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The Independent

January 15, 1921

The New Negro

"When He's Hit, He Hits Back!"

By Rollin Lynde Hartt

In this article Dr. Hartt has been at pains to avoid extremist arguments and scarehead testimony; he deals only with facts, presented from the moderate viewpoint of a Congregational minister who knows the various sections of the United States and has written for many years on American affairs. This article will be followed in an early issue by one which discusses the negro problem from the viewpoint of a Southerner

THE other evening five hundred Knights of the Ku Klux Klan marched in procession thru Jacksonville, Florida—a "band of determined men," who "would brook no interference." Fifteen southern states now have Ku Klux organizations—their emblem, the "flaming cross"; their device, "We Stand for Chivalry, Humanity, Mercy, Patriotism"; their advertisement, a shield bearing skull and cross-bones. Specimens of that advertisement, clipped from southern papers, are shown to visitors at the headquarters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in New York City.

Southerners recall that during Reconstruction the South owed much to the Ku Klux. Northerners, however unsympathetic, find that it accomplished its purposes. Can it accomplish its purposes today, or is it perhaps destined to end by defeating them if not actually bringing about the very situation it aims to forestall? There are friends of the South who, having studied the evolution of the new



He's brought himself and all his trappings and all his military energy and training back home again. And now what will happen?

negro, harbor serious misgivings. No mere fanciful bugaboo is the new negro. He exists. More than once I have met him. He differs radically from the timorous, docile negro of the past. Said a new negro, "Cap'n, you mark my words; the next time white folks pick on colored folks, something's going to drop—dead white folks." Within a week came race riots in Chicago, where negroes fought back with surprising audacity.

Another new negro, home from overseas said, "We were the first American regiment on the Rhine—Colonel Hayward's, the Fighting Fifteenth; we fought for democracy, and we're going to keep on fighting for democracy till we get our rights here at home. The black worm has turned."

I said, "There is a high mortality among turning worms. We've got you people eight to one."

He answered, "Don't I know it? Thousands of us must die; but we'll die fighting. Mow us down—slaughter us! It's better than this."

I remembered seeing a negro magazine shortly after the Chicago riots; a war-goddess on its cover brandished aloft her sword. "They who would be free," ran the legend, "must themselves strike the blow." I remembered a telegram from a negro editor, "Henceforward, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life." Here, in this colored veteran, was the same spirit—the spirit, that is, of the new negro. Hit, he hits back. In a succession of race riots, he has proved it. "When they taught the colored boys to fight," says a negro paper, "they started something they won't be able to stop."

This is apparently no transient mood. The evolution of the new negro has been in progress since 1916, when southern negroes began to move North. That huge, leaderless exodus—a million strong, according to Herbert J. Seligmann, author of "The Negro Faces America"—strong-



Underwood & Underwood
Is the Ku Klux Klan back again? It looks so. But with a difference; the negroes of today are a new race, not to be driven and terrorized into submission

er by far, according to some authorities—meant that for the first time in history the negro had taken his affairs into his own hands. Until then, things had been done to the negro, with the negro, and for the negro, but never by the negro. At last, he showed initiative and self-reliance. Despite the lure of big wages "up North," it required no little courage. If the vanguard was exploited, the exploitation continued and still continues. In an article on "The High Cost of Being a Negro," the *Chicago Whip* declares, "In Chicago, Kansas City, New York and Detroit, where negroes are working, they have to pay twice the rent, and in neighborhood clothing and grocery stores recent investigations show that for the same goods the negro has to pay a color tax sometimes as high as 50 per cent. Thus



© Keystone View

These are the negroes from the 369th (old 15th) regiment, the first American regiment on the Rhine, who won the Croix de Guerre. Colonel Hayward of the regiment stands in the center

the net earnings, if any at all, are 50 per cent less than those of the white workers." Yet the exodus from Dixie goes on. Few—astonishingly few—return.

"One reason for the migrations to the North," says Dr. Hawk, a colored clergyman, "is that the negroes want independence. Planters give them two or three acres for themselves and furnish the plants and seeds and they pay with a certain per cent of their crop, but they have always been in debt for things they are compelled to buy at certain stores. Since the war, wages have been so high that they could free themselves from debt and go North. . . . The going of a negro causes great unrest among other negroes. . . . The exodus is not only among the poor or floating class; lynching has a lot to do with it."

