

SIMMONS THRILLS
IMMENSE AUDIENCE.
(Continued from Page 4)

Chateau Thierry. While you may find much of courage and daring, I announce that nothing can be found of treason.

Will Not Talk Politics.

Upon all sides I hear the bitter cry of politics. I am told that if that grand organization known as the republican party had been in control of the government much of the shame visited upon the Negro and the Negro soldier would not now be a part of the history of the day.

Upon that point I will not speak, except to say that all republicans are not Theodore Roosevelts and that few democrats entertain hope of heavenly reward of earthly labors to improve the American Negro.

When war came, and even before—a month before Bernstorff returned to the pleasant paths around his castle on the Rhine—I announced that I was a Wilson republican for the duration of the war. I spoke for the race to which I was proud to belong.

In the days of fear and hope that followed I and mine kept the faith. When the President read my party out of government it was only then that I left his standard for my own.

An Unwise Speech.

When I declared that partisans would surrender their politics but not their party I spoke for a unified nation. Speaking for a one-party nation Mr. Wilson spoke unwisely and to the sorrow of all. I live in a one-party section of this country. That course is fresh with me. Let one party, whatever its name, control the affairs and the destiny of this nation, and then: "Goodbye, Columbia; farewell, sweetheart, farewell."

I will not speak of politics, but I will say that I know what party stood me on my feet and what party seeks to take me off my feet. I know what party gave me the ballot and what party took the ballot from me. I know what party wrote the fourteenth amendment to the Constitution and what party is always talking about rubbing it out.

Why No Negro General.

I am told that politics cut down our warriors. The fault is not altogether in either politics or the American white man.

We put our own forward to speak for us, and what happened? Instead of speaking for the people they spoke

for themselves. Intrigue found a home among them. This has always been the story: Self above the common hope; looking out for number one. God help the numberless ones!

The American Negro set his heart on the promise of a general of the breed riding at the head of his troops under the Stars and Stripes.

But history still offers an unfinished page. We went into the war without a general, and we came out without one. Still, mark the heroism of the black phalanx fighting under leaders who could not have believed them soldiers because they held them less than men.

Young and Denison.

The hottest partisan against the American Negro, even the banished kaiser of Mississippi politics, will not deny that their race, and their race alone, stood between the shoulder straps of a brigadier general and the worthy claims of those genuine soldiers, Colonel Young for the regulars and Colonel Denison for the volunteers.

Yet twelve millions of their own were first to answer each time McAdoo called for soldiers for the Liberty loans.

Sublime America.

An ancient teacher is quoted as having asked if aught could ever be sublime. America is sublime, surpassing in behavior anything that romance speaks of.

"Bread, bread! We are starving!" Two days after the vanquished Huns had begun to recross the Rhine that was the cry from Germany. What happened?

With American bread and American money Hoover set sail to relieve the stalwart enemies of modern civilization, who but the day before were armed to the teeth against all humanity.

The American Negro has never armed himself against civilization. He has never burned mighty structures to the ground. He has never cut the throats of babies, nor has he abused the women of a desolate country—ask Southerners who had fathers in the civil war about that—nor did he destroy the precious accumulations of art.

For two centuries he has cried for the bread of life and kindness. What has been the answer? The rope too often, and too often the torch. And pulpits are parade ground for parlor phrases, while preachers talk social service language, forgetting an in-

junction that moved multitudes in earlier days: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these!"

Old Glory Told the Story.

Our hope is in Old Glory. Old Glory went along with the boys. Always present, she saw all and remembered all. Questions were put to her over there and she answered. Strangers inquired of her and she told the story.

Old Glory told them that she was no stranger to the task of liberty. That was the day when black hands held her highest in the heavens, refusing to kneel under command, lest for the first time her folds should touch the ground. The French tell that with pride.

While children wept for joy and women wept for God, Old Glory told them that many years ago she was a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to Grant when, like Pershing, he fought battles for liberty.

Old Glory told them that before she ever thought of tasks in distant lands she had broken shackles over here, handed the spelling book to children of slaves; erected altars where an auction block had stood, and years and years before she had protected orphans and widows in France she took women from the hands of despoilers and gave boys and girls a father as well as a mother, and mothers a husband as well as children.

