

MENTAL GYRATIONS !

THE COLORED PEOPLE PROGRESSING --KANSAS OPPORTUNITIES.

*Southern Kansas the Black Belt--Too
Much Cakewalk and Coon Song Spills
The Classic Rhythm of Negro De-
velopment--The Old Negro
and the New Negro.*

New Year's evening we began a 200-mile junket across Kansas, the route forming a triangle from Topeka *via* Emporia *en route* to Parsons. We seached the home of the late Senator Preston B. Plumb at 5:30 a. m., Tuesday. Emporia is one of the quietest, wealthiest, most sociable educational towns in the state. It is just the place for communism with lords and peers, kings, emperors, serfs and peasants, the rich and poor, but not the good and the bad. Although the population is about nine-thousand, one-thousand two-hundred being colored people, no racial conflicts are possible. The civil atmosphere is permeated with the essence of New England ideas of liberty. Combined with educational and Christian ideals, supreme in their force in the character of the people, Emporia has the appearance of Nashville, the quality of Newport and the commercial brazenness of Kansas City.

The State Normal school, the largest in the world, is a blessing to all the people. It enrolls 15 or 20 colored students every year. It may be a little difficult to understand why only three colored persons have graduated from this school—Gaitha Page, Topeka; Rev. John R. Smith, Kansas City, Kas., and a young lady in the early '80's. We are informed that during the past 12 years the attendance at the Normal had reached an average of 1,200 hundred students annually, of whom 15 were colored. This small percentage is a beacon light to hundreds of our young men and women to acquire a more liberal education. The curriculum of the State Normal school is equal to and surpasses that of many of our so-called colleges and universities. In the Kansas University, State Normal school and Agricultural and Mechanical college, there were 51 students last year; thus it can be seen that this is a very small percent. of 15,000 colored boys and girls of school age in Kansas. The fallacy that the professions are being overdone is not justified by these figures.

Among the prominent citizens are D. F. Tipton, the stockman; Alex. Reeves, the genial deputy county clerk; Mr. Moore, the tonsorial artist; Rachel Allen, C. Wood, R. Evans, R. Bassett *et al.*

There are four churches, A. M. E., Baptist, Christian and C. M. E. A more genial, upright Christian minister than Rev. Phelix Barr is hard to find. Rev. W. H. Pellette, formerly of Prescott, Ark., has just been called to the pastorate of the St. James Baptist church. We couldn't ascertain the names of the other pastors. In addition to the educational, religious and political achievements of the colored people of Emporia, a good restaurant, barber shop, physician and lawyer should be secured. The wealth, good sentiment, thrift and public spirit of its citizens demand these acquisitions.

CHANUTE

is a model little railroad town. The population is about 500, about 200 are colored. In a mechanical sense, the colored people here are in advance of those in any other part of the state. Here they have what is known as the "Kansas Savings Investment Co." This organization is the product of Rev. J. S. Hale, who was justice of the peace under Governor Leedy's administration, and one of the most reliable, trustworthy colored men in the state. The objects of this institution are first, to purchase homes, the organization of mercantile enterprises, etc.; second, to loan money to its stockholders on collateral securities, the amounts not to exceed the *per capita* of the stock they hold; third, to employ colored clerks and stimulate a desire to racial independence in the trades and professions. The present company comprises 24 stockholders. Capital stock, \$100,000; paid up capital, \$3,000. Stock is \$1.00 per share. Although this "child" is not quite three years old, it has inspired \$6,000 worth of property improvements among the people of this hamlet. The officers of this company are the following named persons: Rev. J. S. Hale, president; J. W. Johnson, vice-president; M. Gaston, secretary; D. J. Dixon, treasurer. Here is room for a good physician, lawyer and photographer, racial prejudice being scarcely noticeable. Most of the people own their property, which, as a rule, is

kept in excellent repair—houses being newly painted and the lawns beautifully diagrammed with flowerbeds. There are two churches here—Baptist and Methodist. Revs. A. Fairfax and Payne are the pastors. Mr. Ellis Dixon is an excellent pharmacist, and commands a good salary in a prominent drug store. Henry Hale, son of J. S. Hale, who was on the medical staff of the Twenty-third Kansas volunteers in Cuba, is also winning laurels as a pharmacist. Thus far, only five persons have graduated from the High school—Ellis M. Dixon, Dan. Hale, Mrs. Lillie McCullough, *nee* Berry and Arthur Dawson. About fifteen are in the grammar schools. Miss Mary Hale will graduate from the High school this scholastic year.

PARSONS

is a town of 10,000 inhabitants, of whom about 1,200 are colored people. Here the once famous Hobson Institute was established by the descendants of William Penn, though it is now extinct. From this flourishing, young, but thoroughly organized school, more colored young men and women were graduated, perhaps, than from any other school of higher learning in the state. It was founded by the Quakers far back in the '80's, and was to all intents and purposes, a distinctively Negro school. But colored people are not natural-born Quakers, and being Methodists and Baptists by intuition rather than from faith, they did not cheerfully support Hobson Institute. And it went down a few years since, for the need of more funds. It is a noticeable fact that the graduates of Hobson Institute exhibit considerable polish in language, diction and euphony, and not a few have won laurels as mathematicians, orators, teachers, journalists, authors and business men. For example, Prof. J. E. Johnson, now principal of the government school in Muscogee, I. T., he author of "Thoughts on Character." He reasons like Bacon, depicts like Emerson, and delineates like Shakesseare. Hon. S. O. Clayton, of Parsons, is the finest dramatic orator in Southeastern Kansas. Mrs. Henrietta Harper, Wichita, may well be demonstrated the Ella Wheeler Wilcox. She wields a facile pen. Then there is Rev. G. W. Harts, who is editor of a paper in Litchfield; and G. E. Clark, of Parsons. There are but few bright stars who were nestled in Hobsonian skies. Parsons is one of the best towns in Kansas. The colored people own good property; very few "shanties" are to be seen. Strictly speaking, there are no "darktown" quarters. Their houses are tastefully built, beautifully painted, overlooking geometrically designed lawns that are the envy of a more fortunate people. The people are kind-hearted, generous and thrifty; and yet it is strange that colored people receive so little encouragement from their neighbors. There is not a single clerk in a grocery or dry goods store or restaurant; only one drayman and one coachman in the city. It is a rare thing for them to get work on the streets. What a paradox! There are many mechanics and artisans who get employment elsewhere, and spend their money at home. There is room for a good physician, a good lawyer and first-class restaurant. Among the prominent, well-to-do citizens are Hon. J. W. French, S. C. Blair, David Foster, Rev. A. Fairfax, Hon. Charles Morris, Adam Dorcas, Wm. Washington *et al.* The able pulpit orator and Bible expositor, Rev. A. Fairfax, is pastor of the oldest and leading Baptist church. The amiable, conscientious and eloquent Rev. M. Collins is pastor of the A. M. E. church. Rev. D. D. Payne is beloved in Mt. Pleasant.

It is said that about 5,000 colored people from Alabama and Georgia have settled in the mining belts of Kansas during the past 18 months—in Weir City, Litchfield, Pittsburg, Yale and other points. Here is an inviting field for missionary and educational societies. By-the-way, every body uses natural gas down here! From indications, as the discovery of gas in Iola, Cherryvale, Neodesha, Humboldt and Chanute, it is easy to understand why it will be a smooth task for the Lord Almighty to set the world on fire in the Day of Judgment. In my observation, the colored people of the central and Southeastern parts of the state, are 25 per cent. in advance of those in other sections of the state, materially speaking.

W. L. GRANT.