

Literary Fame Came

Slowly to Johnson

Samuel Johnson gained little money when he compiled an English dictionary, but the work served to make his reputation secure. He had been in London ten years, living obscurely as a hack writer and slowly winning a reputation when he was given a chance to prepare the dictionary, for which he was to receive \$4,500.

It took him seven years to complete the tremendous work and he had to pay several assistants. The work is remembered not because of its merits, but largely because of Johnson's letter to the end of Chesterfield, who had rebuffed the editor until he heard the dictionary was nearing completion and then hoped to be regarded as one of the benefactors of the scholar.

Upon the publication of the dictionary, Johnson was given recognition as the greatest living figure in English literature. Fielding was dead, Richardson was living in retirement, Gibbon was in Switzerland, Gray and Cowper were publishing little. Johnson was hailed as England's greatest scholar. The honor had been slow in coming, for 18 years had passed since he had left Lichfield to make his fortune in London.—Kansas City Star.

Famous "Last" Names

on Pages of History

"Last of the Fathers" was a title given by the Latin church to St. Bernard, who lived from 1091 to 1153. "Last of the Goths" was the title given to Roderick, the thirty-fourth and last of the Visigothic line of kings, who filled the throne of Spain from 414 to 711. To Phillipoemen, who lived from 253 to 183 B. C., a native of Arcadia, was given the appellation "Last of the Greeks"; and he was the last really great and successful commander of the ancient Greeks. "Last of the Mohicans" is the title of Cooper's novel of the same name, under which title the Indian chief Uncas is personated. The general Aetius has been called the "Last of the Romans." He checked the first invasion of Attila by the relief of Orleans in Gaul, modern France, in the year 450 A. D. With his death, which occurred in 454, the last support of the western empire fell.

Sesquipedalian Words

Mark Twain was not the only person to find amusement in the German language. A foreigner thus accounts for the deliberation with which the negotiations held at Locarno were carried on.

"Our interlocutors cannot end their explanations," said this foreigner. "With the best will in the world they cannot pronounce rapidly such words as this: Antialkoholengesellschaftsversammlungsgeladungskarten."

This little word means "Invitation cards for the meeting of the commission for verifying the accounts of the expenses of printing the list of members of the anti-alcoholic congress."

Truth at Any Price

Each man should learn what is within him, that he may straze to mend; he must be taught what is without him, that he may be kind to others. It can never be wrong to tell him the truth: for, in his disputable state, weaving as he goes his theory of life, steering himself, cheering or reproving others, all facts are of the first importance to his conduct; and even if a fact shall discourage or corrupt him it is still best that he should know it, for it is in this world as it is, and not in a world made easy by educational suppression, that he must win his way to shame or glory.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

Well Foretells Weather

In eastern Oregon is an interesting well that not only gives supplies of good water but acts as a sort of barometer to tell the approach of storms or changes in the weather. From 12 to 24 hours before a storm, it "exhales" a current of air. The draft increases as the storm approaches, sometimes reaching the intensity of a whistling, roaring jet and shooting up a mist of water with it.—Popular Mechanics Magazine.

The Kiss in History

Kisses between men were common in England until the Seventeenth century. Medieval knights used to kiss each other before they began jousting, as modern heavyweights shake hands. Pages in France used to kiss articles they were given to deliver, both when they received them from the hands of senders and just before they delivered them to recipients, as a sign of honor.

Geological Wonder

Juniper mountain, 30 miles west of Craig, Colo., is a geological wonder. The United States survey says that it is the deepest mountain on the western hemisphere. This means that the bottom of Juniper is buried in the earth deeper than any other on this continent. It is walled with rock, and is one of the outstanding sights in the region reached from Craig.

Plea for Brotherhood

What a great and glorious world this might be if we always kept the attitude toward one another which prevails in the hour of flood and fire and earthquake. Oh! The pity of it that we wait for some colossal disaster to awake us to the real spirit of universal love.—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Moslem Pilgrim Rites

Pious Moslems who make the pilgrimage to Mecca go seven times round the Kaaba, or tomb of the prophet, reciting prayers and reverently kissing the Black Stone. They then proceed to the sacred spring of Zem-Zem, which is said to be the fountain Jehovah opened in the desert for Hagar and Ishmael. There each pilgrim dips into the water two white shirts held together by strings (no pins are permitted for that purpose). These garments must be dried in the court of the mosque, and afterward are laid aside as the burial clothes of their owners. According to tradition a shroud that has been soaked in the water of Zem-Zem will protect its wearer against the fiery heat of the Last Judgment.

