

THE MONITOR

A Weekly Newspaper devoted to the civic, social and religious interests of the Colored People of Nebraska and the Nation, with the desire to contribute something to the general good and upbuilding of the community and of the race.

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THE COMPENSATIONS OF WEAKNESS

It is a bit out of the true philosophy of the eternal that there is no condition in life but has its compensations. Recently our race press has bemoaned the weakness of the race throughout the world and, with a united voice, cried out to the powers to remember it at the peace table. No doubt but that they will be remembered, but even for the dark races there is a humor in the situation in Europe today and they should thank themselves that their very weakness means their safety.

The slogan of permanent peace has gone forth all over the world, but do not even the gods laugh at the sound? Russia and Germany are both in the throes of eternal troubles which bode ill for peace; Poland is fighting a Red army on one hand and a German army on the other and claiming more territory that it is intended she shall have; Serbia asserts that she is ready to slap Italy's face if she does not get part of Italy Irredentia and certain Adriatic ports; Spain is on the verge of revolution because of the pro-German and pro-Ally factions; the Irish have downed the national party and are making ready to declare Ireland an independent republic, and England is hesitating in demobilizing her army until she knows just what the Emerald Isle proposes to do; Austria is split into a dozen rival and fighting units and France wants new boundaries which excite interest and opposition. Even the United States has upset England by her secretary of the navy proposing a naval program that will make England take second place.

Europe is at this moment a hotbed of all that is antithetic of peace and even the most farseeing cannot glimpse the coming of any condition that will quiet the troubled waters and bring harmony to the many nations and races. And through it all Asia and Africa are tolerably quiescent. It may be that age and wisdom and experience bid them wait and hint that at some future day European strife will destroy European power and those who are strong will become weak through the excess of greed and those who are weak will become strong through the very weakness which they now deplore.

THE NEW GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

CONSTRUCTIVE! That is the one word that comes into the wind of every Nebraska citizen who reads Governor McKelvie's message to the state legislature. We recall no recent message that has in it such virility and practicability as this. What is more, the governor does not propose new expenditures without showing how sensible consolidation in other lines will help meet, and in many instances, balance them. We realize, too, that our governor is thoroughly a business man and in no sense a dreamer of impossible and improbable dreams. We congratulate him upon his message and assure him that he has every Nebraskan behind him in his effort to realize the consummation of his proposals. Let the legislature get busy.

LAUGHTER AND SONG

HAVE you noticed that whenever men tell tales of the world war and mention the black troops, they always speak of how our boys were laughing and singing. In the camps and on their hikes, when reviewed by the great generals and in the thunders of guns and rain of shells, they never forgot how to laugh and always remembered how to sing. It is spoken of as a characteristic of our race and surely Nature never endowed us with a greater gift or more blessed privilege. It was Bolingbroke who said, "I have noticed that in comedies the best actor plays the droll. Thus it is in life—wise men spend their time in mirth, 'tis only fools who are serious." And who shall deny that the greatest fighters in the war were those black boys who laughed and sang? Who will wonder why it was that commanders and colonels who knew, were eager to lead black men to battle? No psychologist has told us of the relation between mirth and bravery, but the more one thinks of it the more he is convinced that laughter and cowardice never go together. It is a characteristic of our race, we should be proud of and glory in. It

spells of an inheritance that is as old as time and one that could only come from a long, long experience with life and its futile vanities.

At Sparta there were a thousand temples and shrines to a thousand different divinities and the altar to laughter has survived them all. In this, perhaps, may come a glimmer of a truth that the race which has learned best how to laugh and sing is destined to survive all others and to continue to laugh and sing when sorrow and hate and greed have rung down the curtain for those who despised them.

OUR NEW CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

THE MONITOR has been especially fortunate in securing for its readers two men of national, indeed of world-wide prominence, who will become contributing editors. The first is Hon. John E. Bruce, the famous "Bruce Grit" of Negro journalism, author of The Negro Soldier and president of the Negro Society for Historical Research; the second, Prof. John W. Cromwell, author of The History of the American Negro and secretary of the Negro academy. Both of these men are scholars of repute, lovers of the race and more familiar with the history and achievements of the Negro than perhaps any other two men of our times.

The Monitor feels that its readers want and deserve the best to be had in the way of news, articles and racial literature, and it is with the greatest of pleasure that we make this announcement. All may now look forward to these editorials and articles as distinct contributions to racial information and racial uplift.

