

Annual Growth of Negro is Half Million

Social Fact Finding and Stock Taking Important Task for Negro Race in '28

Kelly Miller, Well-Known Educator, Publicist and Thinker Sums Up the Debits and Credits of the Past Year and Suggests the Formulation of a Program for the Present One.

The old year has passed into history. The new year is just ushering in. Nineteen twenty-seven has been an annus non, so far as striking accomplishments are concerned. The racial achievements of the year are commendable but without much comprehensive significance.

The supreme court reaffirmed its previous decisions affecting the fifteenth amendment and the Negro's right to buy and occupy property without restrictions on account of race or color. These decisions settle in principle, the involved issues for all time. But unfortunately they have little or no relation to actual practice in experience. On the other hand the same supreme court decided, by unanimous concurrence, that the states have the right to segregate the races for scholastic purposes, which also includes the right to group the Chinese and presumably all other varieties of non-whites for school assignment. This decision at the same time goes out of the way to apply the same principle to jim-crow cars. The only practical effect of this decision will be to weaken the force of agitation for civil equality in the North.

The states of Virginia and Georgia have enacted laws defining a white person as one without any traceable admixture of Negro or non-white blood. To the Negro, this definition has only a curious interest. After the lords and masters have determined those whom they will treat as white, the residue, I suppose, will be assigned to and aligned with the Negro race.

The important question that cannot long wait for judicial determination is "what is a Negro, and how is his identity to be determined?" There have been held during the year the Pan African and the Durham conferences. But the findings of the former, though interesting in themselves, evoke no warm feelings or vital interests of the normal Negro; while the fact finding outcome of Durham has not as yet been sufficiently promulgated to be incorporated into a practical program.

The January issue of Opportunity contains an excellent summary of occurrences during 1927. On the whole the debit seems to outbalance the credit side of the ledger. The Mississippi flood constitutes a disaster which has not been offset by any economic or industrial occurrence. The loss of Florence Mills was a serious loss to the artistic side of racial attainment. The banishment of Garvey was epochal in its significance. It is the first time in American history that the federal government has paid a Negro the compliment of banishment on account of his ideas or his initiative and enterprise. Mr. Garvey is the only Negro in the history of the race in America who has formulated a policy apart from white direction, control or influence and has impressed it upon a large following with something like fanatic devotion. The Garvey movement was wholly independent of the white man's origination and support. It was calculated to give a Negro a sense of self-respect in his own personality, and not merely as a carbon copy of the white lord and master. The idea is distasteful to the psychology of the Aryan mind. The movement never did seem to me to be feasible, but its squelching by technical application of law is deeply significant of the white man's attitude on matters of purely Negro initiation and self direction.

It is needless to recite the various incidents of the past year which in the main consisted in the ordinary attainments and achievements of stated activities, each affecting its modicum of advantage and advancement. The new year opens up without any very promising prospects. The civil rights of the race are being chal-

lenged. The battle line of separate schools stretches across the continent. The supreme court has given this issue a black eye blow by the Mississippi decision, so far as federal encouragement is concerned. Lynching is moving along haltingly with diminishing speed. Segregated areas in the cities will slowly fill in the established outlines and gradually extend the boundaries. Our schools will carry out the curricula with increased efficiency, but without corresponding zeal and inspiration. The city Negro has taken on large property obligations which will engross his chief energies to have and to hold. The church life of the race is certainly not inspiring. The Negro's complicity to control great religious organization of his own is being seriously questioned by the most thoughtful of these several communions. From present indications, these great religious estates are not calculated to make the same good showing during the next half century as during the past fifty years. The moral and social life of the race but reflects the general tendency of the times, which is not reassuring. The loss of vital religious belief and feeling on the part of the so-called Negro intelligentsia is the tragedy of the age. If philanthropists who built our schools and colleges could have foreseen this lamentable debacle, they probably would have hesitated in the dispensation of their philanthropy.