To End Church Debt

Amos Skinner had never done any real work; instead, he had tried to invent something that would bring him a fortune.

Meeting an old friend, he rushed up to him, greatly excited. "I've got it at last!" he shrieked. "Made my fortune, sure as eggs!" "What is it this time?" asked his friend.

"Just a little device," said Skinner, "but it will bring me millions. Every church in the country'll buy one. You see, it's a collecting box with different slots for different coins. All silver money falls on velvet, while coppers drop on a big bell!"

Chinese Legend

The legend of the Chinese willow plate design is the love story of Li Chi, the only daughter of a mandarin, and Chang, her father's secretary, who lived in an island cottage at the top of the plate. When the mandarin forbade the match the lovers eloped and lay concealed for a time in the gardener's cottage, from there escaping to the lover's home. The father, pursuing them with a whip, would have beaten them to death had not the gods changed them into turtle doves. At the time of the elopement, the willow shed its leaves.

Birds' Food Important

Choice of food by a bird usually is the most important factor in its relation to man. One of the reasons for importing the sparrow was to have it eat dropworm, a shade-tree pest which spun down its silken threads among pedestrians. The dropworm is no longer a pest in cities, and entomologists give sparrows the credit. Not only this pest but almost every injurious insect we have is eaten at times by this ubiquitous alien.

Displaying the Flag

The Shenandoah method of displaying the American flag is as follows: A hole is placed in the curb and plugged when not in use. A flagstaff is erected 14 feet 6 inches and the diameter at the base is 1 1/4 inches. A weather-proof American flag, size 4 by 6 feet, is put up. These flagstaffs are always placed near the curb line near the pavement and the gutter and are 122 feet apart.

FORTY PER CENT OF THE MONTHLY INCOME GOES TO LANDLORD

One-half of Families Living in Harlem Spend Nearly Half of Their Earnings for Rent

New York, N. Y.—Of the 2,326 families in Harlem, approximately 12,501 persons, 1,044 families, are paying more than 40 per cent of their total monthly earnings for rent, a rental payment far in excess of what the majority can afford to pay.

This interesting fact is disclosed by a survey of social conditions in Harlem recently concluded by the New York Urban league, the purpose of which was to find out the factors affecting the Negro. The survey paid attention to composition of households, size of families, housing, the length of residence, condition of the apartments, relations of rent and income, rentals per room, average earnings of families, occupations of men and women workers, and the problems of working mothers.

Facts brought out by the investigation show that every fifth person in the families was under 15 years of age; that there were 3,314 lodgers, averaging more than one to a household; that more than one-half of the families had from one to ten persons, and that more than a fourth of the homes were overcrowded.

NEGRO BOY RUNAWAY

"A small colored boy, about 14 years old, ran away from his home near Stapleton, January 4th. Anyone seeing him will please notify me and hold him until I arrive. I will pay reward. I object to anyone else using him. Roy Haines, Stapleton, Ga., Route 1, Box 16."

The interesting little advertisement printed above was not, devoted reader, taken from the Richmond Enquirer of, say May 2, 1849, or even the Charleston Courier of possibly April 16, 1855. One of those worthy papers has long since gone to its reward, and the other has changed its name. But on January 27, 1927, which, if we are not taking leave of

our senses, is the current year, the Jefferson Reporter, a weekly, published at Wrens (population about 1,500), Georgia, carried, without comment, the item we reproduce. It has been suggested that it was the plea of an irate father for his son, and as such faintly justifiable. We doubt it. It may have been the request of some one who never heard of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States. We doubt that, too. In Georgia, as in other parts of the South, these amendments are not unknown. But systematically, repeatedly, in the most diverse and ingenious ways, and with a persistence that would do credit to a far better cause, they are ignored.—The Nation, June 22, 1927.

STANDARDS OF LIVING

(From Opportunity Magazine)

The mischievous myth persists among industrial managers and many social workers, that Negroes can live on smaller wages than other races, because their wants are less. This is the "lower standard of living" familiar to students of social problems.