When the movement was just beginning, a white South-ernor wrote in the *Tifton Gazette*: "The white people have only themselves to blame. They have allowed negroes to be lynched, five at a time, on no stronger ground than suspicion; they have allowed whole sections to be depopulated of them; they have allowed them to be white-capped and whipped and their homes burned, with only the weakest effort to apprehend or punish those guilty—when any effort was made at all."

"The exodus is a great mark of progress," thinks Dr. Hawk; "negroes are saying, 'We can do this thing ourselves.'" They had not been doing it long when a new and still more tremendous influence came into play. America declared war. Negroes by scores of thousands joined the colors. Nor was that all. On the fourteenth of March, President Wilson "put the devil into the negro's head," as a southern newspaper phrases it, by receiving a deputation of colored clergy at the White House and making a speech thus reported in the negro press the country over:

I have always known that the negro has been unjustly and unfairly dealt with; your people have exhibited a degree of

loyalty and patriotism that should command the admiration of the whole nation. In the present conflict your race has rallied to the nation's call, and if there has been any evidence of slackness manifested by negroes, the same has not reached Washington. Great principles of righteousness are won by hard fighting and they are attained by slow degrees. With thousands of your sons in the camps and in France, out of this conflict you must expect nothing less than the enjoyment of full citizenship rights—the same as are enjoyed by every other citizen.

How—as a matter of precise, historic fact—did the negro acquit himself in France? Accounts by white men vary. Accounts by black men don't. Exclaims a negro paper, "Are you aware that a negro was the first American to receive the Croix de Guerre with palm and gold star? That three negro regiments and several battalions and companies were cited and had their flags decorated for valorous conduct? That negroes placed for the first time in artillery and signal corps won high distinction? That negroes in the early part of the war held 20 per cent of all territory assigned to Americans? That the negro army was the healthiest on record? That out of 45,000 negroes engaged in battle only nine were taken prisoners? That the negroes established a record for continuous service in the trenches—191 days?" "Under similar circumstances," comments the *New York Crisis*, "we would fight again. But, by the God of Heaven, we are cowards and jackasses if, now that the war is over, we do not marshal every ounce of our brain and brawn to fight a sterner, longer, more unbending battle against the forces of hell in our own land." "Back again, to be lynched, bombed, and riot-frenzied and segregated!" cries the *Chicago Whip*. "The black man fought to make the world safe for democracy; he now demands that America be made safe for black Americans."

In other words, the negro thinks as in identical circumstances a Caucasian would think. Having learned initiative, having heard from his President the promise of "freedom," and having served his country on the battlefield, he is determined henceforth to act as in the circumstances a Caucasian would act. For once—to that extent—black is white.

"You have now with you a new negro," declared the editor of the *Oklahoma City Black Dispatch* in addressing a white audience. "This new negro, who stands today released in spirit, finds himself physically bound and shackled by laws and customs that were made for slaves." Is he then seeking "social equality"? "What we want is social justice," the speaker went on to say; "none of my race is dreaming of 'social equality.'" "The negro is satisfied to

confine his social aspirations within his own race," affirms the *Hot Springs (Arkansas) Echo*, "but he does want such political and economic rights as are guaranteed to every law-abiding citizen." Putting the case still more explicitly, the *Houston (Texas) Informer* says: "What the colored man demands is 'social equity.' He wants the same rights of society that other men and races enjoy; but he does not ask the association and companionship of men or women of other races."

Once in the world, Mr. Dooley could remark to Mr. Hennessy, [Continued on page 76]



Underwood & Underwood

Mary Seymore, who ran for the Legislature from Hartford, Connecticut, is a symbol of an era not only of woman suffrage but of negro suffrage. She has negro blood in her veins and her great ambition is to see her race given a chance to progress

Eleventh article in The Independent that are finding a successful answer

Time Charts

By Professor John R. Commons

In collaboration with A. P. Hall
Jennie McMullin Turner, Ethel B.

