

# NEW NEGRO SEEN THROUGH THE MODERN RACE PAPERS

College Professors Observations Show Growing Confidence In The Negro Press As The Most Reliable Source Of News Affecting The Race. Editor Reedy Speaks Of It As A Warning "Like The Fire Bell In The Night".



By Prof. Robert T. Kerlin.

Activity of the Colored press of the country in these troublous times, the spirit, the boldness, and the influence of it, may well excite alarm as it has done, even "in the seats of the mighty." There are nearly four hundred Negro newspapers published in this country, and they are prosperous as never before. Their circulation during the war period vastly increased, and new papers—all of the outspoken and able type—have subsequently sprung into existence. The Colored people are fully informed of this, their papers make it a matter of rejoicing and pride. It is, indeed, a sign of the times.

#### New Era, New Negro

We are informed by this press that a New Era has come, brought to birth by the World War; that with the New Era has appeared the New Negro: a man who stands erect and looks the white man in the face; a man who asks no odds, but a square deal; a man who does not cringe or fawn, "licking the hand that smites," but demands his rights under the Constitution—equal opportunities in the common affairs of life, equal conditions, equal comforts, equal recognition for character and worth; in a word, Justice.

The World War, and the Negro's part therein, are responsible for it. Not, of course, the origin of the principle of manhood in the Negro, but for its swift leaping into evidence, its sudden self-assertion in new tones. What we fought for the Negro fully appreciated. Why should he not have been able to? He was quick to apply that aim to himself—for the Negro is quick. President Wilson's notes and addresses, the Treaty and the League Covenant, had for the Negro the force of a new Emancipation Proclamation.

#### Patriotism And Valor

The Negroes' subscriptions to the liberty loans, to Red Cross funds, and the whole list, they quote as evidence of their patriotism and spirit in the country's time of need. It is a record of which they are justly proud. They make it the basis of democratic demands, quite naturally. Of the valor of their troops overseas they make the same argument. Those troops fought with endurance and heroism at Chateau Thierry and in the Argonne, and mingled their blood with that of the white soldiers in the dust of France. Those troops labored in the service of supplies at Bordeaux and Marseilles without counting the hours, counting only the loss to our cause of any slackening on their part. They buried the soldier dead—the most repellent task of the war—at Belleau Wood and Meuse-Argonne. Their white lynchings were being reported in their papers from home. Comparisons were inevitably made between Americans and German men.

It is this story that has lighted the Negro. It is this story that has given a new potency to his newspaper.

#### For Information And Guidance

There is no lack of evidence that the Negroes are going to their own papers in these days for their information and guidance. Those papers in the small communities and rural districts, are coming to them from the large cities, preferably Northern cities—whose editors dwell in the "safety zone." To these papers, and others of like quality the Negroes are going for the news, for trustworthy reports of "Negroisms," "Negro riots"—so-called by the white press—and lynchings, for wrathful denunciation of them. The Colored press is now the rival of Colored pulpit influence. There are signs that it is coming into the first place. The Negro appreciates his newly discovered Fourth Estate.

#### Reading Between The Lines

We white people must give the Colored people credit for more perceptiveness than we are wont to do. They have quite as good a faculty as we for reading between the lines, for taking the force of an innuendo, for perceiving the point of a bit of mild irony or gentle sarcasm. Vague and indirect pronouncements, perfectly harmless in appearance to us, are hard grenades to them. Editorial reticence they well understand to mean "safety first for the editor, a longer career of usefulness."

#### Own News Agencies

Every paper has correspondents in all of its territory and in states beyond that might be supposed to be its territory. There are also news agencies. The most important of these by far is the Associated Negro Press. Through special correspondents in every city of the country it gathers the racial news and sends this out regularly to its large membership. About seventy-

five papers receive these communications directly, but all get it sooner or later. Nothing racial escapes the Argus-eyed Colored press.

#### White Papers Not Trusted

The new-born prosperity of the Negro press signifies a corresponding neglect on the part of the Colored people of the white press. They will not longer trust the whites to furnish them the news, to teach them how to think. Too often have they been beguiled. The saying now runs: "There's a white man somewhere in the woodpile." In the columns of the Colored papers alongside of expressions of exultation in their own success run the severest arraignment of the white press for its falsification and suppression of racial news, for prejudiced comment, and for neglect of the Negro—except to report his crimes (alleged). The white papers, by their false and flaring headlines and exaggerated, mainly fictitious, accounts of Negro assaults upon white women are denounced by the Colored editors as responsible for practically all of the riots of last year.

## THE WIDER USE OF SCHOOL PLANT

Report of the Neighborhood Department of The Urban League

On June 11th the closing exercises of the L'Ouverture and Lincoln after school clubs were held in the form of a Carnival at L'Ouverture School. This ends the Urban League's experiment in attempting as an outside organization to stimulate recreation within a school group during the school year.

Our work began March 17th and continued until the close of the school year. There has been the closest co-operation with the Board of Education principals, teachers, and janitors in these two schools. The major part of the work was carried on in the L'Ouverture School where some of the teachers served not only as volunteers in actually directing the work, but also were members of the Woman's Auxiliary Board of the Urban League. The teachers in the Lincoln School have also lent their service in interesting the children in the work and assisting in carrying it out. For these schools the total attendance for thirteen weeks—in singing, folk dancing, parlor and athletic games is 2044.

In the evening Community Meetings we have had the sympathy and co-operation of Mr. Gordon, Principal of the day school, Mr. Evans, principal of the night school, gave valuable assistance in supervising the building. Over 500 adults have participated in these meetings.

Between 700 and 1000 people were present the night of the Carnival and enjoyed themselves in listening to the St. James' Boy Band and watching the aesthetic dances of the girls. Owing to the heat the play which was to have been given by Mrs. Dan Green was not presented in the Kindergarten and the boys' drill was omitted.

We are co-operating closely with Mrs. Mary E. Smith, conductor of the Junior Christian League of Mt. Zion Baptist Church. The Compton Hill Baptist Church is also strong in community spirit and is lending valuable aid to the movements in the interest of this group. We are hoping that other churches interested in the children of these two schools will help stimulate the boys and girls to attend the industrial work to be given at the L'Ouverture School during the afternoons this summer.

The summer program includes the sewing both plain and fancy crocheting and knitting, shop work for the boys, reed and raffa work for both girls and boys, rug making, chair caning, games, and folk dancing.

## GRAND RALLY AND FLOWER SERVICE

A Grand Rally and Flower service will be held at Spiritual Christian Church, 2727 Lawton Avenue on the fourth Friday in this month, which is June 25. Some of the best mediums will be present. Everybody cordially invited. J. S. Weatherford, rector; L. Cooper, secretary.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT

You are urged to attend the sacred song services which will be rendered at Fairfax Avenue Baptist Church 3966 Fairfax, Sunday night, June 20 at 8 p. m. Mrs. R. E. Stokes, organist. Rev. D. W. Morris, pastor.