

Death Takes Noted Authors In Harlem


NEW YORK, Jan. 4.—Funeral services, held last week for Dr. Rudolph Fisher and Wallace Thurman, rang down the curtain on two of America's most brilliant of the school of young writers and leaders in the "New Negro" movement that has been so conspicuous here during the past ten years.

Dr. Fisher, besides having a nation-wide reputation as a novelist and short-story writer, was an X-ray specialist. He died Wednesday at the Edgecomb Sanitarium following a major operation for an ailment that had kept him in and out of hospitals for several years. The operation, performed by Dr. L. T. Wright, was at first pronounced a success, but a relapse shortly afterwards brought to an end the career of a brilliant person.

Dies of "T. B."

Wallace Thurman, who passed away Saturday, December 22, at the City hospital on Welfare Island, had also been ill of tuberculosis for several years. Of a type exactly op-

posite to that of Dr. Fisher, Thurman was always debonnaire and carefree. He was noted in Harlem for his Bohemian parties and his contemptuous attitude toward life. In spite of this, he stood at the head of a long list of writers from the point of view of material success. His first novel, "Blacker the Berry," released about 1925, created a furor among Harlem readers. Later, when it was converted into a play, and appeared on Broadway under the title of "Harlem," it

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brought immediate fame to its author.

Thurman, using this success as a wedge, soon pushed himself into the heart of New York's literary world. His second book, "Infants of the Spring," was released by McCauley after he had been employed by that publishing firm as an editor. It was while serving with McCauley's as an editor that he received an invitation to go to Hollywood as a staff writer for one of the larger motion picture concerns. On the West Coast, his health grew worse, and last summer he returned to New York to enter the tuberculosis sanitarium where he died.

His funeral at Levy and Delaney's parlors on 134th street was conducted in the spirit that characterized his life. Simple services were read as his friends—all the literary lights of Harlem and some of the big names on Broadway—looked on. There was not the usual weeping that attends funerals, but just the quiet presence of those who knew him and who loved him for his achievements. Among those present

were Countee Cullen, Walter White, Dorothy West, Mollie Lewis, Chester Erskine, Harold Jackson and others.

Born in Utah

Thurman, who was 32 years old, was born in St. Lake City, Utah, and was graduated from the University of Utah. He also did graduate work at the University of Southern California. His latest book, "The Interne," dealt with the hospital in which he died.

Dr. Fisher, a graduate of Brown University in Providence, R. I., leaped into the literary limelight with his writing of the short story, "The City of Refuge," which was published in the Atlantic Monthly, reprinted in O'Brien's anthology, and later reprinted in the "New Negro," edited by Dr. Alain Locke. This was followed a few years later by "The Walls of Jericho," which still stands as the finest book done by a member of the Race on Harlem life. In 1932 Dr. Fisher had published "The Conjure Man Dies," a detective story. Even had the novels not been written, Dr. Fisher would have a high rating as a writer, but with these books he had reached a place in literature that made him the envy of all.

Born in Washington, D. C., Dr. Fisher was taken to Providence by his parents at an early age. During his school career at Brown, he won membership in three honorary societies, Phi Beta Kappa, Delta Sigma Rho and Sigma Psi. He was also awarded a fellowship to do research in biology at Brown, and taught some classes while there.

Dr. Fisher's funeral services were held at Duncan's parlors on Seventh avenue. He is survived by his widow, one child, a sister, Pearl, and a brother, Joseph. As an officer in the 369th Infantry, a guard of honor from the regiment attended the services.