

THE MONITOR

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

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THE UNSOLVED NETHAWAY MURDER MYSTERY

Omaha has had a number of murder mysteries during the last few years. Notable among these may be named the Maud Rummelhart, the Schroeder-Rapp, and the Ada Swanson cases. In none of these were the guilty parties apprehended. Fortunately, however, in none of these cases did suspicion light upon any Negro.

We say "fortunately" advisedly, because while crime should be regarded as crime, by whomsoever committed, and punished accordingly, by some strange psychological process the average white American seems to arrive at the conclusion that a crime committed by a Colored man is more heinous than the same crime committed by a white man.

In the United States the Negro is the dominated class and this vicarious suffering for the wrong-doing of those of his blood is part of the price he has to pay in his social evolution—and progress. Hard as it is to bear, this contumely is not an unmixed evil, since it makes for race-cohesiveness and race-purgation.

Race purgation eliminates the unworthy and makes the self-respecting cautious as to their character and behavior.

This racial vicariousness accounts for the fact that our interest and sympathy are instantly aroused when one of our race, although he may be a total stranger to us, is accused of crime. Not that we have any sympathy with crime or criminals, black or white. Black criminals, for the strange phenomenon above noted, do infinitely more damage to us as members of society, than do white criminals, and for that reason we are anxious to see that they are apprehended, given a fair and impartial trial, and where found guilty adequately punished.

And this brings us to Omaha's latest murder mystery, that of Mrs. Nethaway, which occurred near Florence in broad daylight, Sunday afternoon, August 26, and for which a Negro tramp, giving the name of Charles Smith and a stranger in Omaha, is held for investigation. The coroner's inquest, which occupied three days, has failed to connect the accused in any way with the crime, aside from the fact admitted by him, that he was in the same vicinity Sunday afternoon.

If, however, one had been governed by the reports in two of Omaha's dailies for several days following the crime, even the most fair-minded would have been inclined to decide that Smith was the guilty man. In some communities mob-murder with all its degrading aftermath would have resulted. All of which shows the danger of "lynch law" and the necessity for suspending judgment in every case until the facts are in.

We hope that the murderer or murderers of both Mrs. Nethaway and the aged Mrs. Anderson, who was mysteriously murdered the Saturday night preceding that of Mrs. Nethaway will be apprehended and punished. We hope that it will be clearly proven that no Negro had anything to do with either case, because of the adverse sentiment which adheres to the many for the wrong doing of the few.

The Monitor is strengthened in the opinion expressed last week that Smith is not the man who murdered Mrs. Nethaway and we hope that subsequent developments will prove this opinion to be correct. If, however, he be guilty then he should pay the full penalty for his crime.

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GROWING FAIR-MINDEDNESS

While all right-thinking people deplore the recent outbreak at Houston, Texas, The Monitor notes with pleasure, as a most encouraging sign, the disposition on the part of the press, in all sections of the country, to recognize the fact and frankly state that the trouble was by no means one-sided. There seems to be the disposition to lay the blame for the outbreak upon the brutality of the Houston police. While not holding the men of the Twenty-fourth blameless, their splendid previous record for good behavior, leads the leading papers of the country to fearlessly state that the soldiers were not responsible for the conditions and incidents which resulted in the outbreak.

For example, the Commercial Appeal of Memphis—a most unexpected quarter—in a strong editorial under the heading, "Police Intelligence Needed," charges that the riot is "the result of booze, stupidity and the lack of a policeman recognizing the dignity of his own work." It goes on to point out that because of their superior advantages "the peace of the South depends upon the conduct and intelligence of the white people" and notes that "they should see to it that occasions for rioting are more and more eliminated."

This would seem to indicate a growing fair-mindedness which is much needed and which will go a long way towards correcting evils, righting wrongs and adjusting misunderstandings wherever they may arise. At the same time it shows the advantage of having a good reputation, either as an organization or as individuals.

PLAYTHINGS OF FATE

Man is the greatest joke in all the universe and his efforts to dictate to destiny make the gods hilarious. "This is a white man's country," screeched the far West many years ago, "and John Chinaman must go." He went because he was poor and weak and defenseless, and the white man blew out his chest, like a toy balloon. He was the IT of Eternity; the FINALE of things mortal and immortal. Fate laughed and stirred her brew with calm collected hand. She let this bumptious spawn of earth dream on and made no haste to cure his cold conceit. His country prospered and swept on to wealth and mighty power. He was ready to build another Babel and wrest the sceptre from the hands of God and teach him how to rule "a white man's world." Trouble started in countries far away and that which was a whirlpool for a few nations became a maelstrom that has engulfed the world. The labor markets of the earth have been drained for fighters and still the insatiate appetite of war cries, "More! Yet More!" But laborers are as important as fighters and whence must come laborers to fill the thinning ranks of industry? The West looks across the calm Pacific and says, "John Chinaman."

