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BALTIMORE, MARCH 23, 1912

CLERICAL DECORUM

It is important, most important, that the race should maintain the highest possible ideal in the personnel of its clergy. Not only must our ministers be well learned, but above all else they must be godly. As compared with the other large cities of the country, upon the whole, Baltimore, in this respect, stand in the front ranks. For this, we should be thankful, not boastful. In this particular respect, the colored churches of this city are but following the good example set them by the fathers well-nigh a century ago. With all that we have said, it is far from us to imply that we have reached such an ideal as would warrant us in ceasing to be ever vigilant with respect to maintaining the high standard which has been reached. It would be manifestly unfair to expect of all the colored clergy such a standard of attainments and superior elevation of Christian character as are signified in such men as John Albert Johnson, John Hurst, Harvey Johnson, and the like; and, it is equally unfair and wrong because of the delinquencies, or supposed delinquencies, of a few of our colored ministers, to create the erroneous notion among the people generally, that the rare exception among us in clerical life, is of the proper moral and ethical standard. The ministry is too sacred a calling to be used as a target for the irresponsible fulminations, may be, of some not always discreet layman who wandering out of the path of rectitude have been fellow sinners with some poor unfortunate ministerial brethren. If such have the direct evidence against such ministerial sinners, although in the same boat, they ought to come forward, in the name of God, and expose both themselves and the ministers in question, and not add to their own baseness by reflecting upon the whole body of as godly and devoted men can be found in any city the size of Baltimore.

We freely admit that there is much room for improvement in various matters connected with our churches; but, we have steadfastly taken the ground that reformation and improvement therein are to be had by that small group of over cultivated and super-critical young Negroes finding a place and work in our several churches, rather than through "open-letters" and the skillful juggling of words in the columns of our newspapers.

It is hardly less than audacity and supreme impudence, not to permit the proper authorities in the several churches to attend to their own affairs. Certainly, there is enough common sense as well as common decency yet resident in such churches to discover that which offends, and to apply the necessary means of discipline and correction. At any rate, with the large number and great variety of Christian churches of various faiths among the race in the city, when the oral odor and atmospheric conditions become beyond endurance in any particular congregation with out much inconvenience, the sober and sane, in such infected districts, may easily find a satisfactory home wherein they may be edified and built up in the doctrines of God, their Savior.

THE MOUNTAIM PROBEEM

We have suddenly thust upon us a new problem, and this time it is not the Negro problem. It is the Mountain Problem. And, by this we do not mean the converting of the mountain into a plain. Last week was enacted in the good old State of Virginia one of the saddest tragedies which has disgraced a State with such a historical legacy of greatness which pertains to but few of the American States. The details of this sad tragedy are too familiar for restatement in these columns. Sufficient to say, a band of white men, of the "Superior race," invaded a court of justice, murdering the presiding judge, and other court officials, and attempting to blot out the entire judicial machinery. Providence thus witnesses against the absurd and foolish talk about racial "inferiority." The white race is not to be accounted "inferior" because of the deadly work of these "inferior" men of that race; nor is it any more justifiable to condemn the whole Negro race to inborn "inferiority" because of the evil deeds of "inferior" members of that race. This very point, showing the shallowness of the contention of racial inferiority, on the part of the Negro, was strikingly brought out, more than twenty-five years ago by one of the most intensely radical, and at the same time godly men the South has ever produced. We refer to the late Rt. Rev. Dr. Wilmer, Episcopal Bishop of Alabama. It was a plea against any separation of the races, in Church, on the ground of color. Bishop Wilmer then said in part:

"It is proposed to set off missionary organizations for the colored people, not on the ground of their incapacity and ignorance, but on the ground of color. I say not on the ground of incapacity or ignorance, for it is notorious that there are multitudes of white people in some of our States who, as it regards intelligence, education, and manners, are not superior to the colored population and are quite "inferior" to that class of colored people who are prepared to enter the communion of this Church. If, then a separate missionary organization be desirable for any of our people on the ground of their incapacity and ignorance—and that point is the one now to be determined—why is it not equally desirable for people of all colors?"

Problem it certainly is to link unequal things together, and make them equal. The law does not make "superior" and "inferior" people. The Almighty God has placed within man certain internal resources, and as man approximates the Almighty he likewise approximates "superiority" whether his skin be black or white. As he recedes from the Almighty he becomes correspondingly "inferior" whether he be black or white. Now, he ho sets himself to the task of changing this divine law is certainly up against the most difficult of all problems. Some day the State will be persuaded that it is best for the whole of society to recognize, with respect to this matter, what the preacher declares after he has just performed the wedding ceremony: "Those whom God hath joined together let not man put asunder." Virtue is virtue whether in a black or white fleshly setting, and, in the end, it will seek its own. Dust to dust, and spirit to spirit; and, it can not always be that men will continue to say "Our Father" without finally seeing their own Father in the face of every other man. The so-called "Negro Problem" is but the stern disciplinary measure by the which the Almighty seeks to introduce the "superior" race to the real and profound meaning of the opening words of the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father."

