told him that the other side was infinitely more hostile to corporations than we were; that all we were doing was to be perfectly honest with them, decline to give them improper favors, and so on, and that Harriman would have to fear, as other capitalists would have to fear, the other side more than us.

To this Harriman answered that he was not in the least afraid, that whenever it was necessary he could buy a sufficient number of Senators and Congressmen or State legislators to protect his interests, and when necessary he could buy the Judiciary. These were his exact words. He did not say this under any injunction of secrecy to Sherman, and showed a perfectly cynical spirit of defiance throughout, his tone being that he greatly preferred to have in demagogues rather than honest men who treated him fairly, because when he needed he could purchase favors from the former.

At the same time the Standard Oil people informed Penrose that they intend to support the Democratic party unless I call a halt in the suits begun against the Standard Oil people, notably a suit which Moody is inclined to recommend, and they gave the same reason as Harriman, namely, that rather than have an administration such as the present, they would prefer to have an administration of Bryans or Hearsts.—*New York Sunday American*.

The Bait of Race Kinship

When Roosevelt first broached peace to the Russians in their war with Japan he met Count Cassini, the Russian Ambassador and this was just what happened as told by Roosevelt:

"I then saw Cassini and Cassini answered by his usual rigamarole, to the effect that Russia was fighting the battles of the white race (to which I responded by asking him why in that case she had treated the other members of the white race even worse than she had treated Japan.)"

* * *

The same thing applies right here at home. The very ones who shout for white domination are, just as eager to deny the rights of the weaker members of their own group. The weaker whites are compelled to form labor unions and force the stronger ones to give them anything approaching a square deal.

When none of the weaker races are
(Continued on page 142)

BOBBED HAIR

By CHANDLER OWEN

Why do women bob their hair? Does it make them more beautiful? Is it more convenient? More hygienic and sanitary? Less expensive? More attractive to men? Or what?

Probably original history of bobbing hair reveals about what might be termed, for the want of a better word, the Greenwich Village and the radical women. They were not seeking aesthetic effects, convenience, hygiene or economy—but merely difference. For a long while it was considered a mark of radicalism for a woman to bob her hair, to wear sandals and to smoke. Here the feminine iconoclasts were at work trying to go against the established order for no reason other than revolting against the *status quo*.

We have no prejudices whatever against spontaneous variation whether in the biological or in the social world. If a thing is useful and desirable, it ought to be inaugurated; if not, wisdom would dictate rejecting it. When a practice assumes such a widespread rôle one should examine it very painstakingly before condemning it. This in spite of the fact that the majority is usually wrong, for there is some modicum of truth and utility in anything so generally received. Let us, therefore, return to the questions asked at the beginning.

First, does bobbed hair make women more beautiful? Here is a very pertinent question, since women spare no pains to adopt anything calculated to improve their looks. Moreover, there is some queer quirk of the cranium which impels, almost overnight, millions of women to adopt a reverse hair style from one in which they have been making the third largest expenditure in the United States—hair growing. Three or four Negro firms like the C. J. Walker, Poro, Overton, Lee and a half dozen white firms, have made millions on the strength of the mere claim they could grow hair. All the while it has been possible to make comparisons between long hair and bobbed hair, since the great majority of people's hair was already bobbed by nature. In fact, length of hair took precedence to quality, since it was possible to improve the quality but impossible to increase the quantity. So long hair was universally regarded as more beautiful—a consummation devoutly to be wished.

Sometimes, however, convenience or utility will take precedence to pulchritude. So we shall inquire whether bobbed hair is more convenient. It is probably more easily combed, but the time spent in the barber's chair for constant recutting, shaving the neck and shaping will easily outdistance the time required for dressing the hair. Especially true is this of people who have long hair, since there is something impressive about the very quantity which enables them to wind and twist it to advantage in almost any way.

Is bobbed hair more hygienic and sanitary? The less hair one has the less he has to keep clean. But if the question of laziness is permitted to run riot one might reduce the human race to lilliputians in order to have less body to bathe; diminish the teeth to one fourth their size to have less to brush; make the eyes the size of a sparrow's (birds can see quicker and farther than men) in order to have less eye to wash, or decrease the ears to the size of a crow's to have less ear to swab. Moreover, the washing of a woman's hair is not what takes so much time, but the drying.

Still one half of it will dry as quickly as all, just as a dozen handkerchiefs will dry as quickly as one. The person who cannot grasp this elementary logic is on all fours with the three Irishmen who were thirty miles from town when the evening shadows were falling. Pat said, "Well, we've got thirty miles to go." Mike replied, "That isn't so bad—just ten miles apiece."

Is bobbed hair less expensive? The answer to this would seem to require answering some other questions, namely, do hair dressers charge less for washing a bobbed head than a long one? Does long hair have to be attended to more frequently? And, third, what about the cost of constant bobbing, reshaping, marcelling, waving, straightening? The answer to these questions would seem to be that a woman with bobbed hair has all the expense of one with long hair plus that additional expense which comes around with rhythmic regularity—the reshaping, cutting and trimming.

Is bobbed hair more attractive to men? This question could hardly be ignored, since the great bag of feminine tricks from the making of fine underwear to the creation of fur coats constantly at least gives large consideration to, How will the men like it? Just as men are no little concerned about how their creations please the feminine taste. There are some very comprehensive answers to be made on the relation of the eternal masculine to the persistent feminine. In the Universities of California, Columbia, and Chicago, where the men students took a vote on the most beautiful girl, the model selected each time and in each place was the girl with flowing locks and long. Again, I have never seen a man who really liked bobbed hair. They tolerate it—another evidence of the reviving gynococracy—the period of female rule or power. Nor is it strange that men don't like bobbed hair. Sex relations proceed from the principle that unlike poles attract. Men like dresses on women better than knickerbockers. They prefer the night gown to pajamas; the petite shoes to the broad; and the gentle hat to the derby or plug. Reverse the order. How many women would like to see the man they admire with a dress on, in a night gown or with long hair? No sane one. And the reason is that deep philosophic, physical and biological principle that "like poles repel and unlike poles attract." Again, the kind of clothing adapted to each sex was so adapted largely for purposes of discrimination. It is true, however, as Lester Ward points out, that men having the power imposed on women the less utilitarian dress. For instance, trousers are much more hygienic and convenient than dresses and skirts. Skirts hanging from the waist were a strain on the pelvic organs and have given rise to many of the ailments of women. Part of this female revolt then, is directed against a species of masculine tyranny (revolutions usually produce excesses), but like most revolts proceeds beyond the necessary limits. Since then bobbed hair is not so beautiful as long tresses, is no more convenient, hygienic and sanitary, but more expensive and less attractive to men—why do women insist on having it? What is this Prometheus Bound which disregards the call of money and the call of man; which kicks overboard without reserve or pity both economic and biological considerations? The explanation is two-fold. Man has become the slave

