

# Rough Sketches

## "The New Negro Man"

BY JOHN HENRY ADAMS



**PROF. JOHN HENRY ADAMS, Jr.,**

of Morris Brown College. He is considered the rising negro Artist of the South. The Atlanta Constitution pronounces him "nothing short of a genius" and says that "he may some day startle the world with his paintings."

To find the new Negro man, one must take the narrow, rugged winding path as it leads from the humble one room log cabin, through the corn fields and cotton field, pass the country school shanty on to the quiet village in the dale. There, the broader pathway leads from the rough frame cottage, through the smoky, dismal quarters of hirelings; pass the shopping district to the humble academy over on the hill; then take right angles down by the Sunday meeting house to the signal railway station. Tell the conductor you want to get off at Atlanta. Arriving there, take the electric

car for any one of the Negro institutions of higher learning, thence to the Negro modern home locality on the broad and sunny avenue, where on either side the playing of innocent colored children, dressed in white laundered jackets and dresses, out upon the green lawns amid blossoming flowers, reveals the meaning of progress peculiar to the black folk. Stop there long enough to realize the gravity and force of the character whose real self you are yet to know as he toils earnestly for place and power in the world, and as he clings to the higher self asssrtion of the man with a soul.

Now venture on. Here is the real new Negro man. Tall, erect, commanding, with a face as stroug and expressive as Angelo's Moses and yet every whit as pleasing and handsome as Rueben's favorite model. There is that penetrative eye about which Charles Lamb wrote with such deep admiration, that broad forehead and firm chin. On the floor and the tables of his office lie the works of a ready craftsman, a master mechanic. Scattered harmoniously on the walls, hang framed specimens of well designed office buildings and expensive residences, and over on his desk are filed a dozen or more bids, which at one time or another had made vain competition seem as but a cotton thread hanging to his coat sleeve. Such is the new Negro man, and he who finds the real man in the hope of deriving all the benefits to be got by acquaintance and contact does not run upon him by mere chance, but must go over the paths by some kind of biography, until he gets a reasonable understanding of what it actually costs of human effort to be a man and at the same time a Negro.

Again, to find the new Negro man, you



**MR. R. T. WEATHERBY, B. D.**

This is the strong hand underneath the successful Y. M. C. A. of Atlanta. Mr. Weatherby has ability and character, which elements have raised him to the highest esteem and confidence of the people. He is a qualified Christian worker, and a faithful secretary of the Association.

must equip yourself for the tedious study rising out of his singular environment. You must be prepared to comprehend the awkward and oftentimes ugly circumstances, which surround him in his very inception, before he knew what he was, and long before he knows of the "Veil" of which Mr. DuBois speaks so touchingly in his "Souls of Black Folk."

Here, drawn near the bosom of his good black mother, whose face is lighted with joy and hope and anxiety that only a mother feels, is the bouncing, laughing, little creature whose future days are as dark as his skin and whose very life is as uncertain as an approaching storm. Look into his face and then into the mother's face. Observe that interlacing of love and

prospect and adventure as it weaves about the two, the life long singleness of heart-beats and sorrows and sufferings. What promise does that devoted mother foresee in that black infant face? Listen to the musings of that mother: "Where will twenty, forty, sixty years find this 'jewel' spending the love and sacrifice which my heart gives freely, fully, wholly to it?"

The boy grows, develops, enters school, begins the routine of office boy, learns companionship, discerns a little of the outer world, begins a study of the greater inner world—himself discovers his likes and dislike, goes pleasure seeking, and now he has reached his fifteenth year, the beginning of the critical period of a boy's life. Now his mind gets a breath of the intense vigor of his body. Something, he knows



**Dr. J. D. HAMILTON.**

Much has been added to the dental profession of Atlanta, in the person of Dr. Hamilton. He is rather socially inclined, but he knows the value of "sticking to business." His office shows the enterprise of the new Negro man.

not what, moves mad with passion and fire through his veins. The boy's quiet is replaced by amazing wonder at the beauty and significance of the objects beyond the mist and haze of his understanding. Question after question come and go unanswered. These are the harrows of his age.