And if further inquiry was made, Old Glory told them how she stood Douglas on the platform, made Washington, the slave, the teacher of Washington, the freemen, and that music might know her grandest strains, how she waved in answer to the harp in the witching hand of Dunbar.

Having told strangers of the rise of liberty in the new world, Old Glory will tell us and all of the valor of our sons while on an errand in the old world.

Much to Be Told.

What the Negro soldiers did on foreign fields has not been told to the full. The story in the whole will never be told. But the records are written. They are in Washington, and they are also in France.

It is said that unless the scheme was wholly impossible, no Negro was allowed to win laurels without dividing them with others. I will not advance this as all of truth, for despite injustices against the Negro, deep down in his heart the American white man does love justice, and, uninfluenced by the cry of the demagogue, he will do justice. "Fair play" is his motto.

Deeds of Valor.

But there were Needham Roberts and Henry Johnson, above whom no hero of the struggle is to be placed. By their side I would, however, put Quentin Roosevelt.

And there stands that black regiment, every member of which had won a decoration.

And Mike Sheehan, brave Irishman at the front, wrote a letter to Mike McDonough, brave Irishman keeping the home fires burning in a Pennsylvania city, in which he celebrated "those brawny black men," as he called them.

That was the regiment that handled the big artillery, the male guns in the Verdun sector. At each thunder of the big gun a stalwart son of Booker T. Washington would step back, shake his fist in the direction of the enemy, and cry: "Now, Cap'n Kaiser, count 'em!"

Then who will not celebrate that warrior from Mississippi who, against the inexcusable bitterness of his senators in the congress, still loved the place of his birth?

Map of Mississippi.

"Where are you going, Sam?" his captain asked him, as Sam pulled out of camp early one morning without permission. "Jes' cross here," Sam replied.

"For what?" asked the captain. "Well," replied Sam, "it looks lak this thing is coming to a close, and since I ain't goin' ter carve my name on de Hall of Fame, I promise yo' ef old Betsy hol's her edge I'm gwine ter carve de map of old Mississippi' all over one of dese little kaisers."

Who can ever forget that son of Georgia who met the thrust of bayonet with the universal weapon of African defense? He reached the neck of the Hun with a perfect stroke. "You didn't get me," boasted the enemy.

"I didn't," replied the shadowy Georgian. "I didn't, eh? I jes' dare you ter twis' yo' head. Jes' twis' it!"

The Fourteenth Point.

Recollecting the deeds of daring of sons of former slaves fighting against despicable thrones, I would inform Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Wilson that we are content to concede them each their fourteen disputed points, together with all of Europe, if they will agree to concede the American Negro the benefit of the fourteenth amendment to the American Constitution. Lincoln was murdered about that amendment.

For What Did He Fight?

Twelve million Americans command me to inform civilization for what they fought in the mighty struggle, since the great have overlooked their claim. I am bidden to be firm but calm in word. I am entrusted with the task I understand, because I have never offended God-fearing Americans. I am to be as bold as truth, with an eye single to the answer that expediency always makes to justice.

I will go on. The French fought for Alsace-Lorraine, and got it. The English fought for democracy and got that. The Italians fought to rid their golden borders of the tread of barbarism, and back to the mountains the Austrians were driven.

The Belgians fought for the grave of Leopold, and having got it they are welcome to it. The American white man fought for glory, and glory is his beyond every figure I have named.

And the Negro—for what did he fight?

Standing alone like a man in No Man's Land, under orders from the American white man, the Negro fought to make a man's name and a place to stand in every man's land—the United States of America.

Protecting the women of France from the invading foe, by command of the government of his native land, the Negro fought for protection for his own women in Dixie.

Holding his gun without a tremor and aiming it without a fault, the Negro fought to hold the American ballot without a sigh and mark it without a single fear. Any hand good enough to pull a trigger in defense of the American ballot is good enough to put a cross mark on that ballot and have it counted.

