



ATTY. GIBSON WILLIE MAYS HEMAN PERRY

1925: THE NEW NEGRO

1955: THE NEW AMERICAN

BACK IN 1919, when it was over "over there," and the boys came marching home, something called "The New Negro" suddenly appeared on the national scene. The war to "make the world safe for democracy," had not intended to provide a new buoyancy for American Negroes . . . but it did just that.

A Heman Perry, human personification of corporate creativity, went down to Atlanta, Ga., with his fabulous Service Company. John R. Pinkett (now a D. C. broker-insurance specialist, grossing more than a million dollars per year) was a young man . . . lured to Atlanta by the Perry magnetism. Standard Life Insurance Company, set to provide a life career for Walter (NAACP) White, was paying the late J. R. Robinson \$10,000 per year . . . The Chicago Defender was moving toward 205,000 readers per week . . . Langston Hughes had exclaimed: "I, too, sing America!"

Despite race riots at Tulsa, at East St. Louis, at Chicago, at Washington . . . the NEW NEGRO, the post-World War I Negro, was on the march. The recently dead ex-Rhodes scholar, Howard U's Dr. Alain Locke, wrote:

"In the last decade something beyond the watch and guard of statistics has happened in the life of the American Negro and the three norms who have traditionally presided over the Negro problem have a chattering in their laps.

"The sociologist, philanthropist, race-leader are not unaware of the New Negro, but they are at a loss to account for him. He simply cannot be swathed in their formulae."

Since those words were written, thirty years ago, another generation, inspired by a Joe Louis, a Jackie Robinson, by a Pittsburgh Courier, with a peak of 357,000 buyers . . . has hurdled across the years; another global conflict has intervened and now another type Negro is articulate . . . different from his adolescent predecessor (The New Negro) in that racial consciousness is being superseded by a growing franchise of Americanism.

Today, in an age when a Willie Mays moves toward a \$100,000-a-year salary, in a majority operation; when an Atty. Truman Gibson (passing up a \$15,000 job that Heman Perry foreordained) is a \$75,000-per annum fixture in the International Boxing Club, Inc., no longer New Negroes, indeed, we are New Americans! Our children will be Americans at last, in an ever-changing, ever unfolding sociological chrysalis!