

# KELLY MILLER SAYS

## The White Man's Negro

"There are no good Indians, but dead Indians. "The good Negro is the one who does what I tell him."

These are well known mottoes which express the white man's ap-

praisement of the red man's indomitable disposition, on the one hand, and the Negro's pliant docility on the other. Self-abasement and enfeeblement of will are the prime requisites of the slave.

It was because the white man found, or thought he found, in the Negro, an easier instrument of his will than in the stubborn defiant Indian that the black man was imported to supplant Indian slavery on this continent. The whole superstructure of modern slavery rested upon the assumption of racial overlordship on part of the white man

and acceptance of the assumption on part of the Negro. The individual who possessed innate stubbornness and courage found that he must either conform and be comfortable or resist and incur the coercion of the inevitable club. The white man's Negro as a type is the product of the institution of slavery, and is more to be pitied than blamed.

Where resistance is risky the temptation to yield is great. Ajax defying the lightning is the apotheosis of foolhardiness. Frail human nature is readily prone "to bend the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift may follow fawnings."

The seeming servility which the

Negro displays in the presence of the white man is often more spurious than genuine. It is a part of his scheme of calculated cunning. He feigns a submission which he does not feel, and makes believe what he does not believe as part of his protective philosophy.

The white man is prone to racial vanity as the sparks fly upward. Concede his racial superiority and he will readily grant the submissive any subordinate request.

The Negro knows this and

plays upon his vanity as his trump card. The white man and the Negro are equally gullible in face of mutual flattery. Each believes that he is deceiving the other when he is only deceiving himself.

The South is endeavoring to encourage the white man's type of Negro and to eliminate those of more robust and manly spirit. In the August number of Current History, Judge W. R. Winston, of North Carolina has pointed out the whole situation in a free, frank and fearless manner. Listen to the learned judge.

"So long as the Negro 'behaves himself' in the South he is safe. But once let him cross the deadline of race separation and endeavor to assert his manhood rights, and he becomes a menace to the

existing order of things. With hat in hand, the Southern Negro is more than safe, he is happy—if he is that kind of Negro. For his sake and in memory of the old-time 'darky', schools, hospitals and orphanage have been set on foot.

"A tender, patient relationship exists between this unambitious, likeable creature and the white people of the South. The white man's Negro get all that he is entitled to and often more in the courts, as a domestic, on the farm, with trowel or hammer.

The white man who undertakes to impose on a white man's Negro has his hands full. Many years experience as a Circuit Judge enables me to declare that

I never witnessed an act of injustice to such a Negro who does not desire his right social or political."

\* \* \*

## The Widening Gulf

But what of the increasing number of Negroes who are not white man's Negroes and the widening gulf between the races?

Daniel has come to judgment. The cards are laid on the table face upwards. The crux of the Negro problem depends upon the relative roles played by the white man's Negro and the courageous Negro of more manly type. But Judge Winston does not state the whole case. It is not only the ignorant, unambitious Negro who fills the requirements of the white man's Negro. He is found in every stratum of life and of every degree of intelligence.

The Negro of property, learning and position is as easily prone to render racial homage to the white lord and master as the humble hat-in-hand prototype in the South. Change in condition does not always alter character. The essential servility of soul manifests itself in the highest up as well as in the man farthest down. The educated and favored Negro often assumes a submissive attitude for motives of profit the same as the ignorant and unfortunate. They are both motivated by innate weakness of will and desire for the crumbs of favor that fall from the white man's table.

The white man, North or South, seeks out the complaint type of Negro upon whom to confer his favor. He can make little use of the Negro who does not readily yield when there is a conflict of will and opinion.

A good Negro has the same definition whatever his station in life. He is always considered safe and sane, while the one of a different mind is deemed im-

practicable and dangerous. The acquiescent Negro becomes the beneficiary of whatever good gifts the white man has to bestow. He enjoys a monopoly of his graces, grace and goodness. He is made the receiver for the colored race. In this way the Negro who would be thrifty is impressed with the feeling that obedience and submission is profitable in all things.

The temptation is indeed strong. It is easy and comfortable to secure a seat on the band wagon. We find the same motive operating

in politics, in the school, in business, and in every relation of Negro life and activity.

\* \* \*

## The New Negro

Over against this type of the white man's Negro there is developing a type of defiant, discourteous, contentious Negro who resents and resists the white man merely because he is white. These are found among the city toughs, quick with gun or razor to avenge any offense real or fancied which the white man commits against the Negro race.

We also find the same spirit in the reckless intelligentsia who denounce and condemn the white

race without the least restraint of prudence or courtesy.

With chip on shoulder. They are eager to fly into the fury at the slightest affront or insinuation. These are apt to arrogate to themselves all of the courage and manhood of the race, and to brand all others as cowards and trimmers who do not adopt their extreme position. Both extremes are equally dangerous to the best welfare of the race. Neither submission or defiance is calculated to secure the desired results.

THE SALVATION OF THE RACE DEPENDS UPON THAT TYPE OF NEGRO WHO IS INTELLIGENT, COURAGEOUS AND MANLY, WHO IS COURTEOUS, CONSIDERATE AND SENSIBLE, BUT WHO WILL NOT, IN ANY MOOD, COM-

PROMISE THE MANHOOD RIGHTS OF HIS RACE BY SERVILE SUBMISSION, NOR SACRIFICE THEM BY RASH, IMPERATIVE OUTBREAK OF PASSION WHICH WOULD CURSE THE WHITE GOD AND DIE.

\* \* \*

## United Methodism

I notice that the plan for the reunion of Northern and Southern Methodism is provoking widespread discussion throughout the colored press.

The importance of the movement far transcends the boundaries of the groups concerned directly in the transaction. Dr. I. Garland Penn, the race representative on the commission; in two articles in the Southwestern Christian Advocate, has striven to show what advantage will accrue to the Negro membership from the organic union.

The good doctor allows himself to be carried away with the sweet delusion that the two existing Negro bishops will function in the

general scheme of the united church. But unfortunately Jones and Clair cannot live forever.

Through retirement their episcopal longevity may be shorter than their natural lives. Not only are they not likely to be succeeded by Negroes, but it is extremely unlikely that the General Conference composed of Southern and Northern delegates, will elect a Negro as full-fledged Secretary of any board which function throughout all of the conferences.

Not only will the black bishops have no racial successors, but Dr. Penn himself will probably have no such successor. In another article, we wish that Dr. Penn would answer the following questions:

1. Will the united church elect Negro general officers?
2. How will the union of the Northern and Southern wings serve to increase the Negro membership?
3. Will the Southern Church, out of its own poverty, be able to add anything to the establishment or support of Negro

- schools and colleges?
4. Will the Southern contingency bring to the union a religious consecration and zeal for Christian brotherhood that will kindle the pety of the three hundred thousand black allies of the Northern church?

KELLY MILLER  
 Wash. D. C.