of his own manufactured god. First, there is the fashion god—a product of man's own mind, a creation which has grown so strong that it can inaugurate the ugly and force its acceptance. Fashion has trained the human mind to accept diametrically reverse styles. To illustrate, one season decrees a hobble skirt clinging so tightly as almost to obstruct walking; the following season will proclaim wide skirts which seem to cooperate with the wind in exposing the woman's legs. One year skirts are trailing two and three feet long with weights to hold them down; the following year the skirts get so short that city councils pass laws to stop them from reaching the hip. One season decrees such wide hats that women may dispense with umbrellas, the next season brackets their heads in little vamp caps which prevent any hair dress at all. One season gives needle toes and high French heels, the next shoes which are so wide and flat that they become veritable sandals. Yesterday the dress necks were so high that the collars had on sharp points which almost touched the ear; today, the top of the waist has gotten so far from the ear that it can not hear the waist rattle. A little while ago women wore so many underskirts, petticoats and alternates that one might have been mistaken for carrying a blanket display; today, the women are showing that history repeats itself as they approximate the no-clothes savage.

Economists recognize that selling hair is a great business, and if most of the women cut off their hair the fashion kings know that by decreeing long hair as a style they will stimulate a titanic hair consumption. A fortune can be made by selling switches, wigs, etc., and since it is easier and quicker to cut off hair than to grow it the only possible way to resecure it in time for the style would be to buy it. It is not amiss here to note that these extremely reverse styles are deliberately decreed to stop the buyer from being able to make slight alterations and use his old clothing. Of course, we can not overlook the hair pedigree ar-

gument. When one's hair has been bobbed she can always claim that before she cut it it reached almost to her knees—and most people so claim this when visiting among strangers.

Another reason for so completely disregarding the whims of men on bobbed hair is a subtle, evolutionary, protective force—the recognition that bobbed hair makes a woman look younger. Of all the ravages to which women are subjected, none is so dreaded—and justly dreaded—as the weight of increasing years. Whoever discovers the mythical “fountain of youth” can reap his millions from the persistent feminine. Most goods are sold not on their merits but on their apparent merits. The law even protects this fraud on the theory that the purchaser should beware *caveat emptor*. Bobbed hair enabling women to appear to be what they ain't—also lets them sell, to an extent, apparent youth for real youth.

Is bobbed hair here to stay? I don't know. I do know that it is the style now. As such it is part of one's dress and if it persists, nearly every woman will bob her hair. Men will realize that it is almost as unreasonable to require their wives to wear long hair as it is to require them to wear trailing skirts when everybody else is garbed in smart, short ones. Then, too, people wish to be like others. To be different sets up an impassable chasm. Women will not get outside the pale of society nor will the men who restrain them permit it. So long as a woman has a prominent husband or distinguished sweetheart who prefers a different style she need not capitulate to the bobbed hair and she won't. But this is simply a case where the resultant takes the direction of the greater force. When social pressure, the urgency of companions becomes more powerful and important to her, she will disregard those former whims and wishes.

All in all, the bobbed hair craze seems to be but a reflection of the general tendency of the women to become more masculine and the men to become more feminine, both of which square with the fundamental law that unlike poles attract and like poles repel. The feminine women will like the masculine men, while the masculine men will continue to like the feminine women.

Alabama

(Continued from page 124)

police force without an Irishman, not that it matters, and a white insurance company without a Caucasian policy holder, which does matter. Here the earning capacity of Negro laborers ranks high; and here the leading Negro-owned enterprises are barber shops. Colored Birmingham is a titan with a mediocre brain; it has financial and numerical power but no ambition; it has large churches where revivals draw and flourishing lodges where parades form, but there is no unity of purpose for the welfare of the Colored population.

It was in Birmingham that Harding spoke to a vast and mixed audience and after delivering a political harpoon saved his scalp by declaring “amalgamation there can not be,” and it was in Birmingham that Sam Johnson landed in Big Rock jail and sent for his good pastor, who came, heard Sam's story and advised: “Why, Sam, they can't put you in jail for that; no sir, they can't.” And it was in Birmingham, Alabama, that Sam Johnson answered both his good pastor and his good President, “but I'se in jail already!”

Coal and iron and steel and the by-products in fifty years have sprouted and grown here a hustling city. Office buildings tower like gigantic stalagmites wherein the farthest elevator from the front is labeled “For



THE MISSES CLARKE, CAIN AND SMITH,
ACTRESSES, CHICAGO

Freight and Colored," but is freely used by the whites; office buildings where so many offices have colored maids and office girls. Shade of the "Fawn of Pascagoula!" Naomi gives up her job in the old Penny Bank Building to work for a white doctor. Ruth is maid in a white lawyer's office and is the best dressed girl who struts down Eighteenth Street. Rebecca used to work in the twenty-three story building, but she doesn't have to work now! And all these are six and eight dollar a week jobs. The extra money . . . !

Just open your eyes and see. Don't try and think. Come along! In the street below there is a long parade in progress; it is certain to go around to Eighteenth Street and Fourth Avenue where the Negro barber shops, white-owned movie houses and Greeek cafes for colored are doing a rushing business. Notice there is a motor-cycle squad from the police department leading the parade, followed by an electrical fiery cross. Three hundred automobiles are in line; traffic blocked, yellow street cars at a standstill, pedestrians silently watching from the curbing. The American flag passes, and then a sign the length of a limousine reading "For White Supremacy."

Don't think yet! A metallic alarm is in the air; it comes nearer and nearer, down the street that crosses the parade. There is confusion amid the watching crowd on the corner, but the parade goes solemnly on. The clanging alarm again, now growing dimmer and dimmer in its retreating terror. The fire department must get to the fire by another route—nothing must break the solemn parade! Come! There is a billboard that says Ringling's circus will parade these same streets next week, but there will not be so many clowns!

VI

All is not bad. There is too much human nature in Birmingham to be without redeeming qualities. The matter with Birmingham is that it is so young, so engaged in making money and growing bigger that it has not come to its thoughtful age. Take this piece of forewarning from one of its clear-visioned Anglo-Saxon citizens.

"I heard a public man recently argue with fine oratorical effect that God has climaxes everywhere: A climax in heaven, for the sun is king; a climax among the birds, for the eagle is king; a climax among animals, for the lion is king; and a climax among the peoples of the earth, for the Anglo-Saxon is king.

As that stands alone there is a false note in it. The Anglo-Saxon is certainly at this time upon the throne, but it is a shallow and thoughtless man who would make it an occasion for boasting.