THE American business man is usually thought of as hard-headed, intensely practical and unsentimental. As a matter of fact he is probably ruled by sentiment, even by religion, to a greater extent than we know. Witness the Link-Belt Company of Philadelphia, Chicago, and Indianapolis, where there has been a conscious development from pure scientific management to humanism in management; from figures to feelings as the instruments of control.

We visited the Philadelphia establishment. Twenty years ago this concern was one of the first to introduce the Taylor system of scientific management, under the supervision of Frederick W. Taylor himself; with some modifications to be sure, owing to the fact that this concern manufactures special orders and not staple products, but essentially the Taylor system with its functional foremen, time and motion study, minute cost determinations and the rest.

The nine hundred and odd workmen were scientifically adjusted to their jobs, shop routine was carefully and thoroughly established, and the men worked at a swift, steady pace. The worker who failed to come up to the standard performance found that his earnings were so small that he did not wait to be discharged. He quit and sought work where he could go it at a slower pace. The worker who remained produced in large quantities and made better than average earnings.

Costs were kept in such minute detail that operations so little duration as 105 seconds were recorded as separate units. Labor-hour costs were recorded at their actual costs. Value of buildings, equipment, tools and machinery were allocated to separate workmen and unit processes with accuracy. Every instruction was written and carefully recorded. Orders and results passed by writing, even human relations were controlled finally by paper forms. For every act and process there was a form which required careful filling out. The processes and relations were as mechanical as the Taylor system could make them.

This required an immense amount of work, rewriting bills of material, making thousands of entries; costs were always at least a week behind the labor date. A thoroughness of their methods and recognition of faults resulted in a number of changes: the use of a single bill of material, distinctive time card for each separate form of product, labor, and a uniform, general method of distributing direct expenses. Selling costs were kept apart from the rest. Thus the work was materially reduced and accurate sufficient for practical purposes retained.

While they still have scientific management it is so modified that it can no longer be called the Taylor system. It is the Link-Belt system.

In the planning department there have been probably the fewest changes. Here we find scientific management *par excellence*, likewise in the cost-accounting and statistical departments. The work is carefully planned, instructions are made out in copies sufficient for each of the employed workers on each job, and accurate time studies are made and recorded. Their purpose, however, is more to make possible intelligible cost accounts and job estimates than to maintain rigorous paper control over the shops.

The New Negro

(Continued from page 60)

"Th' nayger has manny fine qualities—he is joyous, light-hearted, and aisily lynched." The new negro has determined to change all that. Says the *Kansas City Call*: "The white man will learn in time that he has in this new type of negro a foeman worthy of his steel. If we are driven to defend our lives, our homes, our rights, let us do it man-fashion. How better can we die than in defending our lives, our homes, our rights from the attacks of white men obsessed with the idea that this world was made for Cæsar and his queens?"

I once heard Booker Washington say, "The negro can afford to be wronged; the white man can't afford to wrong him." Patience was the watchword—then. It is seldom the watchword now. Entirely typical of widespread negro sentiment today is this from the *Crisis*:

"For three centuries we have suffered and cowered. No race ever gave passive resistance and submission to evil longer, more piteous trial. Today we raise the terrible weapon of self-defense. When the murderer comes, he shall no longer strike us in the back. When the armed lynchers gather, we too must gather armed. When the mob moves, we propose to meet it with bricks and clubs and guns. If the United States is to be a land of law, we would live humbly and peaceably in it; if it is to be a land of mobs and lynchers, we might as well die today as tomorrow."

So, likewise, the *New York Age*: "Every day we are told to keep quiet. Only a fool will keep quiet when he is being robbed of his birthright. Only a coward will lie down and whine under the lash if he too can give back the lash. America hates, lynches and en-

slaves us, not because we are black, but because we are weak. A strong, united negro race will not be mistreated. It is always strength over weakness, might over right." Meanwhile a colored preacher writer in the *Cleveland Gazette*: "Don't start anything, but when something is started make it hot for them and finish it."