At sixteen, seventeen, on to his twentieth year, the young man contends with temptations such as only the Negro boy meets. The opportunity to work, but a work and an employer whose sole aims are to keep him working at his beginning point; the opportunity to idle, with but the chaingang as the highest form of recompense; the pleasure of friends, who are as vagabond as the days are long; the modern dive with all



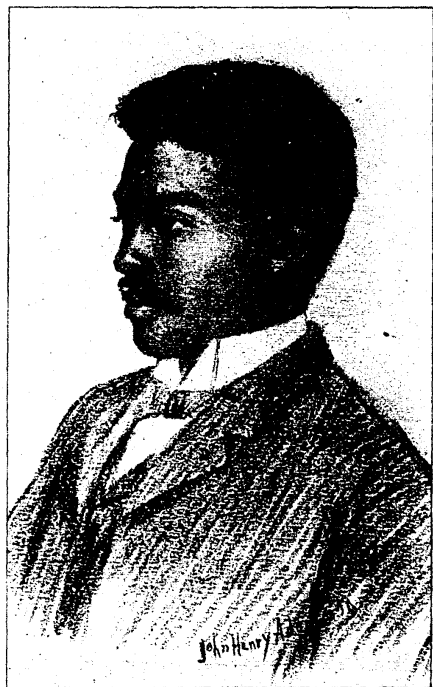
**MR. GEO. WHITE, A. B.**

Mr. White is a young man hardly 22 years old, but he has shown already that he has a work to do in helping to elevate the race. He is quiet and modest and has a strong personality.

its gilded hallucination, doors wide open, tables strewn with gobblers and beer growlers, and the breath of lounging, half-drunken women that contaminate the very atmosphere; the billiard room filled with old and hardened gamblers; and lastly, but of as grave disaster as either of the already named clamps of degradation, is the regular "hang-out corner," the temptation of the new young Negro.

Steadily, persistently, earnestly the young man clings to his aspiration to be a man. His college books, his Bible lessons, his mother's ringing words of love-truth, his pastor's soul inspiring sermons, and the passing lectures and educative entertainment, all instruct him as to the best uses of his time, as to the ultimate meaning of his life, and the real mission of man in this wilderness of love and labor.

The young man stands at last an achiever, and speaks the parting college



**CHAS. L. HARPER, A. B.**

Mr. Harper is one of the strong young men in the government service of Atlanta. He is paving the way for himself for higher things in life.

words from the flower-dressed platform of his dear Alma Mater to the hundreds of admiring friends, who gather to place their benediction of success upon his brow. Nearest his feet sits that failing form of woman, upon whose heart the rich words of her son fall like drops of refreshing rain, after the burning rays of years of anticipation had crisped and withered the beauty and splendor of her face and body. Thrilled to the highest note, with tears streaming silently down her furrowed cheeks, her soul whispers in perfect ecstasy, "Thank God, —my son! —my son!"

This is not the end, rather the commencement of methodic, painstaking, fundamental living. The desire of success has been greatly enlarged in the black man's soul. A half-dozen years and that black man has woven himself into the industrial fibre of his locality, has gone where there seemed to be no water and brought forth the sparkling flow to which his people may go and quench their longing thirst. And he has set the standard of man in his community not upon a man's ability to think or work, be that ever so vital, but rather upon the purpose and end of the man's thinking or working.

This is the new Negro man as followed from the cradle through boyhood and college days on to the larger life, where men are known according as they do less theorizing and more actual, practical work; according as they turn their vast learning and wealth into simple, kindly helps to the poor, distressed and suffering; and in proportion as they make the play and music and revelry of the high head, the common enjoyment of all.

The new Negro man is facing a brighter sun than ever his father knew, in spite of the dark prophecies and hopeless pessimism which greet him on every side. The Negro father, on the one hand, irresponsibly hedged in with ignorance too dense to ad-