But I must not go further for fear of being accused of impotent pessimism. I am not a pessimist, but am simply describing the situation as every clear thinking and fair minded Negro knows it to be. The prophet is always a preacher of despair. He sees and foresees, and reminds the people of the wrath to come unless they mend their evil ways. On the other hand, the blatant optimism goes on eating and drinking and boasting in blissful ignorance of impending doom. Thus it was with the low thinkers and high livers in the days of Noah, who went on eating and drinking, fiddling and dancing while the devouring floods gathered about them. They could not discern the signs of the times.

What, then should be the program of the Negro, for 1928? This should be a year of fact finding and stock taking. I do not mean merely statistical and historical facts of which we already know enough. I mean comprehensive social facts. What are the limits of race prejudice? How far can we modify it, and how far will we be compelled to submit to it? I read in a well known journal a proposed program for 1928 to abolish the color line. It is folly of an unexcusable character to deceive ourselves or to mislead the simple minded folk who look to the intelligentsia for guidance, to hold out such fatuous optimism. We can more easily abolish the Mississippi river in 1928 than the color line. Is the color line abolishable? If so, what means have we at our disposal to abolish it? Who will begin? Where shall we take hold?

The organized evils of which we complain have been enacted into law or crystallized in public sentiment. How can we propitiate public sentiment or remove iniquitous laws? Our experience is not reassuring. With the united endeavor of all of our agitative organizations we have never been able in two generations to have a single proscriptive law removed. Jim-crow cars, separate schools, disfranchisement, a n t i - m i s c e g e n a t i o n laws, proscription of civil rights, and segregation on its operative side are more pronounced today than ever before. Shall we go on screaming and screeching, denouncing and defying, impotently, as they who beat the air? Or shall we be as sensible men formu-

EDITORIAL

The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History of which the learned historian, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, of Washington, D. C., is director, has in recent years organized a movement which will wield a potent and far flung influence in developing self-respect among our own group, and for our people by the intelligent and broadminded among the white race in the United States and abroad. It is the observance annually of a national celebration of Negro History Week everywhere in the United States. The date set for its observance is the second week in February, and this year it begins on Sunday, February 5.

The purposes of this celebration are to popularize the study of Negro life and history and to secure more support for its promotion.

A very definite program as to how this may be done is set forth in the instructive pamphlet published by the association in these words:

1. Organize your community through committees for the celebration.
2. Appeal to your board of education for the adoption of Negro history text books.
3. Interest your library and school in securing a shelf of scientific works on the Negro and pictures of distinguished men of the race.
4. Urge everyone to write the association all he knows about Negro family history and to send in any important documents bearing on the record of the Negro.
5. Set aside one day of the week (during the celebration) as a Book and Picture Fund Day when all will be called upon to assist in raising funds to buy books and pictures of Negroes for schools and libraries.

Since the inauguration of this movement it has been learned by many that the Negro has a worth while history and an important historical background which has been obscured by the facts of enslavement, which have been made so prominent, much to our detriment. Our contributions to American life loom much larger than is imagined or known, even among the cultured ones of our race and a knowledge and appreciation of these facts will increase our racial self-respect and correspondingly a higher esteem for our people in the mind of the American public.

It is hoped that Omaha will join with other cities, towns and villages in the observance of Negro History Week. Self knowledge leads to sovereign power.

YOLANDE DU BOIS TO MARRY POET, COUNTEE CULLEN

New York, N. Y.—Dr. and Mrs. W. E. Burghardt Du Bois of this city announce the engagement of their only child, Nina Yolande to Mr. Countee Cullen, son of Reverend and Mrs. Frederick A. Cullen, also of New York. The wedding will be celebrated at Easter time.

Countee Cullen, the well known young poet, was born and educated in New York and is a graduate of New York university (A. B., Phi Beta Kappa) and of Harvard (A. M.). He is the author of two volumes of poems and an anthology and is assistant editor of the magazine, Opportunity. He is a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

Miss Du Bois was born in Massachusetts and educated in New York and England. She is a graduate of Fisk university (A. B.) and Columbia (A. M.) and is a teacher of English and drawing at the Douglass High school, Baltimore, Md. She is a member of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

late a practical program by means of which we may reasonably hope to modify or overcome some or all of the disadvantages under which we now labor?

