

# THE MONITOR

A Weekly Newspaper Devoted to the Interests of the Eight Thousand Colored People in Omaha and Vicinity, and to the Good of the Community

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## Will Omaha Permit Dixon's Photo Play?

"The Birth of a Nation" Condemned By Many People Is Interdicted In Several Cities.

### REASONS BARRED FROM OHIO

Proclaims Doctrines Which Cost War Justifies Klu Klux Atrocities Maligns Negro Race.

"The Birth of a Nation," a powerful photo play, based upon Dixon's pernicious prejudice-breeding book, The Clansman, has been engaged for "an indefinite run" at the Brandeis theater, this city. The engagement, unless it is prevented, is to begin Sunday, November 14. The press agent states that "this picture has created a furore wherever it has been staged," which is undoubtedly true. It has been the cause of riots in Boston and Philadelphia. The mayor of Atlantic City, N. J., ordered its presentation stopped there because of the bad feeling it was engendering; many other cities, east and west, have placed it under the ban. Thoughtful men and women like Moorfield Storey, ex-president of the American Bar association; Oswald G. Villard, editor of The New York Evening Post; Dr. Washington Gladden, Rabbi Kornfield, Jane Addams and others, not alarmists or fanatics, have condemned it as false to history and dangerous to public safety, and the board of censors of Ohio, after a week's deliberation, during which strong influences were brought to bear upon them to license its production in the state, barred it from the state of Ohio.

We opposed "The Birth of a Nation" being booked as a municipal attraction for our auditorium and the city authorities sustained us in our objections. We are opposed to its production at the Brandeis theatre. There are doubtless legal methods by which its production may be prevented. In our judgment, there is a better way, and that is a calm, dispassionate appeal, which we now make, to the sense of justice and fair play upon the part of the men and women of Omaha, whom we believe can be relied upon to oppose anything that is distasteful to any large group of our citizens.

When the State Board of Censors, October 18, refused a permit to "The Birth of a Nation" to show in the state of Ohio the chairman of the board gave out the following remarkable and conclusive statement of the board's reasons for barring the show from Ohio, and the board's decision is final:

"It will not be disputed that it has a great dramatic value and is stupendous from the standpoint of camera achievements. On the other hand, by no stretch of the imagination can we get away from the fact that it reflects unfavorably upon the

## We Appeal to Our Omaha Friends to Prevent This Play

"The whole tendency of the motion picture drama, 'The Birth of a Nation,' is to arouse loathing and contempt of whites against blacks." From editorial in Kansas City Times, October 26, 1915.

"Not only does it rekindle the feeling of sectional hatred, but it strongly tends to arouse prejudice and hatred among the coming generation against a race that is living in our midst."

From official report of Ohio State Board of Censors, October 8, 1915, in barring play from Ohio.



HARRY BUFORD POLICE CHAUFFEUR  
Omaha boy who is making good on the police department.

colored race. The entire latter half is devoted to scenes and subtitles portraying colored men engaged in all sorts of vicious conduct toward the whites of the south during the Civil war and the reconstruction period following. There are many mob scenes where Negroes are in the most repelling way attacking white citizens, and scenes where Negro men are forcing their attentions upon white women and are engaged in all sorts of ridiculous and knavish conduct, not only as individuals, but as a race... True, they were in many instances led by what the film terms 'scalawag carpetbaggers,' but this only further reflects upon the government of that period. While the picture is based upon some historical facts, many phases are exaggerated in such a way that the child, unfamiliar with the real facts of history, would, upon viewing the film, immediately conclude that the result of the Civil war was the greatest crime in the annals of history, rather than the prevention of human beings driven by the lash and sold upon the auction block. The entire film would seem to proclaim the very doctrine which it cost a half million lives

and billions of dollars to eradicate.

"Not only does it rekindle the feeling of sectional hatred, but it strongly tends to arouse hatred and prejudice among the coming generation against a race that is living in our midst, 120,000 of whom are in Ohio. I consider it wholly unwise, unjust, dangerous and harmful to officially approve a film that reflects upon them and incites hatred toward them, retarding them in their progress, as this film does.

### Can't Be Purged.

"The play also represents the Ku-Klux Klan in such a manner that their conduct is applauded. It tends to justify that organization in capturing Negroes and, as masked vigilance committees, trying them at night, convicting them of supposed outrages, executing them and placing their bodies at the doors of state officials who sympathized with their cause. Without discussing the justification of their methods of that day, the spirit that urged their activities at that time is the same that prompts such appalling conduct in recent

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## "Birth of a Nation" Condemned By Press

The Kansas City Times, Leading Daily Newspaper, Deprecates Its Presentation in Missouri.

### A GRAND SCENIC SPECTACLE

Has Tendency to Arouse Loathing and Contempt of Whites Against Blacks.

When leading newspapers of the country, not given to hysteria, but sane and sober-minded moulders of public opinion, sound a note of warning against the dangerous tendencies of a heavily-capitalized and popular photoplay film, there must be something wrong with that film.

The Kansas City Times, one of the leading daily papers in the state of Missouri in its issue of October 26th, published an editorial on "The Birth of a Nation." It was this widely-read and influential paper's estimate of Thomas Dixon's motion picture play adapted from his novel called the "Clansman." The Times regrets that Kansas City is compelled to suffer from the evil effects inevitable from the production of the picture in that city. Here is the editorial comment of this great metropolitan daily:

"It is a wonderful spectacle, this 'Birth of a Nation,' that is showing in motion pictures in Kansas City this week; a scenic marvel. And yet what is to be thought of an author who would deliberately bring all the resources of his art to bear on a spectacle founded on race hatred? Who would seek popularity by inflaming the worst passions of the human heart?

"The South went through some wretched and terrible experiences in the reconstruction period. Mr. Dixon has picked out and invented some dramatic and revolting episodes and made them typical. In doing this he has succeeded in picturing the Negro as wholly degraded and bestial, with unlimited possibilities of evil.

"Although he expressly disavows any application to the conditions of today, the whole tendency of the book and the motion picture drama is to arouse loathing and contempt of whites against blacks. The applause which the pictures evokes shows the intensity of the feeling.

"At best the dramatized version of 'The Clansman' is bound to aggravate a problem that is bad enough with no additional complications. So far as Kansas City is concerned, it would help if the play could be still further censored, and if applause could be done away with altogether as is in the case of war films."

**Attend Protest Meeting Sunday**