These quotations and most of the foregoing excerpts are taken from "The Voice of the Negro," a brilliant compilation by Robert T. Kerlin, professor of English at the Virginia Military Institute. Other sources yield information as to certain vagaries attending the evolution of the new negro. A "left wing" confesses: "We would be glad to see a Bolshevik government substituted in the South for your Bourbon, reactionary, vote-stolen, misrepresentative Democratic régime. Negroes perform most of the service in the South. Under the Soviet system, their right to vote would be based upon their service and not upon race or color." Another faction has its dream of world empire. One day last summer Marcus Garvey, in green and purple robes, presided at a gigantic mass meeting of negroes in Madison Square Garden; object, the federation of 400,000,000 negroes (the figures are his) to abolish the government of blacks by whites the world over.

Such tendencies, tho by no means broadly typical of the new negro, at least bespeak a great restlessness, a deep and perhaps gravely ominous determination to find, somehow, somewhere, a way out. The race has come to itself. It is learning to unite. It is no longer afraid. All thru its press throbs the spirit of self-reliance and of daring, and its press not only reflects the mood and temper of the new

negro, it creates them. The Ku Klux Klan will perhaps show acumen if, before taking active measures, it begins a careful, patient study of that press.

"The colored people are going to their own papers in these days for the news and for their guidance in thinking," says Professor Kerlin. "These papers are coming to them from a score of northern cities—Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland; they are coming to them from the great border cities—Baltimore, Washington, Cincinnati, St. Louis; they are coming to them from every southern city. Wherever in all the land there is a considerable negro population there is a negro newspaper. Little Rock has four, Louisville five, Indianapolis six, New York City ten; the state of Georgia has nine, Mississippi nineteen, Illinois eleven, California seven. To these must be added the publications of churches, societies and schools. And all classes of these contain articles on racial strife, outcries against wrongs and persecutions.

"The negro seems to have newly discovered his fourth estate. Mighty as the pulpit has been with him, the press now seems to be foremost. His newspaper is the voice of the negro. We have too frequently heard foolish vaunts about 'knowing the negro,' the context of such boasting invariably convicting the speaker of dangerous conceit and the harsh spirit of suppression; those who would honestly seek to know him must read his papers."

Observe. These are the words of a distinguished southerner. But the negro problem long ago ceased to be merely a southern problem. It is national, and there are indications that the Ku Klux problem will be so too.

New York City

Time Charts vs. Good Cheer

(Continued from page 61)

thing like shortcoming as a technician. The technical side of the work is foundational. On it rests all else. But it is the peculiar function of the superintendent, thru these meetings and thru personal contacts with the workmen themselves, to build and maintain a high *esprit de corps*, to keep the machinery of production, including the human element, well coördinated, running at high speed without friction.

Once a week the same group holds a meeting to take up pure labor questions, such as welfare, accidents, discipline. This is a non-technical meeting for the discussion of human relations, and thru it the superintendent aims to build up his sub-executives as managers of men—and at the same time keep himself informed and fit.

The foremen do not fire. That is left for the superintendent. A workman was caught manipulating his time card. They pay both hour and piece rates, the latter for the higher and

better-paying types of work. This workman so made out his time card that it showed a less number of hour-rate jobs and larger number of piece-rate jobs than he had actually performed. Of course he was detected. He was called before the superintendent and given a lecture on stealing, lying, and cheating. He was told that he would be given another chance and no more. The men in the shop were given to understand that this man was on probation, and he went back to work, with a hearty slap on the shoulder from the superintendent.

A little later he was again detected in the same trick. This time he was called in, reminded of his former offense, and the warning then given him, and discharged. Notice of his discharge and the reason for it were given the men. Appeals from the discharged worker's family failed to move the superintendent. "He had his chance, he was warned, and if I did

not stick to my word the whole organization would go to pieces." This was final.

Where is the union all this time? There isn't any, officially. Altho this company, in one of its four plants, operates a shop closed against union men, because of the aggressive attitude of certain unions. Here in Philadelphia it finds the unions less objectionable. It operates an open shop making no discrimination between union and non-union men.

The management here takes the position that men cannot at all times be loyal to both their employers and their union, and in the past has put it up to the men on just this basis. A group of workers came and expressed the desire to organize.

"Why?" asked the management. Well, the men did not exactly know, but they thought they wanted a union.

"Suppose the union officials out of town order you to strike, even tho