Fate smiles her smile inscrutable and stirs her brew. The gods laugh and roll the loaded dice upon the table of time. Fraternal hate has made the white man lose his reason; made him to forget his conceit in the hope of crushing nations of his own kith and kin. A white man's earth is to mean either Teuton or Saxon; it cannot mean both. It will probably mean neither. So Sam and Greaser and John Chinaman must learn the art of labor, the basic art that leads upward to the pinnacle that has proven too dizzy for the fairer race.

CURSES RETURN TO PLAGUE THE INVENTOR

Due allowance can be made for intemperate speech by people laboring under great mental strain and excitement. For this reason we would be charitable with C. L. Nethaway who recited such a scene both at the funeral of his wife and when he accompanied the detectives and sheriff to the spot where her body had been found. His dramatic and well-staged actions are perhaps excusable under the circumstances, but when he solemnly invokes God to "curse the whole Negro race," it is well to remind him that curses like chickens, return to roost and that it has been known where curses return to plague the inventor.

"We have more friends than foes within the Anglo-Saxon race."

Obvious Observations

This kind of weather has California looking like pink lemonade at a German picnic.

The food dictator has left bread about where it was and says, according to the press, that the government cannot regulate prices of meat. What is a food dictator good for, anyway? How many cans of canned goods have you canned since the canning season commenced?

The government says it is going to scatter companies of Colored infantry throughout all the cantonments. That is much better than having one jim-crow camp, don't you think?

Get ready for Ak-Sar-Ben. Some time this fall, believe me, Mabel. School has started again and there are about 100,000 mothers in Omaha who feel as relieved as an English town after a flock of air raiders have gone by.

Let us hope that Omaha's new school principal from Oklahoma does not try to start something with Omaha's way of handling school affairs.

The Nethaway murder has created lots of interest, but people are not watching Smith half as much as they are watching a certain man whose name starts with the fourteenth letter of the alphabet.

Sergeant Bailey has left the court house and gone to the quartermaster's department. Wonder if Mike Clark is going to put another man in there?

The editor of this column has fall fever and after thanking you for your favor, he will take a trip to St. Joe.

SKITS OF SOLOMON

Canning and Preserving

Canning and preserving are the fall sciences of getting away with a huge slice of mazuma and having mighty little to show for it. Whenever a housewife declares she is going to put up a "few" tomatoes, a little corn, a glass or so of crab apple jelly, and a few jars of grape jelly, watch out. There is something doing. There is going to be an assault on your pocket book that will make German's attack at Verdun look like a schoolboy's sham battle. First, madame will "borrow" five beans to buy some jars, because she must have jars. Next she starts getting two bits and fifty cents a crack for a basket of this or that. This or that obtained, she must have sugar and nothing less than a hundred pound sack can fill the bill. Then she starts cooking and shows about as much mercy for the gas meter as a hungry man shows for a slice of pineapple pie and a ham sandwich. When hubby comes home and finds no nice dinner, wifey says she has been busy canning and the time got away. She pats him on the cheek and tells him all about the branried peaches he'll eat next winter and he swallows the mush. Finally the madame gets through and she has fifty jars of garden fruit that have costs her just fifty beans. She could duplicate the whole bunch at the corner grocery for a ten dollar note, but that doesn't phase wifey. She is going through the same stunt next year. If hubby is wise, he'll stand the gaff again, because any wife will give up a vacation in order to can. When hubby figures both he will find its fifty-fifty at least, and if either has a shade of a lead, it is fixing the peaches for hubby's tummy next December.

WILLING TO HELP

Mr. Wakefield's suggestion made in last week's Monitor has struck a responsive chord. Several have called us up expressing a willingness to subscribe towards a fund to insure Charles Smith, held as a murder suspect, a fair trial. The following is a typical statement of the sentiment expressed:

"I don't know the man. If he is guilty he ought to be punished. All I am interested in is seeing that he gets a fair trial and if my help is needed call on me."

The Monitor is gratified at the spirit manifested. We do not, however, believe that there is the slightest doubt that if the case should come to trial Smith will receive absolute justice.

George A. Magney, the county attorney, is a man who sees that every man, black or white, who comes before him accused of crime gets a square deal. Our democratic county attorney ever since he has been in office in his dealing with men has proven himself to be a democrat in the best sense of the word.

IMPROVING ONESELF

As the autumn approaches our people ought to be planning to improve themselves along educational lines. We have whist and amusement clubs galore—all right in their place—but we need to pay more attention to intellectual improvement.

Women, don't forget to register September 12.