PRESIDENT TAFT AND THE COLORED VOTERS

As the presidntial campaign proceeds the interest of the colord voters should not center around the tariff, the recall, and the referndum but upon those men and measures whose success in November will assure us protection in the enjoyment of our civil and political rights. With us this should be the paramount issue, just as the labor people and the anti-saloon people determine their affiliations.

No matter how widely at variance men and parties may be upon the great economic and political questions of the day, American sentiment seems to be crystallizing more and more definitely against according to the colored man a full measure of citizen rights. Even the Republican party, the champion of American liberty, born in the throes of human slavery agitation with no other excuse made or sought for its existence than a desire to champion human rights, has grown cold and indifferent toward us, and the time seems to have arrived when the call comes to us to make our own fight with our own weapons for a citizenship which is now ours only in name.

We have no longer the great champions of human rights to fight for us. One by one the Great Reaper has fallen upon their ranks until now scarcely a corporal's guard is left and their voices are scarcely heard. We no longer have a public sentiment to which we can appeal. Slowly and surely the callousness of plutocratic wealth and the relentless proselyting of a Southern prejudice have poisoned the very sources and so thoroughly contaminated the head waters of once friendly sentiment that now there is little to choose between Northern and Southern sentiment toward us.

We no longer have our own representatives to plead our cause at the bar of executive and legislative action. Those of our number who are in the high positions and holding much coveted places are dominated by fear—that great paralyzer of manhood, whose very touch chills the heat of our wrath over the wrongs heaped upon our people; leaves unuttered the call to resent and punish the treachery of our ante-election friends or openly oppose the activities of our foes, and reduces its victims to the dead level of impotence and inactivity.

To the rank and file of us then, it is left to bear the burden of this struggle in the heat of the day. To the men behind the guns then, comes the call to stand for our manhood rights; to refuse to sell our birthrights for a mess of pottage, and to give our votes to such men and measures as will definitely and positively work for the improvement of the unbearable conditions under which we live.

The attitude of the Democratic party, dominated as it is by the sentiments and opinions of the poorer elements of the dominant race, the oft-repeated assertion that the Democratic party is a white man's party, and the more recent treatment of those colored Democrats who essayed to participate in the birthday reception held in honor of Speaker Champ Clark and who were, it is said, so ruthlessly excluded conclusively show that there is yet no place for us in that party. It remains for us then, to hold our places within the Republican party and by a consistent and persistent and united agitation and effort to seek to commit that party by action to the success of our cause. Upon this course colored men should unite.

This leads us to submit for the consideration of thoughtful colored men these propositions, whose right settlement should determine how our vote should be cast in November:

1. Is the Republican party, as at present constituted, fulfilling its pledge to guarantee to all classes of ciizens the fullest measure of manhood rights?

2. Are the leaders of the Republican party inspired with an honest determination, after as well as before election, to keep party pledges?

3. What has the party done during the past three years in fulfilling these pledges?

4. Has President Taft been true to the great principles and traditions of the Republican party?

5. Does President Taft deserve the suppot of the colored voters?

LATE LITERARY NEWS

Sutton Griggs Latest Book, "Wisdom's Call"

Ever since the Negro first set foot on the American soil, his ignorance, his superstition, his dissimilarity, and his admittedly temporary inferiority to the white man have created probems which, in quantity and quality hav increased with the increasing years. The Negro problem has been and continues to be the veritable mill stone around the neck of our body politic. Astute politicians have tackled the subject and, invariably, after disgusting others by, and themselves with, their failure to secure any satisfactory solution, have slunk away acknowledging their defeat. Nor has the pulpit thus far offered any acceptable solution. It has without fail heretofore been this way—the solution which proved satisfactory to the white man has always been proportionately unsatisfactory to the Nergo and vice versa.

And, at last, the occasion and a man for the occasion have met. In his latest book, "Wisdom's Call," Dr. Sutton E. Griggs has found and offers to the American a solution and a remedy for the Negro problem which can not fail to be eminently satisfactory to the white man and none the less to the Negro. Dr. Griggs' solution and remedy antagonize the interests of neither race but is in complete harmony with them. And mind you! This book deals with no plausible theories—no Utopian dreams. It does, however, deal with hard, cold, well-known facts which are everywhere observable and must be observed.

