

The Voice

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EDITORIALS

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Bill Hastie And Ben Davis

In Somerset Maugham's book, "Of Human Bondage" a young doctor becomes very much attached to a girl of doubtful morals who almost drags him down, but he meets the "right" girl later and ends up living a clean happy life doing good for people. It seems that the relatively small things in life build up and in the end become important in the thread of the Fates. William Hastie and Benjamin Davis are men of similar backgrounds, but last week one became a federal judge, the other, a federal prisoner.

Hastie and Davis met as Freshmen at Amherst college and both went to Harvard law school, both practiced law in southern cities and both had a deep abhorrence of the discriminations of the segregated system.

Last week Hastie was named District judge (for Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey and the Virgin Islands). The real significance of this appointment lies not in its political reward, but in the fact that after over 300 years, a Negro has been given a court bench next to the highest in the

land, where the law can be interpreted in its more equalitarian aspects and where cases can be more quickly passed up the supreme court for final decision. Judge Hastie, then, is in a position where his brilliant legal mind can do much for the cause of democratic government.

Davis was one of eleven communist leaders convicted last week of conspiracy to overthrow the government by teaching communist doctrines. The moneyed publisher, with good political contacts, and popularity with Harlem's half million Negroes, Finns and Latins was sent off to jail for his views on what America needs—in a communistic way). In this connection it is interesting to note that in its long history of violence and murder and, not only threatening, but actually thwarting the democratic process, the KKK has never had a member jailed for holding its views.

I guess everybody works for integrity between actions and beliefs, but one thing seems certain—that where democracy works, communism hasn't a chance. —CMG.

Mallard Home Burnt By Klan

LYONS, Ga. (ANP). According to information received here last week, the home of Mrs. Amy James Mallard, widow of the lynch mob victim, Robert Mallard, was burned to the ground by Ku Klux Klansmen last July 4 and farmers in the Altamaha river section have just decided to tell it.

Widow Mallard, who now lives in New York where her daughter, Doris Byron, is a student at New York university, learned that her house had been destroyed by fire three months ago.

Mrs. Mallard's husband was murdered near his farm house last November and, following a trial in which she was accused of shooting him, the widow left this little town never to return.

Friends of the Mallards notified the widow's lawyer, Mrs. Cora Walker Bailey, because she had asked that chemical supplies belonging to a Boston concern be shipped north.

African Colonial Issue Goes To UN Subcommittee

LAKE SUCCESS, N. Y. (ANP). A special 21 nation subcommittee has handed the job of drafting a plan settling the future of the

OUT OF OLD NEBRASKA



by JAMES C. OLSON, Superintendent STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Halloween, that jolly evening given over to ghosts, goblins and small boys of all ages, has long been celebrated in Nebraska with enthusiastic and appropriate ceremonies.

It would appear, too, that the "Halloween problems," with its resultant disruption of the landscape and occasional destruction of property, is as old as the celebration itself. Search through the back files of Nebraska's newspapers, in the library of the State Historical Society, reveals frequent news and occasional editorial comment relative to Halloween celebrations, impromptu and otherwise.

A comment in the Tekamah *Burtonian*, Nov. 2, 1900, is typical: "Tuesday night the young bloods of the town proceeded to make a hot time by overturning boxes, etc., in celebration of halloween. There was not near so much disturbance as there was last year."

One of the more ingenious Halloween tricks of a generation ago was perpetrated between Bennet and Cheney in 1901. The B. & M. freight was making good headway between the towns, when the engineer saw a man standing on the track. He whistled but the man failed to move. The brakes were applied frantically, but too late—the man was ground under the wheels.

Upon investigating the accident, the conductor found that the "man" was simply a straw dummy placed on the track by mischievous boys. In reporting the incident, the *Nebraska City News* remarked, "It is not necessary to repeat any of the speeches made by the crew, as they would not look well in print."

The year 1901 appears to have resulted in considerable depredation in and around Nebraska City, including the wrecking of two cars belonging to the street car company. Little wonder that the *News* advised its readers, "Thursday night is Halloween, and you want to turn the dog loose to protect your property."

As is true today, communities frequently planned Halloween parties to keep turbulent spirits occupied in the hope that no time

Actors To Note James Bland Compositions

Saturday, October 22nd, marked the 95th anniversary of the birthday of one of America's most prolific and yet least known composers. He was James A. Bland, a Negro, born in Flushing, Queens Borough, Long Island, on October 2, 1854 and died in poverty in Philadelphia, May 5, 1911. He composed some 600 songs of which 53 are listed in the Congressional Library. The most famous of his compositions are "Carry me Back to Old Virginny," the State song of the Commonwealth of Virginia, "O Dem Golden Slippers" and "In the Evening by the Moonlight."

"The Etude," music magazine for October, 1946, carries an interesting two page illustrated account of Bland's life and the dedication of the Bland monument erected by the Lions club of Virginia, in the Merion, Pennsylvania cemetery and Gov. William M. Tuck of the Old Dominion State delivered the dedicatory address.

Bland's lovely nostalgic ballads have been sung far and wide by

would be available for predatory activities. The *Falls City Journal* reported a number of such parties in 1899; and in 1916 the *Hastings Daily Tribune* reported a community party in which hundreds participated.

Louise Pound, Nebraska's eminent author and student of folklore, mentions a number of early Halloween customs, still persistent, in her article, "Old Nebraska Folk Customs," published in *Nebraska History* for March, 1947.

minstrels, barber shop quartets, and school and college choruses. The Negro Actors' guild is planning in the near future to sponsor an appropriate public observance of Bland's contribution to American folk music.

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