Our Women and Children

Conducted by Lucille Skaggs Edwards

DRESS FOR BUSINESS

(Mothers and school girls—especially those of high school—will find much sound advice in the following article.)

The vice president of a great insurance company took occasion recently to talk plainly to some of his hundreds of girls, who were accustomed to overdress, or to dress inappropriately, or to use office time for "prinking." Such a thing does not happen without good reason, for the ordinary American business man is always respectful of the rights, in dress and similar personal matters, of his women employees. He does not speak unless he has abundant provocation.

There is abundant provocation in a great many offices. Girls are often obliged to go to work before they become old enough or have had an opportunity to form sound taste in dress or anything else. Many of them go frequently to the theatre or the "movies," where they see women—on the stage or the screen—in the most elaborate and striking costumes that means and ambition can design. The whole stage setting is often a mere background for the dress parade. Elaborately decorated windows of the great and fashionable department stores are constant sources of temptation. It is almost inevitable that a girl with the love of beauty and finery in her heart—and where is the girl who has it not?—should go astray in the matter of taste in dress if left to herself.

The point is that she should not be left to herself. If her mother neglects to tell her that in business there is no place for very short or diaphanous skirts, or fancy-colored shoes with inordinately high heels, or conspicuous stockings, or picture hats—if her mother so neglects her duty, her father should see to it that she is instructed; and if he fails of the task, let the girl consider herself fortunate if she fall into the hands of an employer as sensible and as courageous as the vice president of that insurance company showed himself to be.—Ex.

THE LITTLE HORSES

By Nancy Byrd Turner

Last night a sweet dream came to me
When dark had sealed the eyes of men.
I thought I was a child again
In our old nursery.
From the warm hearth the flickering fire
Made amber lights on everything,
Sent dusky shadows up the wall
Like fairies frolicking;
And back and forward, to and fro,
In cradling arms rocked very slow,
I heard a soft voice chanting low
The song it used to sing:
"Go to sleep, you shall ride
The little horses gay,
The black and brown, the gray and roan,
The sorrel and the bay!"

It was a dream within a dream,
For, sudden from the twinkling flame,
Charging, their tiny flanks agleam,
The little horses came,
Their slim hoofs shod with silver shoes,
A light wind tossing tail and mane,
A saddle on each satin back,
A rosette on each rein—
Red for the black, green for the gray,
Blue for the sorrel and the bay—
And stirrups swung in wondrous way.

I waked. The nursery was gone,
The shadows and the amber light;
Against my window, chilly white,
Glimmered the solem dawn.
But I could smile, remembering
How all the little horses fleet
Raced down the rosy air to me
On bright-shod, flying feet:
The whinnying black, the gallant bay,
The splendid sorrel and the gray,
Their gallop tuned, in magic way,
To the old song sung sweet:
"Go to sleep, you shall ride
The little horses gay,
The black and brown, the gray and roan,
The sorrel and the bay!"

CRITICISM IN THIS CASE UNMERITED

Omaha, Neb., Aug. 29, 1917.
To the Editor, The Monitor: In the issue of August 18th, under the caption, "Helping the Race," the District Grand Lodge No. 8 of Missouri and Jurisdiction of the G. U. O. of O. P., is sarcastically taken to task and help up to public ridicule, because they did not see fit to use either of the Colored dance halls in Omaha.

First, we wonder why that despite the fact that within the last two years there have been three Grand Lodge sessions held in Omaha, two of which used the city auditorium and paid

for it, that no mention is made of that fact.

We wonder why no mention is made of the fact that the G. U. O. of O. F. engaged and used automobiles owned by Colored men; why no mention was made of the fact that all our printing was given to a Colored industry, and that the bill for it was only seven dollars (\$7.00), less than the amount paid for the hall in question.

We wonder why no mention was made of the use of the Jacobs Hall by our good people? It occurs to us that both the Mecca and the Alamo are owned by our people, and the other is owned by white people.

We also engaged Colored musicians which cost us \$131.00. No mention was made of the fact. We engaged a Colored man to do hauling for us. No mention was made of that fact. Have we not been loyal to our race?

We engaged the Keep Dancing Academy because of the drill, as the floor space was far superior to the other halls mentioned, and afforded other advantages that neither of the halls mentioned could afford. We further state that the G. U. O. of O. F. has never tried to show off before white, black or any other people. We have performed our duty and if that shows some one something new all so well and good.

Aside from all this, we are here among white people. We seek employment and help of them, we urge them not to discriminate against us on account of our color, yet some people seem to think it good sound doctrine for us to refuse to patronize white people solely on the ground that they are white, and that we shall not use a hall simply because it does not belong to Colored people, despite the fact that such hall far excels it in every way for the occasion. This is as false and dangerous doctrine as any people, white or Colored, can preach.

J. C. BELCHER.

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