The old Roman in his day said exactly the thing that we are prone to say now. But he forgot the processes and the purposes of his upliftment, and today is one with "Nineveh and Tyre."

Verily pride goeth before a fall and an haughty spirit before destruction. Germany erased the word service from her character and she "fell as Lucifer fell."

"Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,
A broken and a contrite heart."

If we can occupy our kingly place in that spirit, then all hell shall not prevail against us. If not, we, too, must take our place in the sad procession of the nations that are lost!"

And this from a white pulpit shortly after Birmingham came near as a feather's edge staging a Saturday night race riot that would have made Atlanta, Chicago and Tulsa mere pikers. Negroes around Birmingham use dynamite daily in the mines. On that particular night one ordinary fellow walked down Twentieth Street with a suit case of it!

Some day ruddy young Birmingham, capstone of Alabama, will emerge, like Miriam, from the Red Sea of her struggles and a new era will begin. Some day! And as Birmingham emerges, Alabama will emerge.

Down there, whenever the band strikes up "Dixie"

there always follows the outbursts from the depths of rebel breasts a resounding "ALABAMA" that challenges the welkin. Alabama! Alabama! 'Tis a resonant and mouthful American word. It always heads the list, whether with "twenty-four for Underwood" or in the category of States. And in the dictionary there is close by a nefarious and nefandous relative, a fearful word, a Frankenstein destroyer of reason, and that word is—Amalgamation!

So endeth this ramble through a State that deserves to its ownself a better way in life. Alabama! Here we rest!

Editorials

(Continued from page 125)

larger combinations. Most of them were already multi-millionaire businesses. In many instances they combined to form billion dollar businesses. Recently a group of bakeries in Chicago combined in a \$600,000,000 trust. The Federal Trade Commission alone has prevented the combination of the "big five" packing industry, including Armour, Cudahy, Wilson, Morris and Swift. Several million dollar steel companies formed a group to compete with the United States Steel Company. The same thing happened in the automobile world when several companies combined to compete with Ford and Ford himself took over the Lincoln, still further extending his own combination. This is simply the modern trend toward trustifying everything. It saves duplication and lessens the cost of production.

Negroes will soon have to do the same thing. Ere long all these little insurance companies will have to combine into about two, and not more than three. The National Benefit Life Insurance Company and the North Carolina Mutual will probably have to lead the way. It is the only chance of meeting white competition. So in spite of the reluctance to give up fat berths as president, secretary, treasurer, etc., the stockholders of these companies must insist upon such procedure in interest of the larger good.

Don't

(Continued from page 127)

Mary gave the sign to the musicians and the floor was again quickly filled with dancers. The excitement of the moment before was apparently forgotten. Suse was drowning her thoughts in a glass of beer; Jim was now wide awake and ordering another drink of whiskey; Sandy had made his way to the table where Jim was sitting and, calling to the waitress who, taking the latter's order, shouted, "Make it two."

Suse has espied the two men but the "Queen" had given her a warning look which held her slow to make an approach in their direction. A fracas on the other side of the room called her majesty from her watchpost and that fact gave Suse her chance to get to the table where the men were seated. Slipping smoothly and swiftly through the maze of dancers she reached their table just as the waitress had brought them their orders of whiskey.

Sliding into the empty seat nearest to Sandy she said to the waitress, "Bring me er small po'tion of de same."

Sandy stammered, "Hello, Suse, how yer bin?"

Suse, leaning over close to him and at the same time slipping her shapely, dark arms about his shoulders exclaimed, with a sneer on her upturned lips, "What's de mattah wid yer friend ternight, bin drinkin' too much?"

Jim leaped to his feet with the quickness and suppleness of a panther and, springing to the side of Suse,

gripped her by the throat and threw her violently to the floor. He quickly sprung on the cringing form of Sandy, clutching his now thoroughly frightened partner by the throat with the left hand while flashing in the other was the sinister glittering of a long bladed knife.

Suse, rising half way from the floor saw the flash and screamed out, "Don't, Jim, Sandy ain't nothin' ter me!"

The cry came too late. The cruel blade had found Sandy's heart and in the hush that followed the awful moment, Jim vanished through the door and was lost in the night.

The Standard Life

(Continued from page 122)

combining to the ultimate profit of both parties, or in any other attempts to reach the goal by ways contrary to established experience. We have a common interest. Its ends are achievable and the means are plain to see. We cannot afford to divide our resources, I repeat, and, fortunately, there is no need for us to do so. We are rapidly approaching, if we have not already reached, the point where we can get as much, if not more, in exchange for our material or spiritual tokens from our own institutions as from the longer-established white competitors of them.

Let us take the field of insurance, as the field in which my own experience has lain, to develop this point.

No Negro seeking to protect his family and himself against the numerous mischances and ills of life, and the certain eventuality of death need go outside his own Race for the means. Insurance companies founded by and for Negroes, owned by legions of Negro stockholders sharing in the profits of operation and thereby keeping that profit as an asset of the Race, offer him every whit as substantial protection and variety of service as their competitors outside the Race. True, none of them as yet rank in financial resources with the Titans of modern business which have arisen in this field of activity among our white brethren. But they have no occasion to even consider such rivalry. The five or six large Negro-operated companies which come naturally to mind have resources more than adequate for their scope of operations and are rapidly adding to these resources. For purposes of illustration, I may be allowed to cite the company with which I am associated.

Founded by S. W. Rutherford twenty-six years ago with an initial capital of \$2,000, The National Benefit Life Insurance Company is still operated by the original management. But the \$2,000 of original capital has grown to \$250,000, with an additional \$256,000 deposited for the protection of policyholders. Today the company has approximately \$38,000,000 insurance in force, with 88 branch offices in 26 states and over 1,300 employees, all Negroes. From the highest executive to the newest messenger, the company is staffed by Negroes. Its stock is held by Negroes, largely in small lots, all over the country, and its profits of operation are consequently part of the economic resources of the Race.

There is just occasion for pride in this solid achievement. I do not mean pride in the narrow, individual sense. It is a thing which goes above and beyond the individual. It is pride in the Racial sense. Race consciousness, race solidarity, have made this growth possible.

The Critic

(Continued from page 138)

around these stronger whites expend their bile and viciousness on the weaker members of their own race as in Ireland and Russia, indeed, European history teems with it. Hence, as in the above quoted passage Roosevelt saw that the race argument was brought in as a bait much as Germany used it with the United States after the war. White working

men in America who, as was said, are compelled to form labor unions still continue to fall for the empty flattery and bunk about race superiority.

