

# THE MONITOR

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO THE INTERESTS OF COLORED AMERICANS

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## ARTICLE XIV, CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

### Citizenship Rights Not to Be Abridged

1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

### THINKING

AN amusing story is told of the discomfiture of a rather brilliant lawyer by the reply of a witness whom he was examining. The witness was a Negro of quite limited education, but his reply shows the ready wit with which our race is endowed. The lawyer said, "Now, sir, will you tell the court what you know about this affair?"

"Yassah, I think—"  
"We don't want you to tell what you think," interrupted the lawyer, "but what you know about it. Tell us what you know."  
"Yassah. As I was about to say, I think that—"  
"Don't tell us what you think, I have told you once, and I repeat it, but what you know," impatiently interrupted the lawyer, "Now, go on and tell us what you know."  
"Yassah. Well, as I tried to explain, I think—"

"There you go again. Do you understand plain English? Haven't I told you that I don't want you to 'think,' but to tell us what you know," again testily interrupted the lawyer. Scratching his head a moment, the witness retorted, "Look heah, boss; I ain't no lawyah, lak you all is. I can't talk without thinkin'."  
Clearly the joke was on the lawyer. We are, however, unwilling to let this amusing incident pass with the laughter which it evokes. Would not we all be better off if we realized the wisdom of not trying to talk without thinking? As a people we should think more and talk less. A great deal of sorrow and trouble come from thoughtless talking. Thinking is a prime essential of intelligent powers of thinking.

### LOOKING WITHIN

WE hear a great deal of complaining about barriers which others place in our way. While these limitations and embarrassments are not to be entirely forgotten, yet is it not true that we overestimate their influence in impeding our progress? Instead of spending so much time and energy in looking at hindering causes without, would it not be well to spend more time considering the impediments within ourselves, individually and racially, and use most of our energy in trying to remove these? We spend too little time in serious self-examination of our individual and racial weaknesses. The most

successful business man, or professional man either, and this is equally true of any worthwhile workman, is he who studies his business in order that he may see just where it is weak or faulty so that he may correct the defects which give his competitor the advantage. He looks within rather than without. He knows full well that if he can raise the standard of his business or profession to the highest point he need not fear his competitor. So it is with us. By correcting our faults, individual or racial, and raising our moral, intellectual and economic standards and status to the highest degree we need have no anxious concern about what barriers others may put in our way. We will be able to surmount them and compel the recognition which we deserve. Let us look within first. Let us know ourselves. Self-knowledge leads to sovereign power and self-knowledge is gained by looking within.

### A GOOD RATIO

LAST WEEK Central High school's mid-year class contained thirty-nine graduates. Of this number three were colored students. This is the highest ratio of graduates we have ever had. If in every class our students constituted one-thirteenth of the total what an excellent record this would be and how it would raise our intellectual standard. We hope to see such a ratio eventually attained and maintained.

### FOR PUBLIC DEFENDER

ROBERT STREHLOW who made such a good record in the last legislature has filed for the nomination for Public Defender. Mr. Strehlow is a young attorney of good ability and excellent character. He has and deservedly a large number of friends among our people. The Monitor can and does most cheerfully commend Mr. Strehlow to the favorable consideration of our voters who will have the privilege of voting for his nomination in the April primaries. He rang true in the legislature and will do the same as Public Defender, should he be nominated and elected.

### FOR COUNTY ASSESSOR

FOUR YEARS as deputy county assessor in which he has made good is the chief credential upon which S. E. Klaver has filed for the nomination, to be decided at the April

primaries, for the office of County Assessor. If experience, ability and integrity count with the electorate as they should Mr. Klaver should have no difficulty in securing the nomination. The primaries are two months off, but it is none too early for Mr. Klaver's friends and supporters, among whom The Monitor accounts itself, to begin boosting for Mr. Klaver.

### BOOK CHAT

By Mary White Ovington, Chairman, Board of Directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

"Negro Poets and Their Poems"—By Robert T. Kerlin. Published by The Associated Publishers, Inc., Washington, D. C. Price \$1.50. Postage 10c extra.

