

FRONT PAGE STUFF

EVERY LIVE NEWSPAPER in the country smeared the story of the domestic troubles of the Stillmans over their front page. The reading public seem to relish scandal, especially when it touches those who have reached a high station in life. And as the counting room is the main artery of the business, every dainty morsel of scandal that can be dug up by alert and inquisitive reporters is fed these angels who support the paper. The definition of news is anything the public wants and will pay for.

WORTHY OF STREAMERS across the page of every newspaper in the United States was the dastardly deed charged to John Williams, a white Georgia farmer, but the story, if printed at all, was buried in most cases on an inside page. Of course it is understood that the American white man is far more interested in reading whether a certain white child is illegitimate or not, or how much alimony should be paid a wife accused of being unfaithful, than he is of reading that a white man—a member of the "superior" race, with generations of civilization behind him—brutally slaughtered 11 INNOCENT MEN for no other reason than they displeased him.

WHY NOT LET THE WORLD KNOW THIS? Surely no greater single-handed crime has been committed since the dark ages. Why the effort to hush the matter up? There is nothing like publicity and light to cure evils. But the offender was white, the victims black. The mere statement of these facts answers fully the questions above asked. So commonplace have lynchings and other barbarous forms of taking life become, even the law winks at them.

WE FIND on the front page of a large northern daily more than half a column devoted to exploiting the Ku Klux Klan, an organization that can only serve one purpose, and that purpose is to spread discord, which eventually—if allowed to function—will terminate in a conflict similar to the one in which the North and South were engaged some half century and more ago.

THE TERM "new Negro" is often used. There is no such critter. The old ones have simply awakened, and the things that could be put over on those yesterdays cannot be put over on these todays or the tomorrows. It is absolutely criminal for a newspaper to give publicity to an organization fighting twelve million loyal citizens simply on account of their color. The editors of these papers know if they know anything, that we need no lawless organization to maintain white supremacy in this country.

IT IS YELLOW JOURNALISM of the rankest type to pander to the morbid tastes of the lowest element of the reading public by pointing out boldly our shortcomings and hiding under a bushel our virtues. It is narrow and detestable to suppress the facts in the Williams case and others where white men are the criminals, we the victims. How can we ever hope to arouse public sentiment in our behalf when the press, the mouthpiece of the people, is prejudiced? We have suffered by reason of an unfriendly press giving too much publicity to news derogatory to us. The most of us are striving to be good citizens. We have done and are doing things that would reflect credit on any man. Why not play the game fair, give us an even break and let some of our good deeds be front page stuff?