Whatever Goes Up Will Come Down

"Margaret Hume, daughter of the Washington, D. C., aristocracy, has eloped with Abdullah Entezam, Persian legation secretary, and society is shocked."
—*News Item.*

The seeds of this success were sown only twenty-six short years ago, and the progress from that tiny beginning to the manifold business of today, is the strongest possible proof of the vast potentialities within the grasp of the Race. If this much has been accomplished under the stress of conditions which, until very lately, have hampered every Negro enterprise which fell in any way under white supervision (and the nature of the insurance business, its fiduciary character, its strict control under the laws of each state in which it does business, brought it constantly under inspection) then what may not be achieved under the greatly improved conditions of today when we have largely won the confidence and the good will of the majority of the right thinking among our white associates, if as a Race, we work together to a common end?

Each of us, within the purview of our individual activities and lives, can further the cause. We can further it by giving our business to Negro institutions and enterprises. The larger and stronger Negro institutions can help their weaker confreres. My own company, again to employ an illustration from my individual experience, makes it a policy to work with and support its sister institutions whenever and wherever it consistently can. This co-operation takes many forms. What, in the lingo of the insurance office, is called re-insurance is one. Younger companies, working for a foothold, frequently need this sort of assistance. There is the Universal Life Insurance Company of Memphis, Tenn., for example. The Universal Life is a young but exceedingly up and coming organization. They often run across the opportunity to write large policies, and sometimes the sum involved is in excess of the risk which it is safe and proper for them to assume in addition to their outstanding obligations at the time. We then underwrite this excess, thereby enabling them to handle the balance safely and thus salvage business they might otherwise have to decline. Among fraternal orders, there is the Independent and Royal Order of David, of Morgantown, W. Va., for whom we do a good deal of this sort of thing, and it all helps to knit the fabric of racial economic independence more closely.

Let us drive the main point home to ourselves. We possess within our own racial limits all the means of life: spiritual, mental, physical or mechanical. Our common interests can not only be served within our racial communion but they can be better served therein.

Why then, in the name of progress and common-sense, should any of us forge new weapons for our business competitors outside the Race to use against us? Certainly none of us would thus defeat our own aims and purposes did we know clearly what we were doing.

And so, I repeat, let us continue to beware of the Greek bearing gifts! Just as specious arguments will be used to camouflage this latest issue of the "merger" of Standard Life with a white company and to persuade Negro dollars to drop into white pocketbooks, so will the fight be fought all along the line.

We cannot with our present facilities reach every Negro with the facts, and the comment thereon which will make those facts intelligible. We can, however, keep the light burning on high until all must eventually see it.

Race solidarity, Race loyalty, Race consciousness, call it what you will, is at once a buckler and a weapon. Let us never forget that.

When Darius the Great ruled the world east of the Golden Horn, Persian society of the humblest kind would have been just as scandalized at the marriage of one of Miss Humes' skin-clad, cannibal ancestors to one of its members. Then the whites were fit only as concubines. Later when Alexander the Great conquered Darius and annexed his kingdom, Alexander, as Herodotus says, attempted to fuse the two empires by marrying off many of his leaders and

women of his court to Persians. The venture didn't prove a success for the Persians still believed themselves superior to their conquerors.

Times change. All passes. Once a man, twice a child, applies to races and nations. The infant who today takes orders from his parents will in the process of time rule them in return. Just as today it is considered degrading for a daughter of the descendants of cannibals to marry a Persian, even so, the day may not be far distant, unless human nature changes greatly, when the descendant of a Congo cannibal will consider it below his dignity to marry a member of the now allegedly superior Nordic race.

* * *

Ludendorff, directing genius of the late Kaiser's army, says:

"Taken as a whole, the white race, as a result of the World War, is at a standstill all along the line. Everywhere you see signs of retirement—China, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey! How long the vastly intellectual and scientific superiority of the white race will maintain its dominance against the steadily growing fighting spirit of the vastly superior numerical yellow and brown races, only the historian of the distant future will record."

The distant future? Another European war—and it isn't so far off—and the East will see the West to bed.

Shafts and Darts

(Continued from page 129)

When mah favhe years dawhn hyare
ah done
And Ah gat bahck to Ja-maica
If ahnybody mahntions ships to me
They'll need an ahndertakher!

Chorus

* * *

Yes, a Black Star is sometimes an
ill star!

Theatre

(Continued from page 136)

translated by Browning-King and the United Credit Clothing Co. Hudson Seal coats and Buick cars are numerous enough to indicate that the community is materially prosperous. Ac-

The Letters of Davy Carr

(Continued from page 131)

I was doing that I was startled by a voice close to my ear, and here was my friend Caroline with a small tray and two dishes of unusually fine home-made ice cream flanked by two huge pieces of real cake. Who—being human—could refuse? So while I attacked one dish she seated herself calmly on the arm of my big chair, and regaled herself from the other, talking and laughing incessantly about everything and nothing. Then she insisted on dragging me downstairs to meet a particular friend of hers. I at first essayed a mild refusal.

"Now if I were a real 'cat,' like Helen Clay, I should say that you are so taken up with your 'dicty' friends that you don't want to meet anyone else. But then I am not a real 'cat.' But, come on, Old Grouchy, or I shall be compelled to resort to extreme measures."

Such is my helplessness in the hands of this young



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cording to Lester Walton, Harlemites have bought and are buying real estate the value of which runs way up in the millions. A number of expensive charities and an annual football classic are among the community luxuries, and the culture level is marked by several vociferous Greek letter societies. In short, Harlem, to all outward appearances, is quite as civilized as Bucharest.

It is only when you enter one of the local theatres that you begin to suspect that the culture level of the community is really on a par with that of Port Huron, Mich. For it is only once in a blue moon that these theatres offer entertainment that wasn't old stuff when Hector was a pup, and cheap and shoddy as well. Even when they make an attempt to present amusement that is not moth-eaten as in the case of "Getting Gertie's Garter," the result is usually the last word in ineptitude.

"Getting Gertie's Garter" was presented by practically the same company that presented "The Demi-Virgin" and

in the same way. That is they relied on the suggestiveness of the title to put the play over. This time the plan didn't work very well. It worked in "The Demi-Virgin" because there was always a couple of girls on the stage taking their clothes off. But "Getting Gertie's Garter" depends less on wholesale disrobing than on sensible direction and a fairly skillful handling of the dialogue. Neither was in evidence when I saw the farce. As a matter of fact the dialogue was throttled worse than it was in "The Demi-Virgin," and the directing as well as the casting of the piece was obviously planned in Central Islip.

The evening was not entirely lost, however. The Lafayette orchestra was in great form, especially the superbly nonchalant trap drummer. The audience was no less interesting than usual. There were not so many good looking women out, but there was a fair sprinkling of extremely dolichocephalic men present. "Dolichocephalic," translated into the vulgate, means "saddle-headed."

minx, that, when she takes this tone, there seems to be nothing to do but yield. So I arose with a cheerful grin, and prepared to follow her.