"It would seem that there must dawn upon us, shaped by the poems of this collection, a new vision of the Negro, and a new appreciation of his spiritual qualities, his human character. A profounder human sympathy with a greatly hampered, handicapped and humiliated people must also ensue from such considerations as these poems will induce. One of the poets here represented cries out, as if from a calvary, 'We come slow struggling up the hills of Hell.' Another, in milder but not less appealing tone, cries, 'We climb the slopes of life with throbbing hearts.'"

"This appeal, expressed or implicit throughout the entire range of present-day Negro verse, an appeal sometimes angrily, sometimes plaintively uttered, an appeal to mankind for fundamental justice and for human fellowship on the broad basis of kinship of spirit, may fittingly be the final note of this anthology: 'We climb the slopes of life with throbbing hearts.'"

This ending to Mr. Kerlin's anthology gives the keynote of the method employed by him in selecting poems among an author's published works. He has not chosen first for poetic excellence, though, of course, he has taken only what he felt to be good work, but he has looked primarily at the spirit of the verse, at its human

significance. He has thus built up a volume that should stand in the American library by the side of "The Voice of the Negro", that compilation of the Negro's attitude toward life as revealed in his utterances in newspapers and magazines. Both books, if the whites will only look into them, will give, as Mr. Kerlin says, a new vision and a new appreciation of the spirit and purpose of the colored race. Seventy-three poets are represented in this volume, from Phyllis Wheatley to Georgia Douglas Johnson, from Jupiter Hammon to Claude McKay. The book is well illustrated with photographs of some of Meta Warwick Fuller's noble sculpture, and with pictures of thirty-eight of the poets—though how some of these men and women could send such unflattering photographs of themselves it is hard to understand. There are eight chapters starting with the very early verse of the spirituals and the folk songs, the latter made accessible to us through the collections of Talley and Blades, next taking up the first formal poets, Phyllis Wheatley, Horton, Frances Harper, and then continuing to the free verse of Rababkerief, Langston Hughes and Anne Spencer. Each poet is introduced by Mr. Kerlin with some biographical word and an appreciative line regarding the poem or poems chosen by the collector. There is also an index of authors with short biographical notes. The book is painstakingly put together by a careful scholar.

It would be foolish to pass judgment on the poetry in this volume. As the words I have quoted at the beginning of this review show, the book is a poetic voice of protest, a spiritual cry that a white southerner lovingly and appreciatively gathers together and puts before us. It is a book for the white man to read and gain thereby in sympathy. The colored reader will miss some names, that of Countee Cullen, for instance, but he must remember that this is a collection primarily of spiritual protest, secondarily of excellent verse. And he will have reason to be proud of the many beautiful lines and verses gathered for him here, to be kept in permanent form, a memory of the dead and a call for action from the living.

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# Nebraska Civil Rights Bill

Chapter Thirteen of the Revised Statutes of Nebraska, Civil Rights. Enacted in 1898.

Sec. 1. Civil rights of persons. All persons within this state shall be entitled to a full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges of inns, restaurants, public conveyances, barber shops, theatres and other places of amusement; subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law and applicable alike to every person.

Sec. 2. Penalty for Violation of Preceding Section. Any person who shall violate the foregoing section by denying to any person, except for reasons of law applicable to all persons, the full enjoyment of any of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, or privileges enumerated in the foregoing section, or by aiding or inciting such denials, shall for each offense be guilty of a misdemeanor, and be fined in any sum not less than twenty-five dollars, nor more than one hundred dollars, and pay the costs of the prosecution.

"The original act was held valid as to citizens; barber shops can not discriminate against persons on account of color. Messenger vs State, 25 Nebr. page 677. N. W. 638."

"A restaurant keeper who refuses to serve a colored person with refreshments in a certain part of his restaurant, for no other reason than that he is colored, is civilly liable, though he offers to serve him by setting a table in some private part of the house. Ferguson vs Gies, 82 Mich. 368; N. W. 712."

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