

THE MONITOR

A National Weekly Newspaper Devoted to the Interests of Colored Americans
 Published Every Thursday at Omaha, Nebraska, by The Monitor Publishing Company.
 Entered as Second-Class Mail Matter July 2, 1915, at the Postoffice at Omaha, Neb., under the Act of March 3, 1879.
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 SUBSCRIPTION RATES, \$3.00 A YEAR; \$1.50 6 MONTHS; \$1.00 3 MONTHS
 Advertising Rates, 75 cents an inch per issue.
 Address, The Monitor, 201 Kaffir Block, Omaha, Neb.
 Telephone Douglas 3224.



NOT RECIPROCATION BUT AMERICANISM

IN Newport News, Va., the colored citizens refused to have any part in lawlessness and mob violence although one of their race had been outlawed and brutally treated by a white man, and although the press admitted that no mob violence on the part of our citizens was easily possible, certainly according to the established precedents of the southerners' mob law, lynching of the white man would have been justifiable.

The colored citizens of Newport News resolved upon the law, which must be the occupation of every real American and the hope of all who aspire to be Americans.

Now the World-Herald calls this conduct of these colored citizens "reciprocation." It seems that this journal considers the conduct of colored citizens as a mere return consideration on their part because only a short time prior the white citizens refused to permit lawlessness on the part of members of their race.

The fact is that law is not relative nor comparative—but supreme. Law is void of the spirit and flimsy weak in the letter when any class of citizens uphold it for the sheer force of example or to exact reciprocity.

We should uphold the law because it is the law, the mandate and the ruler of the American people. It is unpatriotic to think of law in any other light. It is dangerously near treason to the ideals of our democracy to express the significance of maintenance of law in other terms.

The conduct of the colored citizens of Newport News or any white citizen who acts likewise, is misnamed by "Reciprocation." Call such conduct by its proper name, vitalizing and regenerating—one hundred per cent Americanism.

COMMISSION FORM A FAILURE.

THE more we see of the working of the commission form of government in Omaha the more convinced we become that it is far less satisfactory and less efficient than the former mayor and ward councilmen system. Where each ward has its own councilman he feels a direct personal responsibility for improvement and upkeep of his ward. It centers responsibility and makes it possible to get things done. Under the commission form this is not so. It is too easy to pass the buck or shift responsibility. Impassable streets, flooded sidewalks, unsightly rubbish heaps which are a shame and a disgrace to our city are to be found within a mile of the city hall and it seems impossible to have anything done about it. If, for example, the Third ward had a councilman, the almost intolerable conditions which exist say on Twenty-first street from Izard to Clark would have been improved long ago. The same would be true of other sections of the city. The Monitor believes Omaha should return to the old councilmanic system. The present commission form makes it entirely too easy to pass the buck while a patient and long suffering citizenry awaits needed improvements. As a responsibility-shifting aggregation our present commission form is a colossal success: as an efficient organization for getting things done it is a gigantic failure.

Proverbs and Paragraphics

REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them: While the sun or the light or the moon or the stars be not darkened nor the clouds return after the rain. Ecc. 12, 1-2.

A nomad might be a poet, but he cannot be an architect. A herdsman might have written the book of Job, but the great builders of which it speaks are dwellers in cities.

Every noble activity makes room for itself.—Emerson.

SYNCOATED SPASMS

FRIENDSHIP

QUITE recently an eastern newspaper held a contest for the best definition of a friend. A boy won the prize with this: A friend is a guy what quows all about you and likes you just the same. Now when it comes to hitting the bullseye, young strippling was right. That is just what a friend is. We human squashes are loaded down with hefty infirmities, some loaded heavier than others; but real, sure enough friendship is the stuff that sticks by you in spite of all. Often the public thinks that the proof of friendship is the lending of a few bucks when you are up against it. You are all wrong, chicken; all wrong. He might be a friend when he lends you the few bucks, but he knows as well as a canary knows the bird scale that he is going to be your enemy after he starts trying to collect. You are generally the first one to do the falling out and friend lender has to fall out because you won't let him stick. No, the true test is as the kid says. If a man knows all about you fore and aft and in the middle and still calls you his friend, the chances are he means it. He is just your friend from general principles. He doesn't gain anything by being your friend. The chances are that some time he loses a whole lot, but he sticks just the same. That is the reason why many thinkosopers claim that you need to have some nifty collection of adversity in order to find out who your friends are. And he is right. As long as you bounce and bubble upon the wave of prosperity, everybody is your friend according to his dope. But when your canoe springs a leak and your slabs and plates of character begin slipping loose, the real friend shows up. And many a time he is the guy that you never did think was your friend.

