

HARLEM: Negro Doctors' Mecca

New York City—Harlem is not only the Mecca of the New Negro but also of the Negro Physician. The new liberal hospital policy of the City of New York toward the Negro physician is rapidly making this community the home of more competent colored physicians than can be found elsewhere in the country. In New York they find opportunity in direct ratio to their competency and unhampered by color discrimination as exists elsewhere.

Before the inauguration of the new policy in June 1924, Negroes were afraid to go to the Harlem Hospital for treatment. It was believed in the colored community that black patients in that hospital were being butchered by fledgling Caucasian surgeons, mistreated by nurses and frequently given the "black bottle." Colored folk only went to the hospital or clinic as a last resort thus greatly increasing the sickness and death rate. Obviously, if the health of the Negro was to be improved he must have greater confidence in those able to improve it.

Greater Opportunity

At the beginning of 1925 there were no Negro physicians in the Harlem hospital clinic and none serving there as internes. Under the present city administration the indoor staff of Negro doctors have grown from four to ten; ten Negro internes have been graduated and eight are at present on duty; the number of Negro physicians attending clinics has grown to thirty (the period of training between interne-

ship and the beginning of practice has been defective or non-existent elsewhere for Negroes); all of the student nurses are colored; four Negro supervising nurses are in charge of teaching and training and twenty colored graduate nurses are in charge of wards.

This policy has greatly encouraged specialization among Negro physicians and there is a larger amount of it in New York City than elsewhere. A bacteriological and a pathological technician have been appointed after successfully passing municipal civil service examinations. A noted Negro physician from the staff, Doctor Louis T. Wright, has recently been appointed Police Surgeon with the rank of Inspector. This is the highest uniformed rank in the New York Police Department.

Experiment Is Success

This key note in medical education has made of Harlem hospital a fine example of interracial amity and harmony. There, white and black physicians and nurses work side by side healing the ills of individuals of both races. This first experiment having proved satisfactory and provided competent Negro physicians satisfying alike to the public and the profession. Commissioner Schroeder of the Department of Hospitals has for the first time in history officially established the policy that all city hospitals will hereafter be open to Negro physicians.

Because of this fair and forward-looking policy of the Walker Administration the Harlem hospital has been able to

Police Surgeon



DR. LOUIS T. WRIGHT, who holds the highest uniformed rank in the New York Police Department.

regain the confidence of the colored citizen. The institution has actually become popular and black folk point to it with pride. Where before they were reluctant to enter its portals they now eagerly crowd the clinics. As a consequence of the new confidence in the institution the Negro death and sickness rates in New York while forty per cent higher than those of the white population are yet considerably lower than to obtain in any other comparable Negro community in the United States.