"I don't in the least care what you think about other folks," she went on, "but *this girl* is my very dearest friend, and if you don't like her I shall feel very badly." And then, in a peculiar tone, which puzzled me somewhat at the time, she added impressively, "She is not very goodlooking, you know, and I shall be heartbroken if you treat her indifferently on account of it. When you realize the beauty of her character, you will agree with me that she is the sweetest girl in town."

This showed the flighty, careless, irresponsible Caroline in a new light, indeed, and I was somewhat touched by her solicitude. I hastened to assure her that I was the last person in the world to be unduly influenced by mere outward beauty, or the lack of it. But I could not help wondering what special type of physical deformity would make her feel such a warn-

ing necessary, and I prepared myself accordingly. Then I was ushered into the dining room, and found quite a company gathered about the table. A trifle self-conscious, I was led to the head of the table, where sat the loveliest brown girl it has ever been my privilege to meet. Shut your eyes for a moment to the ugliness of the everyday world about you, and construct in your mind's eye a girl of medium height, with a figure which would make the Venus de Milo hunt a new corsetier, the most wonderful rosy velvety brown complexion, and a pair of flashing black eyes. Use your imagination a moment longer, and picture her attired in a costume which is the last word in simple good taste and elegance. I am aware that this paragraph might be blue-pencilled for excessive use of superlatives, but I refuse to remove a single one!

You can, of course, imagine my slight confusion when Caroline put her arm around the girl's neck, and said, in a voice in which she could not quite control the note of mischief triumphant:

"Tommie, let me present Mr. Carr. Mr. Carr, this is my dearest friend, Miss Dawson."

Then the saucy baggage looked straight into my face, and exploded in a perfect gale of laughter, somewhat to the mystification of everyone present, including Miss Dawson, who blushed a deep red and offered me her hand. Mrs. Rhodes, poor woman, who is being scandalized continually by Caroline, looked from one to the other of us with a sort of helpless bewilderment, but Genevieve, who always has the right word ready, said very sweetly:

"We should all enjoy a good laugh, Carrie. Don't be selfish."

But Caroline only laughed the more, and finally had a mild fit of hysterics, and had to be slapped on the back and given cold water. After a few lively minutes, order was restored, and then Genevieve returned to her request, this time pointing it my way.

"Please, Mr. Carr, we are dying of curiosity. Won't you tell us the joke?"

I looked at Caroline, and she laughingly nodded acquiescence. I turned to Miss Dawson and bowed slightly, and then I answered Genevieve.

"Caroline," said I, "made me promise very solemnly that I should be nice to Miss Dawson, even if she was very homely."

The spontaneous and hearty laugh which followed was a perfect tribute to the lady's beauty. The rest of the evening was pleasant enough, I must say. Caroline made me sit next to Miss Dawson, and the ice being so completely broken by the former's prank, we were soon fast friends. Another item or two, Old Pal—she has a nice voice, a well-furnished mind, and, judging from her countenance, she has character. A paragon, you will exclaim. I am not quite sure as yet, but thus far I have been able to check every requirement. Caroline and I took her home, and we had a lively time. Miss Dawson is quieter than Caroline, and seems to have more control over that rather wilful young person than does anyone else. I turned in when I got back, and slept the sleep of good digestion and a clear conscience.

I had just finished writing the above lines when the folks came in from the theater, and it was not long before I heard Caroline's little slippers tripping up the stairs. This time she had a handful of macaroons, which she was munching with every sign of enjoyment. She sat calmly on the arm of my chair and fed me macaroons in the most nonchalant way in the world.

It is a fact that her "pervasiveness" oftentimes irritates me, and she frequently interrupts me when it is disagreeable to be interrupted. Then, too, I somewhat resent her perfectly assured manner, as of one who either has no doubt of her welcome, or is quite indifferent to what I may think or feel. And yet, I guess I should not be absolutely ingenuous if I tried to make you believe that her presence is always unpleasant or tiresome.

"I saw Tommie tonight," she said, among other things. "She likes you, but I warned her against you. In spite of that she sent you her love. I told her that I should not deliver it, but, as you see, I have. Take it for what it is worth."

"I feel honored to be in Miss Dawson's thoughts at all," I said, "but, tell me, is the love of an up-to-date, modern girl worth having? Or, if worth having, is there any way in which to be sure of it?"

"Now you're too deep for me, Old Grouchy."

And with this answer Caroline bade me good night, and ran down to her own room, whence I could hear Genevieve's voice raised in tones of expostulation and reproach.

I have not seen Jeffreys for several days, in fact, but once since the night of the dance. From something Mrs. Rhodes said I think he is in Baltimore. Personally, I should like it better if he were not in this house. But, after all, I suspect that is a selfish desire. Though I express it, I am duly ashamed of it.

This is a dreadfully long letter, and, as I look it over, seems rather full of Caroline, perhaps too much so to be interesting to you. If you knew the young lady herself you would realize how hard it is to control her, in letters or anywhere else. I am going to a rather nice dance this week Friday. The Merry Coterie is giving a "dove" party, but inviting the men folks to come late to dance and eat. It sounds promising, for it's a lively bunch, and I expect to meet a good many people I have been wanting to know.

Be good to yourself. I am glad the people up that way are beginning to appreciate you. It's a true saying, Buddie, that "you can't keep a good man down"! So long, until next time!

DAVV.

Sunday A.M., Oct. 29, 1922.

I am happy to note that you survived my last letter. You must be a glutton for punishment to come back for more. While I am not sure I agree with your "diagnosis" concerning my friends, and especially your estimate of Miss Barton, still I am glad that I have succeeded in making you see them somewhat vividly, even if a trifle out of focus. I don't remember all that I wrote about Miss Barton, and, though I admit that one or two of my experiences with her might suggest the flirt, you would have to see her for yourself to get a total effect which would be reasonably just.

So you like Caroline best? I guess that's because I have written more about her, and I have written more because she is always around, and because she has a rather aggressive—I was about to say "obstrusive"—personality. But, my dearest friend, if you should at any one time see Caroline, and Lillian Barton, and Mary Hale, and Tommie Dawson—not to mention Genevieve and a half dozen others I have met—I'll wager you would have a brainstorm such as you have never experienced. I should give quite a tidy sum to see you in such a pickle.

Last Tuesday I spent the early part of the evening with Don Verney, and I tried to get his ideas regarding the present phase of our social life in cities like Washington and New York. His views are certainly interesting, though I am not quite prepared to say that I agree with him completely.