CURRENT AND OTHERWISE

(By W. H. A. Moore)

UNDER the caption of "Gutter Politics" the New York Call presents an interesting editorial comment. In a recent issue, on the attempt to fasten the atrocious crime of possessing Negro blood on the distinguished president-elect, Warren G. Harding, by certain elements in the democratic party. The Call concludes that if Senator Harding has the constitutional qualifications to hold the office it doesn't matter a heck whether the "disgrace" flows through his veins or whether it doesn't. It really doesn't matter. But it makes one fairly weep for the future of the country and the spirit of the democracy which is holding it together when a group of its most precious patriots, with an ef-

frontry dazzling in its particular brilliancy, are driven to the exulting necessity to win in an election of fastening the outstanding and criminal "disgrace" on a candidate for public office who was so debased as to have Negro blood running through his veins. There is nothing of public or of private record at hand that can establish the truthfulness of the charge in Senator Harding's case. When one harks back, however, to the historical fact that Negro slavery was the keystone to the national structure for more than 250 years and held it together until all the questions of internal welfare and domestic policy were in a fair situation of stability, there comes a lump in the throat when he comes face to face with a temper of ingratitude that is as low and mean in spirit as the effort to set up the possession of his blood as a "disgrace" during the progress of the recent campaign. This is not the time to discuss in detail this latest matter of "disgrace" which has come so pointedly into the aspects of our national life. I will say, though, that it might be well for a loud-mouthed contingent of "whites" to put the soft pedal on the "Negro blood coursing through his veins," and turn their very valuable consideration to questions bearing upon the safety of democracy in the land.

"A few fool Negroes cause race troubles," says the Newton (N. C.) News. To this I say, Amen, and incidentally add, and a great many fool whites. Here are two instances in which color and race play a very commonplace part. A fool is a fool regardless of either. The future would look dark indeed if the Negro had a monopoly on the production of fools. But thanks to the fellow who went to sleep at the switch he hasn't got it and stands small chance of procuring it.

A Negro prophet is busy warning people that the world will come to an end in 1931. This is important if true. But why should we worry about it? The world will come to an end in 1929, for a great number of folks. In my own case 1931 will do just as well as any other time if that is the fate in store for me. The world had a beginning and, in all probability, it will have an end. We had nothing to do with the beginning but we will have just as little to do with the end. Let us live while we can and do good.

In the meanwhile Woodrow Wilson will retire to private life on the fourth of March, 1921.

WHAT THE EDITORS SAY

A RECIPROCATION

White men have saved Negroes from being lynched by white mobs. They have not done it as often as they should, but they have done it frequently.

Now a Negro has saved a white man from being lynched by a Negro mob. A notable event. The Negro is beginning to reciprocate in this matter.

The hero, for such he was, is a Negro preacher. The offense of the white man was the running over of a Negro child with an automobile at Newport News, Va. The Negro mob had surrounded the driver and was proceeding to lay violent hands on

him, when the preacher intervened with such persuasiveness as to raise the mob to desist. It at once improved an ugly situation in the city where a dangerous state of feeling had been created by the killing of three Negroes in a conflict with the police.

And no doubt the Negro was ready and glad to reciprocate, for he performed a service not only to the white man but one in the interests of his own race in this signal discouragement of lynching altogether and this demonstration that the Negro who pleads for the protection of law is capable of restraining his own provocation in deference to law.—World-Herald.

A MOB CONVICTED

An interesting court sequel has followed the sparing of a man's life by a mob at Welland, Ont., several months ago. The prisoner, David McNeal, taken from the burning town hall to the place meant for his hanging, and with the rope around his neck, pleaded for "fair play," protesting his innocence of the charge against him that of attacking a girl. The mob desisted—something so rare in the conduct of mobs as to attract wide attention.

McNeal had just had his trial in a court of justice and has been acquitted bringing vindication to him, as to his crime, according to law and furnishing an argument against lynching that ought to have a particularly powerful effect wherever the fact becomes known. One is justified in supposing that every man who was in the Welland mob must be permanently and wholesomely inoculated against participation in such lawlessness again, and this clear demonstration that the mob was mistaken ought, it would seem, to act as a deterrent to mob activity anywhere.—World-Herald.

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McKELVIE IN DOUGLAS

GOVERNOR McKelvie carried Douglas county by 1,800. An examination of the vote in the precincts in which the colored people live tells an interesting and suggestive story.

Oh, look! "Trooper of Troop K," the big Lincoln Mexican war photograph, starring Noble M. Johnson, is at the Franklin, Tuesday, Nov. 30.—Adv.

Select Your Vocation

Pick from the brook the stones that fit your hand, and picking them, sling them and slay the giant.

As no man can cut off one of his fingers without injuring his whole hand, so can we not injure one member of the race without affecting every other member.

Clarence Brooks, the Lincoln motion picture star, will appear in person at the Franklin Theatre, Tuesday evening, November 30. Regular admission.—Adv.

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