Obvious Observations

Flags were at half mast, the world has paused for a moment in its mad whirl and the children of earth bow their heads in sorrow. Teddy is dead.

Pleasant weather has come back again, but we have no welcome for the flu.

The bolsheviks are making things warm in Germany. It looks as though the people are determined to rule sure enough in some places.

When some one asked Von Bernsdorf why der kaiser hauled himself to Holland, Vony saght, "Where in hell else could he go?" And it was some answer and some question both together.

One million boys home in the next six weeks! Clear the decks and get ready for some STUNTS!

Have you contributed your bit to the Armenian fund? If you haven't, spare a penny or two because they need it.

What have you done about those New Year resolutions? Flung 'em in the fire, I 'pose?"

You just ought to see the Hamitic League of the World's certificate of membership! Some class; Cecil, some class!

How long before the governor will do something about the high cost of eating?

If you aren't a skater these days, it's hard to stand up on Omaha's sidewalks, so our friends say. Ditto.

Gov. Bilbo of Mississippi talked right out in church when he told the N. A. C. P. to take a trip to the hot place, didn't he?

Thanking you kindly for your munificent silence, we will now light up this cigarette butt and be happy.

SKITS OF SOLOMON

The Message

GOVERNOR M'KELVIE, better known as Slippery Sam, the new state boss, has startled us sovereign citizens from the bogs of dull dark disinterest. The other day he appeared before the new and nifty legislature and with a mouthful of solid and substantial chatter, bridled its attention, harnessed its interest and lassoed its assistance. The governor told the boys in unmistakable terms that he means business and that they better get busy. He didn't bankrupt the rhetoric and friend Addison for language fodder, but told 'em in plain American that there was plenty of worth while stuff for 'em to do and if they were there for business, to show him. He suggested readjustment, gave radicalism a purple patch under the oculars, boosted centralization on the top shelf, handed nepotism an

uppercut, shook hands with prohibition, put his arm around equal suffrage and kissed her full on her cherry red lips, slipped a dose of disloyalty to the educational institutions, urged a bit of national training, threw out a collection of agricultural programs that will tickle the palates of the farmers and make old H. C. L. shiver in his boots, proposed an urgent invitation to new manufacturers, hauled out the urgency of good roads for farmers and auto speed fiends, said there should be a tax on buzz wagons, showed the penitentiary where prisoners could quit being gentlemen of leisure and earn their beans and buns, bespoke a new capitol to replace the ancient edifice of prehistoric times, said state parks should go into the advertising business, and laid a laurel wreath on the graves of our boys. It sure was some message Sam handed out and if the legislative bunch brings down some real realities, governor needn't worry about somebody else warming his seat two years from now. All we can say now is, "Go to it, Sam; we're widcha with both big feet clingin' to terry firmy."

SELF-SEEING

Is it not possible that the certain condescension in foreigners toward America which irritated Lowell into writing one of his cleverest essays is now being repaid in kind by America rather more fully than the circumstances demand? It is true that high ideals inspired our entrance into the war; it is also true that we expected to gain nothing for ourselves. But is this quite the singular virtue some would have us believe?

After all, we had grievances to redress, though none so serious as Europe had suffered. It was perhaps a very human desire to avenge our dead, rather than an enthusiasm for the fourteen points, that nerved our men at Chateau Thierry and St. Mihiel. And if now the pose of the bloodless altruist becomes too irritating may our critics not be moved to say, first, that we took nothing for ourselves because there was nothing we want, and, second, that we ourselves have done in the New World what we ask not to do in the Old? America has been a fairly aggressive nation as such things go. Even the present administration has been arranging matters to suit itself in Hayti and San Domingo, without taking the slightest trouble to consult the fortunate wards of its beneficence. A just peace is to be desired above all things. But is there not an unpleasant moral egotism in the assumption that we are the principal arbiter of what is just?—New York Tribune.

OLD DESIRES

The January Crisis says: "The New Year," sang the Persian poet, "awakens Old Desires." Certainly at no time during the year does the realization of unfulfilled hopes weigh so heavily. Today when the whole world waits while the delegates at the Peace Table formulate the new rights of man, we are conscious that for us discrimination still lowers. All Europe rejoices in its new gifts—the British proletariat is promised a liberal labor program; the Czecho-Slovaks are tasting the joys of nationalism; France is rid of the Prussian menace; Belgium is bidden to bind up her wounds. But our men, who have helped mightily to awaken and preserve the spirit which makes these things possible, are returning to what?