Riding the angry waves of the ocean in search of the tyrant of the modern world, the Negro rode against the inhumanity and indecency of the "Jim Crow" car, the shame of America.

He fought to give milk to babies in bleeding Belgium so that he might ask his country to show mercy to his babies "where the cotton and sweet potatoes grow."

He fought for a chance for his children in that land whose boast is that Alfred E. Smith can rise from the slums of the East Side to the governor's chair at Albany without the aid even of a grammar school education.

He fought to give liberty to Germans so that he might have liberty in Alabama and show himself worthy of it.

The American Negro fought for a kind word from the American white man, whom he has never failed and to whom he is the only friend not bought with gold.

The Negro fought to have his name called by the foreman of the factory before that of a single stranger who sought these shores as a rock in a weary land long after the genius of the American white man and the Negro's hold on the mercy of God had made this the land of freedom, if not of the free, and the home of fighters if not of the brave.

The great triumph of the American nation will be the end of lynching. I tremble to think of his humiliation if some member of the Peace Conference at Versailles should ask President Wilson for a schoolmaster's dissertation on the psychology of lynching.

Whom does the white man lynch, or allow to be lynched? The Negro, you say, the least among men in power and wealth; that man who cannot answer in kind, and would not, thank God, if he could. No; that is not true. Who, then, is the victim, you ask. I will tell you!

The American white man lynches the memory of George Washington. He lynches Thomas Jefferson and the immortal Declaration. He lynches the august body that drew the Constitution, Time's most remarkable document. He lynches Sherman and Grant and the glory of the name of Lincoln.

Lynches Bunker Hill.

He lynches the Emancipation; and maybe many would like to lynch that instrument from the story of human progress. He lynches the honor of the name that stepped from the Mayflower. He steals from Bunker Hill its title, robs Valley Forge of its grandeur, and takes from Appomattox all that gave it place in the annals of liberty.

He does more than that. He lynches innocence from the eyes of children, virtue from the brow of women and honor from the hearts of men. He lynch his nobler, his better self, and robs the human mind of the gold of conscience, and with the rope of murder he strangles that religion that stepped in glory from the thorns and nails of Golgotha.

Do I complain? No, not at all. Time is still the voice of God. But I will inquire, how is it that my government, the greatest the world ever saw, can cross the ocean, and with the bayonet teach law and order, while law nor order can claim a home in Whiston-Salem, East St. Louis and Sheffield, U. S. A.?

I might inquire again, how is it that my sons can be commanded to cross the ocean and cut down the oppressor and end his oppression while their kin suffer the heel of the oppressor and feel his oppression at home? Is congress able to levy taxes to carry forward war for liberty while unable to levy order to carry forward liberty? I would appeal—I would appeal to North and South alike to end, as a crown to the great victory, the curse of the mightiest and the noblest land of time. Lest I am misunderstood I appeal, not to men, but from Fort Sumter to Gettysburg.

The caesars of the world being dead or dying, I stand on the unmatched record of the Negro soldiers and appeal from the President, silent in the White House, to God, who speaks from the heavens.

The war is over. No longer the bugle and the drum. The flag is furled on fields of blood. Back to the hearts that sent them, white boy and black are returning. Arm in arm they left on the crusade of freedom. Arm in arm they will return. By dictates of wisdom higher than man our sons took themselves to distant fields. Hands for the whole; hearts for the maimed; love for all.

Kings Gone Down.

Kings are gone down. Thrones are overturned. Liberty got her promised hearing. The temple of peace rises on the ashes of deserted fields. Mercy wipes away the tear of sorrow, and the great of earth are gathering to pencil a new map and define again the rights of men.

The crownless kingship of Lincoln takes the sky, and the Stars and Stripes is above land and sea. See my country first among all nations! I have none to speak for me. I obeyed the command, "Go and make the world safe for democracy." Through tears of women and sighs of men I would ask if my country is now safe for me. Through me no offense must come.

Hope offers the balm in words that are sweet. Therefore, I will ask God to open the door of the titled and the great at Versailles and inquire if the American Negro is free at last, or is he to be alone, the lonely slave of the world?

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