According to Don, we are suffering—and especially

those of us who call ourselves the "best people"—with a dreadful inferiority complex, to use the phrase of the celebrated Dr. Freud. We imitate the white American in everything, except the few points in which he really excels. Indeed, we have a gift for picking the wrong things to imitate. For example, we (our so-called "best people," I mean) have run wild on lavish spending and frivolous pleasures, in the modern American fashion, but we have not learned the art of hard work which underlies these things in the typically American life. Socially we are beginning to imitate the rather "sporty" classes of Americans, such as infest the ordinary summer resorts and are obtrusively present in all places of public entertainment, under the erroneous impression that these people are typical Americans, whereas in fact they are only the parasites who live on the great body of the American social organism. They spend from their superfluity, which has been piled up often through the efforts of generations of toilers, of which this present generation is but the last bitter dregs. Our women spend as much for a gown as a white woman with many times as great resources, and the wives of men with limited salaries feel constrained to make the conspicuous display which, in the case of white Americans, would be made only by the wives of the very rich or by irresponsible women of the underworld, who live but for the hour. Pretty dresses are all very well, and most of us realize their aesthetic and social value, but no middle class group seems to be justified in any great amount of *display for its own sake*, and quite apart from real needs. For example, during the festivities attendant upon the last inauguration, when there were many elaborate functions given within the space of a few days, one local lady wore five *different* costumes, each one expensive, to five successive dress affairs, and yet her husband is a man living on a salary, which, to a white American of the business world, would be moderate indeed. We have the lavishness of Jews, without their acquisitive ability, and the love of pleasure of the tropical races, while trying to compete with the hardest-headed and most energetic people in the world, the Yankee Anglo-Saxon. Since the law does not permit Sunday dances, one hall on You Street advertises dances to begin at midnight Sunday, and last until dawn on Monday, as if an eighteen-hour day is not long enough to satisfy our lust for pleasure. In no *similar* middle-class community among any other race in the world could such performances be made to pay, but the midnight show is a regular institution in colored Washington and New York.

As we talked, I noted Shands' *White and Black* lying on the table. I opened it at the passage in which the author makes one of his characters, an educated colored preacher, rebuke his brethren for wanting to be white, and for wanting only the fairest mulatto or quadroon women for wives.

"What do you think of that statement?" I asked, handing him the open book.

"I guess it's true of too many men in Washington as well as in Texas. There are circles here in which one rarely sees a woman of brown complexion, and the men choose the women, you know. Of course, the reasons and motives back of such a selection are complex. It isn't mere color prejudice in probably most of the cases, though it is in some, no doubt. In a country with such a hellish system of discrimination, not only in social life, but in employment, in places of public entertainment and service, on railways, ships, in schools, in stores, in courts of law, in army and navy—in every possible relation of life, in fact—the possibility of approximation to the white type becomes a very practical ideal. Who can blame a man if he wants his children to be as nearly white in appearance as possible, or, at any rate, perhaps more nearly white than he is himself?"

"From a practical viewpoint, certainly no one!" I said. "But what of those who, while living *socially* as colored people, in their desire to be treated as white in public places, "cut" their too palpably colored friends? Do you uphold them?"

"No, I don't!" he answered. "But if I don't uphold them, and if I could not find it in my heart to imitate

them, I at least understand. Some of these people are holding government jobs which they would lose if they were known to be colored, so they have to protect themselves. They are, therefore, white downtown and colored uptown, which is a most regrettable situation, whatever the extenuating circumstances. But it is not only those who are dependent on their apparent whiteness for their chance to make a living, who do this sort of dodging. There are those who do it merely because they want to be able to pass as white in restaurants, theatres and stores. Their reason is not quite so good, but, after all, they would say, and with some justice, that *it is a reason*. There is no doubt that, especially in the upper strata of society, and particularly among the women, a very fair skin is regarded as a distinct and undisputable evidence of superiority. Just as the Germans tried—and almost succeeded—in making the French believe that they were a degenerate people, so has white America for the moment succeeded in making some of us feel our inferiority, even though we refuse to admit it. Yes, we have—many of us—a distinct inferiority complex!"

"What would you say should be the attitude of those fair enough to "pass"? Should they never go anywhere where their whiteness will procure them better treatment than would be accorded them if they were known to be colored?"

"No, I should not take such an extreme position. If that were the case, there would be very few places left for us in Washington. My rule is not so far to seek, after all. I go where I please, when the motion strikes me, and in all places where one must pay for what one gets, I accept gladly the best treatment my appearance procures for me. But if by chance any friend or acquaintance comes in whose color clearly indicates his race connection, I make it a point of honor to treat him just as cordially as our previous intimacy would warrant."

When you think it over, that's a pretty good rule. Many more things Don said, and many were the illustrations he gave, but I shall not overload this one letter with them. Too much solid food in one meal is a bad thing.

* * *

I believe I said in my last that I had not seen Jeffreys for several days. Well, he turned up the other evening, a trifle haggard, perhaps, but more dapper and prosperous-looking than ever. As Caroline would say, if it's a question of mere clothes, he surely is "the class"! I was in the lower hall talking to Mrs. Rhodes and Caroline when he dropped out of a taxi in front of the door. To the questions as to where he had been, he gave serene and untroubled responses.

"To tell the exact truth," he said, with his widest smile. "I have been to my tailor in Philadelphia. I was getting positively shabby, you know."

If that were the case, he surely brought home clothes enough. He had on a new fur-lined overcoat whose cost would dress an ordinary young fellow for a whole year, and then some, and a diamond ring such as only a champion pugilist or a circus-owner might wear. It was easily worth the price of an ordinary automobile. I have noticed before that Jeffreys is very much given to wearing expensive jewelry, especially rings, of which he seems to have a great variety.

Well, he laughed and joked for a few minutes, fished from his bag a five-pound box of Huyler's most expensive candy for Caroline, and ran upstairs, where he spent the time before dinner getting straight. I happened to be looking at Caroline as she followed him with her eyes—a steady, half-puzzled, reflective look. She caught me watching her, and blushed, I thought, just a trifle.

Caroline, as I said, is taking evening work at the University in order to make up some needed credits on her college record. She goes to classes every evening but Saturday, all of which does not prevent her from having company after 8:30 or 9:00 several nights a week. Very often she comes in with some young chap who has brought her home in his car. She is indeed a popular young lady. But I should hate to have a sister of mine pawed over as she is by these modern youngsters. I heard one of the

older men refer to them as cubs, and indeed it's a good name, when one sees them maul the girls around. The whole arrangement between girls and fellows seems to have changed since I came up in a little provincial Southern city. The girls do all the leading, a good deal of the inviting, and more than their share of the wooing, and the boys seem to expect it. When you speak to them, they laugh and say, "Oh, well, this is 1922!" That answer seems to fit almost any situation. While Caroline seems rather independent in most ways, she does let the fellows maul her about too much. I never like to see it. I am not used to it. In my early days a fellow who tried it would get called down pretty fast and pretty hard.