To a country whose plea for a democracy includes white men only; to a South which says openly that the Negro need not because of services in this war expect greater privileges, that he must be kept "in his place," and that the South intends to define that place. Political equality, economic opportunity, civil rights, justice before the law, all these, our "old desires," are as far away as ever, unless we take a desperate, unflinching stand.

One thing is in our favor and that is the awakening of the social conscience. Hartley Withers says, "Hitherto it has always been assumed, except by a few voices crying in the wilderness, that by the force of inexorable economic laws, every nation must have its human dregs, living in a state of half-clad, half-fed misery and making a mockery of the civilization which allows their existence." The world knows better now. However desirable, however expedient, men may damn such a state, society is conscious that no scheme of life can be right or complete which dooms those who toil hardest, to get the meanest share of the good things of life and to have no chance of living in the fullest sense.

But this social conscience can avail nothing without our own deliberate and concerted effort. In this year of general reconstruction we black Americans must fight, must push forward, with steadier heart and nerve than ever before, until we are well over the top. We must do combat on our own Western Front. And in order to win, we have got to put aside bickering and factionalism, trivial jealousies and disputes. See what the Southern States, by pooling their race prejudice,

have been able to accomplish since that other Reconstruction. On, then, Black Americans, and remember the pass-word—Organization and Co-operation.

RETROSPECTION

OF late I have been reading much of the league of nations, the freedom of the seas and the proposals of self-determination. On one particular day I read an excerpt from an English paper that said, "self-determination was not intended to apply south of the Suez." I glanced at the calendar and when I saw it marked as the sixth one of the New Year, I remembered that just a year ago that day I had spent a pleasant afternoon in the company of a little old lady "way down south." She was old from the weight of years and from the weight of cares which she and her people had suffered. She had taught school in the south.

She told me a how a few years ago a strange man came to the south, speaking to her people. He was a short thick-set, highly intelligent looking black man and he talked in the most excellent English, with a foreign accent. He talked to them of a faraway country that belonged to them, a country that was beautiful and bountiful, and where jim-crowism, disfranchisement and segregation were never known. He asked his poor persecuted hearers to go with him and many of them, together with this little woman, sold all their worldly goods and followed him.

They journeyed to New York, procured a ship, provisioned it and made ready to sail. But the government interfered, halted the expedition and held them for many months. Finally they were released. The ship set sail, arrived at a southern port and took aboard many strong followers, who had not become disheartened through the months of waiting. Again they set sail and this time for the port of their dreams.

Some weeks later they touched a port at the far side of the Atlantic and again the strong arm of a strong nation reached out and held them. More months passed and eventually, without a word of explanation, they were released with only two weeks of provisions in the hold of their ship and their destination yet a long way off.

But the winds were kind and the sea smooth and at last they landed on the rough and rugged coast of Africa, the native home of Chief Sam Sam, their leader and dreamer, who hoped that his followers would become the nucleus of a new empire in the great black continent. But the dream was doomed. Inexperience, hunger and hardships destroyed the morale of his people, and they lost hope. At the very end of their journey, when strong hearts and valiant spirit might have helped their vision come true, they quailed and sent a call across the sea to their own government to take them back. The United States sent a ship and took them all on board, all but the little black leader who had dreamed the big dream and was now called a fool and a knave.

As I think of it now, I wonder whether Chief Sam Sam was a fool or a martyr? I wonder if he might

not have been really sincere and that his call to his race was the voice of a loving heart that longed to make them free. I wonder if, long before this world war, the idea of "self-determination" had come to him and that it meant to him a chance for his suffering race. I believe it did.

FRED C. WILLIAMS.

MUSICAL EVENT AT LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL

Kansas City, Mo.—Kansas Cityans were given a rare musical treat when seven white musical artists of the Studio building gave a most pretentious program in a monthly free concert at the Lincoln high school. A number of high class songs and mu-

sical selections were given. The artists found a large and appreciative audience. A feature of the program was the playing of Miss Eaton, violinist, who played three Negro characteristics, composed by W. Clark Smith, local composer. This splendid program was due to the untiring efforts of Prof. J. R. E. Lee, who has done much to make the free and monthly musicals successful.

For moving, expressing and hauling call Douglas 7952. Penn and Sibley.—Adv.

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THE HAMITIC LEAGUE OF THE WORLD
933 North 27th Street. Omaha, Neb.

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Sixteenth Street

OPPOSITE POSTOFFICE

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Right Into Heart of Business District