Class by class, living costs for them are probably greater than for any other race, and it might reasonably be argued that this is so, mainly because they want things which others feel that they should not have. The cost of food is not reduced in Negro communities. They pay the same, and, if the testimony of shop keepers means anything, they are most generous in their expenditures for this commodity. The cost of clothing is no cheaper for them, and the exigencies of their rough work, on the one hand, and a greater group social life than the corresponding class for whites, on the other, require that their purchases be more frequent. Rental costs are actually higher for them; they pay from 20 to 50 per cent more for the same houses occupied by a white family, and in spite of the acceptance of lodgers they never are guilty of the astonishing limits of overcrowding reached by some immigrant families. They pay more for their insurance, because of their death rate (which no doubt, better wages could reduce); they maintain more churches at a greater per capita cost than any other laboring population.

Because of the narrow margin on which they live, they are instalment buyers, and thus pay an exorbitant interest which this method of petty commerce exacts. Even amusements are more expensive. Shut out from so many of the public accommodations, they must create their own apart from the advantage of those indirect subsidies to the poor from the taxation of larger individual incomes. To these excess costs may be added the significant fact that they do not request aid from relief organizations as readily as many other groups; they give relief in kind freely among themselves, and have larger families than native American whites.

If custom will not permit them fairly to get more than those who can disregard the item of race in their accounting, certainly they should get as much. Actually to argue that they should want less, which is, in a strict sense, aside from the point.

WHITE MANUFACTURER SAYS NEGRO LABOR IS GOOD AS WHITE IF CHANCE GIVEN

(Extracts from a letter sent to T. Arnold Hill of the National Urban League by the general superintendent of a Chicago plant of a large corporation.)

"Many of the manufacturers have an idea that the only place Negro labor can be used is as porters, housemen and janitors. My experience with Negro labor is that they can do anything a white man can do when given the same consideration and the same opportunities.

"I have handled all classes of men and find the Negro laborer both skilled and unskilled, will give a firm the same co-operation that the white man does. I find them just as observing and just as quick to learn and will work for a firm's interest equally as well as a white man.

"I am using Negro labor as firemen in the power house, coal passers, assistant electrician and also as operators on machines, and also have two as foremen. These two men who are foremen are just as good organizers and can get the maximum work at minimum cost from their men as the white foreman does. In fact, in the packing and binding rooms I dismissed a white man and replaced him with a Negro foreman and am getting much better results from the Negro foreman than I did from the white foreman.

"Quite frequently I call my men together at a get-together meeting, and in addressing them I find the colored man will pay more attention to what I have to say than the white man does, and goes back to his duties

with a determined idea to carry out my plans as I have outlined to them in my address.

"Another thing I have observed in Negro labor, when you grant them favors as a rule it is appreciated more and they try to reciprocate quicker than the white man.

"There isn't a manufacturing plant, barring none, with the proper supervision, that Negro labor cannot be used in and the plants operated efficiently. Seventy-five per cent of my help is colored labor. Competitors in our same lines visit this plant and tell me that I have one of the best organizations they have ever seen. Everyone is working in harmony, production is rolling along smoothly and no confusion in any department.

"I can truthfully say that I have not a Negro worker who is not supporting me 100 per cent. When I was appointed executive of this plant there were approximately 25 per cent Negro labor, and the plant a losing proposition. Today, with 75 per cent Negro help, it is a paying proposition and one of the best paying plants in this division. I think this is an answer to Negro labor. From the bottom of the list, with 25 per cent Negro help, to the head of the list, with 75 per cent Negro help.

"It is the men themselves that have put this plant where it is, and not the management, as without co-operation of these men, it would have been impossible for the writer to have made first base. That is what Negro labor will do with the right treatment and given an even chance with the white man.

"I may be optimistic in making this statement, but my opinion is Negro labor if given the opportunity in the next ten years will replace many of the white men's jobs.

"In regards to Negro labor with foreign, I'd rather have one Negro than two foreigners, as a Negro understands what you are telling him. You do not have to waste half your time trying to make him understand what you want done. If it is a small job the Negro will have the job done while you are trying to make the foreigner understand what you want done."

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