Caroline is taking French and history in her classes, and she often asks my help on some point or other. In fact, she has the habit of coming up to my room to study or write when I am out in the evening, for, if she is in her room on the floor below, she is more likely to be disturbed. On the night of Jeffreys' arrival she came up about nine o'clock, having sent away her escort as soon as she reached home.

"I didn't know you were in," she said. "Would I bother you if I curled up here to study? Genevieve has two or three teacher friends downstairs, and, if I am in sight, I can have no peace."

I was busy writing, but I assured her that she was welcome. Before settling herself down, she looked inquiringly at Jeffreys' door.

"Did he look as if he were going out for the evening?" she asked.

When I assured her he did, she stretched out with her book under the wall-electric as if relieved, and said no more for some time. After a long while she came over and sat on the arm of my chair, which seems to be her favorite post, and asked me to translate a troublesome passage from her French text. While we looked on the book together, she leaned against me, and put her right arm over my shoulder. It was very sweet and very intimate, but I could give Saint Anthony a few pointers about temptations. When the difficulties had been satisfactorily smoothed out, and she had gone back to her place on the couch, I said, in a teasing mood, "Don't you ever read and study in Mr. Jeffreys' room?"

"No," she answered quickly, looking up at me.

"Why not?" I persisted.

"Because he would not understand."

"Understand what?"

"Well, because he might *misunderstand*."

"And you think *I won't*?" I continued, taking a sort of malicious satisfaction in cornering her—or, rather *trying* to corner her.

"No. I *know* you won't."

"But—*why*?"

She smiled at me serenely, and was it indulgently?

"Because, Old Grouchy, *you are you*."

I was checked for a moment. Then I returned to the attack.

"You have only known me a few days, let us say, and yet do you assume that you know me so precisely? Am I so transparent, so shallow as all that? May I not be, for example, a monument of deceit and duplicity? How do you know I am not? I am afraid your conclusions are not entirely flattering to me."

She laughed a merry little laugh, and turned on her elbow to look at me.

"Old Grouchy, I though you were old and wise. Or are you just trying to draw me out? Well, I have seen transparent water that was not shallow, as far as that goes, so your analogy does not hold exactly. More than that, I am by way of being complimentary, but you, like most weak mortals, would rather be thought inscrutably wicked than naively good. And yet you have the nerve to preach to *me*!"

"You're wrong there, little lady. I never *preach* to you!"

"You may call it by another name, but I choose to call it preaching! Of course it is not always expressed orally. You have very eloquent eyes, Old Grouchy, did

anyone ever tell you that? You surely can *look* disapproval!"

She laughed, and I laughed, and I dropped the subject, as being too personal.

* * *

Everyone here is talking about the Thanksgiving Day game between Howard and Lincoln. I suppose you recall how our New York friends tried to persuade us to go to Philadelphia last year. Well, this year's game will be in Washington, and the university folks and the society folks are getting ready for "big doings." The Rhodeses expect a house full of company, to judge from the talk downstairs. Caroline is having new dresses made, and I have recently heard her complaining that her fur coat is not "fit to wear to a dogfight," to quote her exact words. If Genevieve is making any preparations, she makes no outward display, but "little sister" is not so reticent. Mrs. Rhodes, usually so cheerful, was complaining today of the high cost of living, which in this particular case, means the high cost of clothing. It seems the boy, who, as you may remember, is a medical student, must have a new outfit, for his "frat" is turning on some great stunts during the Thanksgiving recess. I sympathized with her, as one who knew what trouble and expense it is to bring up a boy. Well, have you not given me lots of trouble, old fellow, not to say expense? So, using you as my particular burden, I listened to the good lady with the most sympathetic consideration, and thus, I hope, advanced myself several grades in her good graces. And we both know, don't we, Buddie, that it pays,—yea, even a thousandfold—to try to please one's landlady!

Just to prove how very right I am in this last assertion, as the upshot of our conversation I was invited to partake of some very special extra fritters, with "gobs" of butter and some heavenly syrup. Let me tell you, my friend, the Rhodes' house is completely appointed for living, from the outermost part of the kitchen porch to the attic door. (As I have never been in the attic, I can't say as to that.) Don't you envy me from the very bottom of your soul? You know you do! I know that third floor front in Harlem which you inhabit—one could hardly say you *live* there!

But, before I forget it—can't you come down to the game? I know I ought not tempt you from the hard path of virtue and devotion to learning which you are now following, but this once won't hurt. We had about decided, had we not, that you were to come Christmas anyway, but I am wondering if you might not enjoy the Thanksgiving festivities more. From what I hear, there will be college folks from everywhere, and we are sure to meet many old friends. Think it over, and write me in your next, so that I can have time to make plans.

Monday, October 30, 1922.

As I write these lines it is nearly twelve o'clock, and the whole house, except Jeffreys, whom I hear whistling softly in his room, is asleep. Before me lies a note, written in a pretty but not too legible hand. "Dear old Grouchy (it says): If you don't write me a very brief essay in your best Baton Rouge French, on 'Rousseau and the Romantic Movement,' I shall surely get an 'F,' and then, of course, I shall die of mortification. Certainly you will not wish to have my untimely demise on your conscience. In serene confidence, I await your decision. Your devoted pupil, C." *Pupil*—indeed. Now what—I ask for the one-hundredth time—is a poor man to do?

So I close this long, and, I fear, rather prosy letter, in order that I may write, in my "*best Baton Rouge French*," an essay on Rousseau and the Romantic Movement, for a lazy girl who is getting her beauty sleep in order that she may ensnare some other unsuspecting man tomorrow.

Don't forget to tell me your decision about the football game. By the way, Caroline says she brought Tommie Dawson into my room yesterday when I was out—oh, this plague of women!—and the handsome Miss Tommie admired your picture very much. But I have not told

you how my room in arranged, have I? Well, I'll save that for next time. Do you remember that lovely brown beauty in Savannah you were so crazy about in the hectic fall of 1917? Well, Tommie Dawson has her backed off the boards! Enough said! Goodnight, my friend!

DAVY.

The Children's Hour

(Continued from page 128)

the village representatives of law and order met them at the cross roads and assured them that every agitator had vanished, and to "please not hurt anyone"! And how when they had ridden more slowly into the town precincts, behold John and Herman Hoffman and a few other neighbors were waiting—also grimly defiant—to say tersely with their Teutonic accent: "Taylor, we heard 'bout t'em bums! We thought you might want to clean out the bunch and we came to help!" But, as the officers had stated, the "bums" had vanished, and so brothers Hoffman and Bruce had ridden home again. And that had ended the hurling of epithets in that community for many years!