Dr. Griggs is a philosopher, a psychologist and a logician evenly balanced and happily blended in one. He takes for his premises simply facts—facts you have no desire to deny, then with the wisdom of a philosopher, the delft analysis of a psychologist and the unerring mercilness of a logician, he partly leads you—partly drives you to conclusions from which you have no desire to escape be you white man or be you Negro. You simply wonder why a thing so self evident had not before by you been seen.

As an unmistakable panecea for all the ills growing out of the Negro problem—be they religious, financial, poiltical, or social, this book cannot fail to be a success. It needs only to be read by each and both of the races. The highest form of mission work a man in American do is to read this book himself and then pass it on. Let the Negro read it, then pass it to some white man. Let the white man read it then pass it to some Negro. It is the book which will give the American people permanent relief from all phases and conditions of the Race Problem.

The book contains 193 pages. It is well printed on good paper and has a beautiful leatherette cover. It may be obtained by sending fifty cents, with five cents added for postage, to The Orion Pub. Co. East Station, Nashville Tenn.

THE PEOPLE'S FORUM

There Should Be No Doubt In Colored Voters' Mind.

To the Editor of the Afro-American Ledger:

In choosing between President Taft and ExPresident Roosevelt, so far as the colored voter is concerned, there should be no doubt. The official acts of each we have well in mind. And we are to weigh them by their official acts. Both have had their faults, but the faults of President Taft are more numerous and more damaging than those of former President Roosevelt.

The attitude of Taft toward the Negro has been anything but satisfactory. Reference is made particularly to his Supreme Court appointments and his Southern policy.

With all things considered and proper deductions made, every fair-minded man whose vote is not predetermined by circumstances, will cast it for Roosevelt.

A vast majority of the race leaders in Baltimore and elsewhere have unhesitatingly declared their preference for Roosevelt and state their reasons for so doing. Doubtless they think the same of Roosevelt today as did Mr. Cummings on the twenty-third of June, 1904, when, in seconding the nomination of Roosevelt said in part:

"For the distinguished honor of seconding the nomination of that grand type of American citizen, Theodore Roosevelt, I am profoundly grateful.

"He is above all things a true, honest, earnest, patriotic American citizen. He is a leader of unflinching courage, a man of wisdom, a man of action. He is open and frank, free from intrigue or concealment. In his life and walks and conduct he stands unapproached and unapproachable. He is a broad man, broad in intellect, broad in sympathies, broad in soul; he lends a listening ear to the cry of the down-trodden and oppressed, and with strong and ready arm encircling the weak and helpless, he bids them rise and hope and live.

"With a vision unclouded by bias or prejudice, he sees through the outer clay, clad in different hues, the man within, standing there beholds the image of the Divine Master indicating the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

"God grant that in our party's struggle to reach that time it may ever have a man to place before the American people for their suffrage who has the ability, courage, honesty, and aggressiveness of Theodore Roosevelt."

March 18. J. Sumner Holly.

Approves Course of the Afro-American Ledger

To the Editor of the Afro-American Ledger:

Permit me to express approval of the course the Afro-American Ledger is pursuing in bringing the attitude of President Taft toward us a race so conspicuously to the minds of our voters, some of whom are able to see and have seen these very things for a long time. These men are not so bound in their allegiance to the Republican party that they will vote for its candidates, regardless of the effects upon us as men.

The readers and observers among our men know that in Mr. Taft we have had an indifferent President so far as our rights and privileges go. Whether deliberate or not we do not know, but the fact remains, however, that the foregoing assertion is true.

It seems that lynchings and mob rule have flourished to a greater extent than before. These things have apparently not disturbed Mr. Taft very much. He now has the hardihood to ask our endorsement of his course as President.

Mr. Editor, I would like to ask if any Negro with a spark of manhood in him can under the circumstances support Mr. Taft I for one cannot and will not. Your views as expressed are conservative and are readily assented to by the men of your city, but where you will have to organize for more effective work is out in the rural districts.

March 20. Walter C. Jones,
Darlington, Md.