Let existing agencies and organizations continue for the present to pursue the even tenor of their ways. All constructive endeavors contribute their little modicum to the sum total, as the rain drops wear away the mighty hills. But we should pool our wisdom and bring our aggregated intelligence and directed will to bear upon our economic, political, civil and social conditions. We must be ready to scrap the ineffective organizations and agencies upon which we have been wont to rely, but which have proved to be woefully ineffective but not until something better has been devised to take their place.

Does this sound like a revival of the idea of the Negro Sanhedrin? If so, so let it be. I pass the idea on to those who can effectuate it. Dr. R. R. Moton has made the suggestion.

Let the Negro in 1928 take stock and mark time, preliminary to the formulation of a program with which he can march forward to the fulfillment of his destined future.

KELLY MILLER.

SEGREGATION ISSUE AGAIN TAKEN TO OGDEN L. MILLS

New York, N. Y.—Report of a second call upon Ogden L. Mills, under secretary of the treasury, to protest against segregation of colored clerks in the treasury department, is made to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People by Neval H. Thomas, president of the Washington branch. Mr. Thomas states that a report had been "hastily gotten out" from ex-Governor Frank T. White, treasurer of the United States, stating there was no segregation in his department but that in an hour and a half of plain talk, the delegation made it clear to Mr. Mills that it was generally understood that segregation prevailed.

The colored delegation, according to Mr. Thomas' report, inquired of Mr. Mills: "Mr. Secretary, do you mean to say that there is no discrimination here when out of this vast army of 67,000 people not one directive position is held by a colored man or woman save in the jim-crow division of the office of the register of the treasury?"

Mr. Mills is reported to have promised at the conclusion of the interview that he would investigate the situation and inform the committee of the results of his investigation.

It is generally understood that the cabinet officers in Washington are none too eager to have the segregation issue raised in their departments as its political possibilities in the coming election are anything but pleasant for the persons responsible.

NEGROES OPEN ICE FACTORY

Louisville, Ky.—A few weeks ago a new ice factory was opened in this city in the west end by members of our group. Quite a number of men have been employed and modern equipment has been installed. We have about thirty local ice dealers all of whom have heretofore purchased their ice from the large trust companies.

COLORED CITIZENS ORGANIZE A FORUM

Riverside, Cal.—Formation of the Colored Citizens' Club, an organization to further community enterprises through the conducting of open forum on matters of municipal scope, was completed last week in a meeting held in the Mercantile Hall on Park avenue.

NEGRO RACE TO GROW 500,000 A YEAR IN U. S.

Chicago, Ill.—Five million may be added to the colored population of the United States every ten years, based upon the present birth rate and subtracting the present death rate, according to figures compiled by Allan Leroy Locke, professor of philosophy and sociology of Howard University, Washington, D. C.

Dr. William H. Walsh, Executive Secretary of the American Hospital Association, gave out the figures in connection with a campaign for Negro hospital development. The most unsatisfactory situation in the whole medical problem confronting the colored population today is that relating to hospitals, and this situation is as acute in the South as it is in the North, he quotes Dr. Carl G. Roberts, President of the National Medical Association, Negro, as announcing.

LOS ANGELES MAYOR TO SERVE ON N. A. A. C. P. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

New York, N. Y.—Mayor George E. Cryer of Los Angeles has consented to serve ex-officio on a conference committee which he will himself appoint, in connection with the 19th annual spring conference in that city next June of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

This news comes to the national office from Dr. J. A. Summerville of Los Angeles, who together with Messrs. L. G. Robinson and Titus Alexander, were appointed a committee to interest prominent citizens of Los Angeles in the N. A. A. C. P. meeting from June 27 to July 3.

In addition to the mayor of Los Angeles, Hon. Arthur Eldridge, president of the board of public works, has consented to serve on the N. A. A. C. P. conference committee, as have Hon. James E. Davis, chief of police; Hon. Lewis H. Schwalbe, U. S. collector of customs; Dr. Emory S. Bogardus of the University of Southern California; Judge Archibald of the superior court; Bishops J. J. Cantwell, Bertram Stevens, and J. W. Martin; Judge Guerin of the superior court; Judge Georgia Bullock of the municipal court; Rabbi Edgar F. Manin, Supervisor J. H. Bean and Dr. Walter Sylvester Herzog.