The story evidently ran through Bobby and Jojo's minds simultaneously for the same query came from their lips. "Grandfather, do tell us a story about when you were a boy!" And Jojo added:

"O! course you couldn't have fought in the Civil War, Granddaddy! You are certainly not that old, but can't you tell us something about the days of '61?"

"Do, please, sir! We're going to be that far in history class when school opens, and it will be fine to be able to tell something that actually happened then, that's not in the books," Bobby added.

"I won't have time now, children! Grandmother has dinner waiting, I'm sure! And after dinner, I must look after my tobacco and then spray the melon vines—but if I had a youngster or two to help me—" and he glanced slyly at the two nearby, "I might save lots of time and then we could remember about my boyhood together."

"We will help, we will help," and they scampered off to the house with him, infinitely cheered!

To be continued

The Question Box

[In this new department of THE MESSENGER we shall endeavor to answer all questions submitted to editors. Questions should be short and concise. Writing should be on one side of the paper and in ink.]

A. W. asks: Does an emergency still exist in the housing situation in New York City, and are permanent rent laws needed?

Answer: Here are two questions the Negro tenants of Harlem will have to consider. While the landlords are contending that the emergency is over and that the temporary rent laws should be repealed, investigation shows that there are very few apartments to be had, and the rents for them are no lower than in 1920-21-22-23 and 24. In many instances the rents are higher. Negro tenants are still paying twice the rents paid by the former white tenants, with a very few exceptions. There is, however, a way out for the tenant who is paying exorbitant rents. We are informed that according to the rent laws a landlord is not entitled to over 8% on his investment, hence, the tenant by taking the landlord to court is quite likely to get a reduction. The tenant has the right before paying the

third month's rent to refuse to pay the landlord, the rent he demands on the ground that it is unreasonable and oppressive. This action is followed by a summons to court, a filing of a bill of particulars and trial by jury. Then the judge and the jury determine the rent the tenant should pay, and not the landlord.

Gossips

You heard that tale
About Susie Brown?
No? Lan' sakes! it's
All over town;
They say her house
Is fixed up fine,
And—it's whispered 'round
She's brewin' wine.
It's tellin' how
Sich things gets out,
But folks is talkin',
Around, about.
An' she, walks in
An' out that house,
As meek and mosey,
As a mouse!
Since Dr. Stiffneck
Turned her down;
They say she's rushin'
Old Sam Brown!
That fur coat an'
Them diamond rings!
It's tellin' where she
Gets her things?
Lord! let me go,
It's half past four,
My ole man's ringin'
At the door;
I got my dinner
Yet to do
Don't tell a soul
What I tole you.

ANN LAWRENCE,

An Ode to a Wet Tree

Dear Tree! Outside of my window,
Don't mind the driving rain,
That pours over you in torrents:
The sun will shine again.
Gentle breezes too, may blow,
To dry your leaves once more,
And make a Tree, resplendent;
As green as once before.

"Dear Friend, behind your window,
I love the gentle rain,
I love the little rain drops;
That patter against your pane.
God sends the needed shower,
God sends the driving rain;
He sends again the sunshine,
But, sendeth none in vain."

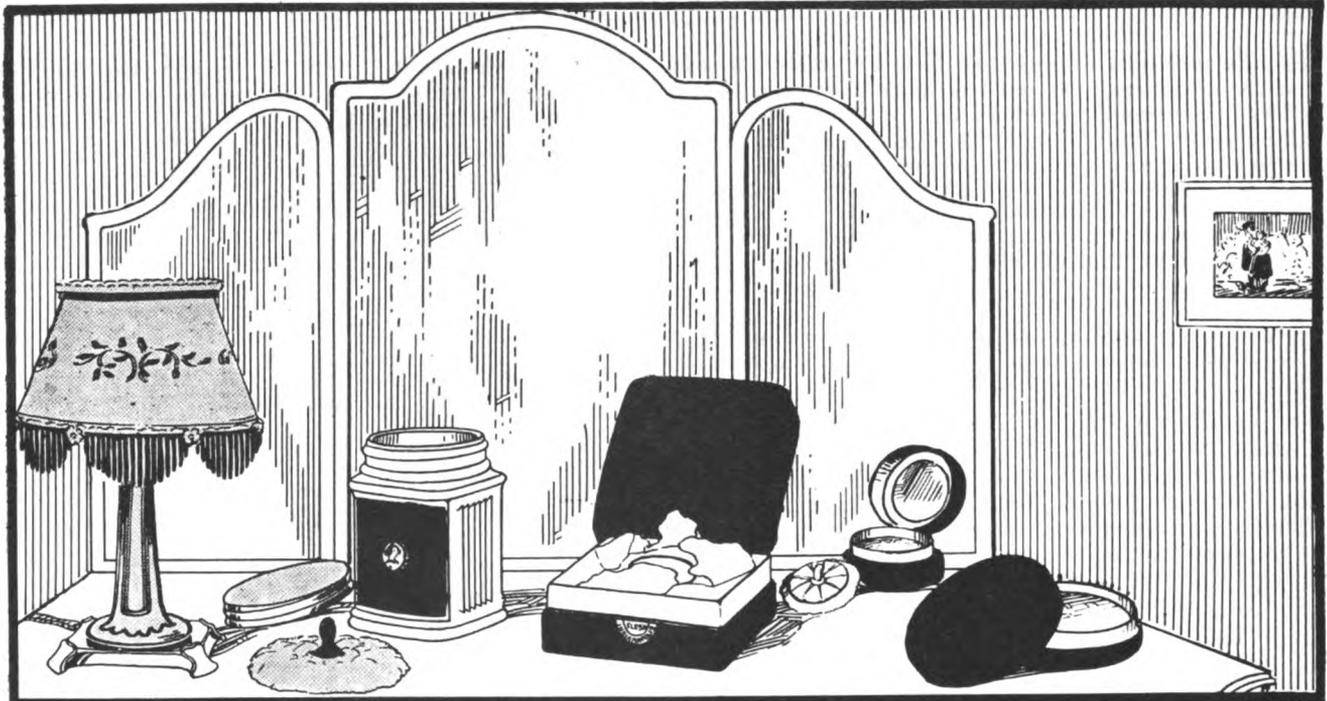
ANN LAWRENCE,

An Ode to Bobbed Hair

The Electrician did—
The door bell,
The Carpenter did—
The stair;
But—when it comes
To shingling,
The Barber does
The Hair!

Your plaits and
Sweeping tresses,
Coiffeurs and Psyche knob
Cannot hold
A candle to—
The clean cut, boyish bob.

ANN LAWRENCE,



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Vegetable Shampoo
Superfine Face Powder
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Witch Hazel Jelly
Tan-Off
Complexion Soap
Toilet Water

Perfume, Etc.

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