

domestic, laborer, inventor and poet. The man who is in overalls is made as comfortable and given every assistance and courtesy in obtaining his material as the doctor or lawyer.

The Bulletin Board on the main floor serves to give daily information on Current events. The Reference Room carries all standard periodicals.

The books by modern authors do not crowd out the old standard authors. Homer, Milton, Dickens, Dunbar stand in their places while a separate collection is kept of new books. The class of reading is very high and Negroes prefer Robinson's "Mind in the Making," or Wells' "Outline of History," or Lippman's "Public Opinion" more than any of the new alluring fiction.

The congested school situation is aided by the library service. One is awed by the stream of classes going from the school to the library to be given reference assistance or to hear a story of great heroes told them.

The children's room is often crowded after school hours with many a little urchin eager to hear of the "Pied Piper," or "Little Black Sambo," or "Dr. Dolittle," or "Unsung Heroes," eyes are open wide and sometimes mouths with intense interest while the Librarian lets the children follow the "piper" in such a real way that one can visualize the tale.

The tots gain their first introduction to literature from the Children's Room of the library.

Strangers seek the library to get more information as to the Negro and they note with interest the congeniality of a mixed staff white and colored which has a tendency to help solve the problem, the contact and understanding has been such as to influence many an institution South who have learned of this existing fact.

The eyes of the world are on this library with the Negro, Jew, Chinese, Arab, East Indian, West Indian, Spaniard, Mexican, all seeking education.

Visitors come from Africa's sunny shores, busy Paris, unsettled Germany, and many other climes to visit this library. Heads of various Educational Institutions register their interest at the library and thus it becomes an important factor in Education to the community.

Its aim is always to give out the best books and material and to serve the public.

It is not necessary to erase the Slave Regime thought or to forget the past, but to read the best, think the best and encourage higher education.

When minds of men are fed on books  
That bring them education,  
How can they lose their goal or aim,  
Or their determination?  
I will wear away the prejudice,  
The fertile, well fed brain  
Where Hate once was, Love enters in  
And ever there remains.

## COLOR AND CAMOUFLAGE

A PSYCHOANALYSIS

BY WILLIAM PICKENS



W. PICKENS

Psyche analysis explains human behavior by the great Unconscious Mind. Individual idiosyncrasies, group psychology, "race questions" are cleared up by this science. The Mind is one, but the greater part of the mind is the Unconscious part as the greater part of an iceberg is the under-water part. Seven-eighths of floating ice is under water. The bigger the whole mass, the bigger the visible part but the visible part is relatively small.

So with the mind: The Conscious part is the smaller part, while the Unconscious is the inconceivably vast store-house in which are packed away all the experiences and impulses of the individual and perhaps of the ancestral race or races to which he belongs. Especially are all of our forbidden desires and repressed emotions stored away in this Unconscious; all things forbidden by fear, caste, social custom, "civilization." But they are there in the unconscious and may invade the conscious field at any time. There are so many awful "taboos" which modesty and fear forbid us to be conscious of, that nature has developed a guardian or watch-dog, a gate-keeper, to keep these things from coming out of the Unconscious into the Conscious. For want of a better name, this guard at the gates is called the "Censor." If this Censor gets off the job for a moment (as when we are half asleep, very tired, drunk, doped or otherwise "off our nut"), then a whole train of horrible desires, thoughts, impulses rush into the Conscious, and we are "peculiar," "queer," "idiotic," "crazy," "manic" according to the temporary or

permanent degree of weakness or of relaxation of the Censor.

When we sleep, for example, this Censor is off the job, more off in some minds than in others, and the Dreams come; a whole train of forbidden and repressed desires that gain temporary freedom and rush up out of their submergence, and so we "dream" of doing things which we would never do awake, and many things which only our cave-ancestors, or the hairy ancestors of our cave-ancestors, would do *consciously*. There are other times when this Censor is partially off guard, as in reverie, day dreaming, drowsing, drunkenness, etc. When a person does what he is afterwards sorry for, and says: "I was weak," it is an instance of the failure of this Censor, and the temporary triumph of ancestral snakes, lizards, toads, leopards and savages, so to speak.

It is evident, therefore, that the more *pretense* and *hypocrisy* there is in a civilization, the harder the Censor has to work, the more exhausted he becomes at times, and the readier to relax and let loose a whole train of atavistic "varmints" and Medusas. Girls tyrannized-over in "boarding school" sometimes run wild when they get loose; overworked business men and female "society" slaves sometimes "raise Cain," when they find the "lid off" somewhere, and the hypocrites of our "superior" civilization seem much more depraved than the natives when they get to a "wide open" place like Tinian, in Mexico, or Monte Carlo, in Europe.