SMART SET AT HOLLIDAY STREET

S. Dudley and the new Smart Set Company in "Dr. Beans From Boston," the big musical comedy of substance and originality, will be the offering at the Holliday Street Theatre on Monday, March 25th, and judging from the inspiring reports that have preceded it, it is altogether probable that it will establish a record where by others in the future will be judged, so far as concerns plausibility coupled with novelty and attractiveness. The main object to be attained in the presentation of an entertainment of this kind is the greater number of effective features of a novel kind to be crowded into entertaining space, as will share equal interest with a large array of pretty, talented girls, and as many really funny comedians as can be depended upon to relieve the strain of the ensemble and chorus work. Then, too, it becomes a matter of positive necessity to provide scenic equipment, and costume accessories on a scale of superlative elegance, in order to keep pace with such offerings as "Dr. Beans From Boston" is proclaimed. However, this attraction has one advantage that it would seem hard to overcome, and that is, it tells an intensely amusing story, built upon rational farce lines, and while the plot is made subservient to many explosions of unconscious mirth and entrancing melody, nevertheless it lends tangibility and sanity to the whole atmosphere. There seems to have been method in the madness that prompted the making ready of this seasons version of "Dr. Beans From Boston." From every direction comes the verdict of superiority of elaborate details, regarding the production, and what must be more gratifying still to the promoters of such an extravagant venture, is the financial results that have already been achieved for an entertainment calculated to impress an audience with its novelty and honesty of purpose. The book is the joint work of Mr. Dudley and Henry Troy, who is also a member of the cast. The jingles were provided by Will H. Vodery with lyrics by Henry S. Cramer. Those who contribute to the excellance of the performance are: Arthur Talbot, Daisy Martin, James Burris, Roley Gibson, Ella Bevans, Frank De Lyons, William Ramsey, Alberta Ormes, and Jessie Harris. Matinees will be given daily.

Berkley, Md., Mar. 21—The literary society has been meeting regularly and many instructive papers have been read. Mrs. E. N. Washington recently read a paper on "The Needs of the Race."

TALKS OF THE PEOPLE OF OKLAHOMA

Meets Some Interesting People While Visiting Different Places In The State

Chicago, Ill.—Now you see I am in Chicago, but I must turn my attention to saying some other things.

I have promised to tell you a little more about Oklahoma. I enjoyed very much the trip through the state. The men of our race are putting forth real manhood there. Rev. W. H. Jernagin arranged for me to make the trip and the people were so kind to me that the gave me money enough to pay all my expenses while riding from place to place, and there was only one place on the whole trip where they would accept of a cent of my money for entertainment and that was in Boley.

As I told you in my last letter, Boley was strictly a town belonging to our people. I did not get to spend much time in getting around, because of the heavy rain which greated me. I met the bankers, and the lawyers, and the merchants, and the professors, and the business men and women of every grade. It is indeed a hustling busy town. Banker Turner is a big man and has a heart and soul, but both have been worked on to such an extent that he did not know how to take hold of the next man who came along.

He said that many newspaper men had been there to write up the town, and that has been the last of it. They have gotten the money, went on their way rejoicing, and there is now a newspaper man in this country, if he can just get his hands on him, something is going to drop. I hope it ill not drop yet awhile, but if it should drop, I will feel sorry for the man.

"He came here," said Mr. Turner, "recommended by Dr. Young, and was to write up the town for $50. We put up the money, Dr. Young entertained him, and then he drew a check on a bank in some place in the United States. The check was returned, I have never seen a single paper, although he was to furnish us with 500 papers. I hope to put my hands on him."

On account of rain, I did not get to meet the mayor of Boley, but I had the plesure of meeting the Y. M. C. A., and delivered at a talk for the men Sunday afternoon, and then from there, I pulled on down the road, until I had reached other places, going to the banks, stores, schools, and post office.

I made a trip to Langston City to visit Langston University. Many were the men I met there. I had the pleasure of being with President Inman E. Page. To my mind he is one of the greatest men of our race. He is a man who is doing something. He stands for something.

In Guthrie, I was with Dr. H. W. Conrad, formerly of Louisville, Ky. but who has been in Guthrie for years. He has purchased a fine home. Mrs. Conrad is just a busy woman. She plants her own chickens, and has her own eggs, and then I don't know what else. I am delighted that I had the pleasure of meeting her and seeing her home. Dr. Conrad is a fine doctor.

I will not say more about Oklahoma, but I have a few more things back in my mind. From Oklahoma I went to visit Hon. John Wright, who is treasurer of the city of Topeka. Did you ever see a man of your race the treasurer of such a large city? I have never seen one like him before, and I was indeed delighted to see him, and look into his face. He is a fine man, and then the Lord blessed him with a fine wife. Mrs. Wright is one of the best and sweetest singers of the race. She one time was with Blind Boone, but now she is keeping house. I do not know when I have seen a woman who delighted so much in doing for her guests.

In my last letter I told you I was entertained by the Back-Bens. This is a club composed of 15 men of brain, men of worth, men who are working for the betterment of the race. I was delighted to be with so many educated men and hear them talk about the things of the day. Lawyer James H. Guy introduced the current events, and I tell you he was up on what had happened, and then Prof. Nathaniel Sawyer made a big speech, and it made me feel good to hear him. It was just the thing to meet these men. I will not say more.