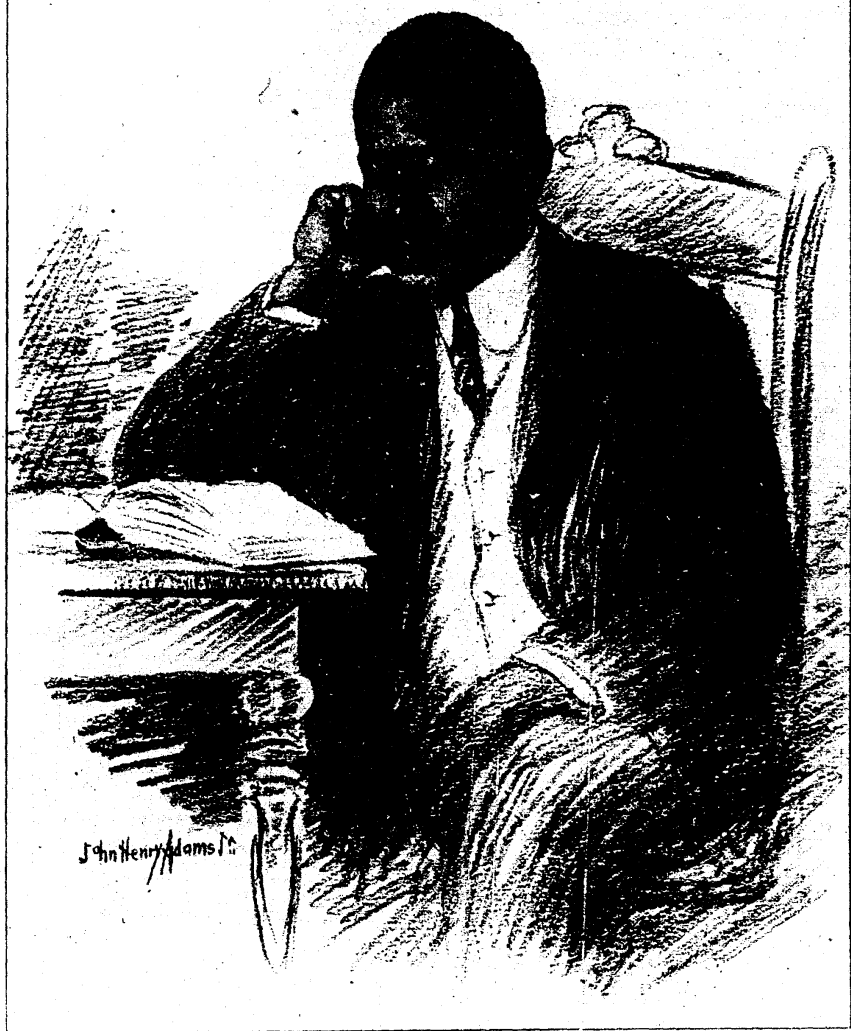


**MR. WM. J. DECATUR, A. B.**

In this characteristic pose can be seen one of the new forces of the race. For years a successful teacher. Mr. Decatur is now partner to Mr. J. B. Long, the successful builder and contractor. Decatur and Long represent the spirit and demand of the times—thoroughly competent mechanics.

mit of much foresight, sees nothing for the son but a perpetuation of his own social, political, and material advancement to the abnormal state of affairs now existing, but goes more often far contrary to what he really thinks is the best and right in the long run in the preparation of his son for life's work, in the hope of at least meeting present exigencies.

On the other hand, most of the newspapers and the evil men behind them, paint the new Negro out of the pigments of senseless antipathy, call him a brute and, fixing suspicion on him, seek to revert the cast of manhood into cowardly, cringing and wilful serfdom. Here, then, is no en-



### THE "NEGRO" IN JOURNALISM.

The above sketch shows Editor Jesse Max Barber in his characteristic attitude while engaged in study in what he calls his "Sanctum Sanctorum." Mr. Barber is a very close student of current, economic and sociological questions, as his narrations of current events in "Our Monthly Review" will show.

couragement. What of the new Negro man's future? The future is the man's, and he is relying on the strong arm of merit which providence has developed so as to cope with all human means and needs.

The new Negro man as represented in the accompanying sketches sees nothing but vital principles to sustain him in his struggle for place and power, and, like Socrates, would prefer the hemlock, or its equivalent, to all the vain pleasures outside of death than give over a single unit of right. He will do this not for his own sake merely, but for the sake of humanity, even the sake

of the human who would decry principle to raise temporarily himself. The present fight is a fight for manhood—not man. Man dies. Manhood lives forever.

"I can die!" says that brave young man in Attick's review. "I can die for principle,—die loving and kissing my enemy."

This is the new Negro man's day. Let him be found always studying, thinking, working, for the social hour, when dancing and merry-making are to enter, has not come. Gird up your loins, young man, and hurry.