In addition, many other citizens of Los Angeles prominent both in official and civic life, have consented to serve on this committee to receive the N. A. A. C. P.

It is confidently expected that this conference of the N. A. A. C. P. will be the greatest gathering of colored people and their friends ever to have been held on the Pacific coast of the United States.

The N. A. A. C. P. is at present arranging with the Rock Island railroad for special cars and possibly a special train to carry delegates and visitors from the east to Los Angeles, covering points of scenic interest on the way. Representatives of the Rock Island road are at present working out an itinerary of which full details will be made public as soon as completed.

RETIRED AFTER 30 YEARS

Washington, D. C.—First Sergeant William M. Lee, 25th Infantry, stationed at Nogales, Ariz., has, upon his own request, been retired. Sergeant Lee has had more than thirty years' active military service. War Department orders making this retirement official have been issued, and note the fact that the services of Sergeant Lee has been "honest and faithful."

SIX HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Among the 32 graduates from Central High school who received their diplomas Thursday night were five colored students, one boy, Eugene Smith, and four girls, Eddie Chambers, Bernice Johnson, Nancy Pharr and Hazel Myers. This is the largest ratio of colored students ever graduated from any Omaha high school class. There was also one graduate from South High, Gertrude Harris.

EQUAL RIGHTS LEAGUE PROPOSES DOUGLASS COMMEMORATION

League and Congress Issue Appeal to Race for Three-Fold Aim of Awakening Self-Reliance, Removing Federal Segregation.

Boston, Mass., Jan. 27—Be known to mankind as a race which has produced great characters. Let other races see that Aframericans have heroes of their own blood, historic champions of their liberty and equality. Teach our race to emulate the principles of our own great dead. These are some of the values held to come out of annual public race days in an appeal to colored Americans everywhere to observe Douglass Day on February 14th, the birth anniversary of Frederick Douglass, the issuance of which by the National Equal Rights league and race congress of America began today from its national headquarters at 9 Cornhill.

This organization as a league completes this year 20 consecutive years of activity, and by the merging of the former national race congress last year now represents Aframerica's united self support for equality, being now the only national colored civil rights body. Douglass is the organization's patron saint in that his bravest, most sacrificing achievement was that of conducting an independent movement for freedom of race by the race itself in addition to that led by others, which the observances should emphasize. In devotion to the spirit of Douglass' work, the race is asked to celebrate the 11th anniversary of his birth and thereat to declare by speech and resolutions first for abolition of color segregation, especially by or under the federal government, and second, for reduction of Southern representation in congress as pressure for obedience to the spirit of the fifteenth amendment.

The paramount objects are to arouse the race to self reliance, to have President Coolidge receive anti-segregation resolutions to abolish the federal example of this inequality before he leaves the presidency from every colored community, and for congressmen to receive the resolutions for the fourteenth amendment from their respective districts, and every meeting send an extra copy to Representative Tinkham, all in the same work.

ASK NOMINATIONS FOR SPINGARN MEDAL

New York, N. Y.—The committee on award of the Spingarn medal announces that nominations are in order for the medal to be presented at the Los Angeles spring conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, next June. The medal is awarded annually to the United States citizen of African descent for most distinguished achievement in some honorable field of human activity.

Nominations should be accompanied by specific account of the achievement or achievements on the basis of which the award is asked and each should be accompanied by a brief biographical account of the nominee.

Communications should be addressed to Bishop John Hurst, Spingarn Medal Award Committee, care of the N. A. A. C. P., 69 Fifth avenue, New York City.

SINGLETON AND BARNETT FILE FOR LEGISLATURE

Dr. John A. Singleton has filed for state representative from the ninth and F. L. Barnett from the tenth district. Both gentlemen served acceptably in the last legislature and should be returned. Dr. Singleton served with distinction on three important committees, Cities and Towns, Medical Societies, and Privileges and Elections, being secretary of the Medical committee.

Mr. Barnett served on the Committee on Fees and Salaries and on Railroads committee and also introduced and had passed an anti-mob law.