Now we can understand that American white people, through their false and unnatural association with



black Americans for so many years, have their *Unconscious* stored full of repressed desires and feelings respecting people of color; and how the tired Censor gets off the job and there is sometimes a "gushing over" toward color, when any thing or situation presents itself which the white individual can *consciously* (and more or less conscientiously) consider a "good reason" or an "exception" for breaking away from the soul-enslaving custom. White people are human; and the individual or his ancestors, may have deeply desired, from time to time, to have normal relations with various colored individuals whom they met up with; to be kinder, affectionate, to talk normally to, or to have more intimate associations with. Custom and caste and fear caused most of these desires to go unexpressed and to be instantly repressed and clapped down by the awful Censor into the subcellar of the Unconscious.

But there they are, and what a job to keep them there! More and more of a job as the ages go by and the work of repressing, and compressing, increases. It is a relief when such white people can open up to colored "excuses" from other parts of the world: an African Negro girl, under the disguise of being a "Hindu Princess," won in London the honor of being voted "one of the few most beautiful women of the world"; colored girls, under Pacific Ocean sounding names, are holding jobs as "Hawaiian beauties" in some of the swell tea gardens of New York City.

But let us tell you of at least two very interesting cases. In one of the states of the Union we have an acquaintance who is from that part of Asia where some of the natives are black and have straight and coal-black hair. This Asiatic gentleman married an American Negro woman, who is also beautifully black. She has brains, and knew by instinct and experience, rather than by psychoanalysis, that American whites would easily "fall" for "Asiatic blacks." She therefore decided to be of the same nativity as her husband and go into business with him, selling curios and wares from their native (2) land to the gullible blonde millionaires who visit the pleasure resort where they established themselves. She bought her a black head of hair, of the Asiatic kind; they are, of course, known by the Asiatic name of the husband, and have a rich business among snobbish white Americans. The thing works like a charm. It is our opinion that many of them know that the woman is a Negro, but so long as she will gratify their self-conceit by "passing," keeping on her foreign-looking hair and talking about "our country," where she has never been, they are perfectly willing to give the weary Censor a respite and enjoy being human toward colored people for a while.

This shrewd little black woman has learned how to profit in other ways by the inevitable weakness of this self-deceiving hypocrisy. One day a millionaire lady came in to buy a certain kind of *ore la e*, no better than that made in Massachusetts perhaps, but harder to get and "made in a certain part of Asia." She had often bought it before from those who knew how to sell at millionaire prices. She demanded that kind.

"Eight dollars a yard," replied our Afro Asiatic woman.

"Oh, I don't want that," said the rich lady, "for it can't be *authentic* at that price. Have you none of the real — lace?"

"I expect some in a few days, Madam," said the

black woman, who saw in a flash that the white woman was looking for a *price*, not a quality.

A few days later, the rich lady: "Has the — lace come yet?"

"Yes, Madam," handing out the same lace.

"What is the price?"

"Twelve dollars the yard."

"That's the kind. Please give me 20 yards."

And so they had to take eighty dollars more of her money just to satisfy her vanity.

And so it is with their color psychosis: they are willing to accept *black*, providing the situation is sufficiently camouflaged to allow the Censor to feel that the accepted black is not exactly of the black people whom the individual and his ancestors have been for so many years fighting and repressing, in their country and in their Consciousness.

One more case. There are thousands of them. There is a Negro friend of ours in one of the Middle Western states who is dark-brown and heavy-featured. He is of an ingenious turn of mind, and he has invented several useful appliances, and has also compounded a hair preparation and discovered a treatment by which the crinkly Afro-American kind can be made straight like the hair of the Amerindian. He allowed his own dark Negro hair to grow long and then straightened it, so that it hung toward his shoulders. Then in company with a white Northern friend, who was in the truck, the straightened haired colored American took one of his mechanical inventions to New Orleans, and in an international contest for excellence in that particular apparatus he was awarded *first prize* and a great gold medal.

But who was he in camouflage, and in New Orleans? Why, "Chief Mason," from some little island, real or imaginary, up in one of the Canadian lakes, where he had never been. Socially he was a lion in New Orleans; he was quartered at the most exclusive hotel, invited to all the society dances, and could hardly get rid of the curiosity-struck women. "Father may I dance with the Indian," was what he heard from the young daughters of the greatest snobs in Louisiana.

And this "Indian," mind you, is darker than nintenths of the colored people who live in New Orleans, and with whom those Louisiana snobs will not ride in the same railway coach. But the Censor of the ages, who stands guard between the Conscious hypocrisy and the Unconscious naturalness, found temporary relief in getting off the job and letting out some of the repressed desires toward some "other kind" of dark man. This Censor sometimes gets off duty and lets out the Terrors in crowd-psychology: mobs and lynchings. The "Terror" of the French Revolution, when men were tigers and women were hyenas!

How long can this repression of nature be supported?



THE ETHIOPIAN ART PLAYERS AND THE NEGRO COMETTES. BY MARGARET HARRIS.

Salome, the very uninteresting play of Oscar Wilde's from the viewpoint of dramatization, as played by the Ethiopian Art Players, has been characterized as a feeble attempt to circumvent the unreasoning prejudice