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Use printer's ink, and use it well.

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HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

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A LITANY OF ATLANTA

BY DR. W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS
IN THE NEW YORK INDEPENDENT

A Litany of Atlanta

Silent God, Thou whose voice afar in mist and mystery hath left our ears an-hungered in these fearful days—
Hear us, good Lord!

Listen to us, Thy children: our faces dark with doubt, are made a mockery in Thy sanctuary. With uplifted hands we front Thy heaven, O God, crying:
We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord!

We are not better than our fellows, Lord, we are but weak and human men. When our devils do deviltry, curse Thou the doer and the deed: curse them as we curse them, do to them all and more than ever they have done to innocence and weakness, to womanhood and home.
Have mercy upon us, miserable sinners!

And yet whose is the deeper guilt? Who made these devils? Who nursed them in crime and fed them on injustice? Who ravished and debauched their mothers and their grandmothers? Who bought and sold their crime, and waxed fat and rich on public iniquity?
Thou knowest, good God!

Is this Thy justice, O Father, that guilt be easier than innocence, and the innocent crucified for the guilt of the untouched guilty?
Justice, O Judge of men!

Wherefore do we pray? Is not the God of the fathers dead? Have not seers seen in Heaven's halls Thine hearsed and lifeless form stark amidst the black and rolling smoke of sin, where all along bow bitter forms of endless dead?
Awake, Thou that sleepest!

Thou art not dead, but flown afar, up hills of endless light, thru blazing corridors of suns, where worlds do swing of good and gentle men, of women strong and free—far from the cozenage, black hypocrisy and chaste prostitution of this shameful speck of dust!
Turn again, O Lord, leave us not to perish in our sin!

From lust of body and lust of blood
Great God deliver us!

FROM lust of power and lust of gold,
Great God deliver us!

From the leagued lying of despot and of brute,
Great God deliver us!

A city lay in travail, God our Lord, and from her loins sprang twin Murder and Black Hate. Red was the midnight; clang, crack and cry of death and fury filled the air and trembled underneath the stars when church spires pointed silently to Thee. And all this was to sate the greed of greedy men who hide behind the veil of vengeance!
Bend us Thine ear, O Lord!

In the pale, still morning we looked upon the deed. We stopped our ears and held our leaping hands, but they—did they not wag their heads and leer and cry with bloody jaws: *Cease from Crime!* The word was mockery, for thus they train a hundred crimes while we decure one.
Turn again our captivity, O Lord!

Behold this maimed and broken thing; dear God it was an humble black man who toiled and sweat to save a bit from the pittance paid him. They told him: *Work and Rise.* He worked. Did this man sin? Nay, but some one told how some one said another did—one whom he had never seen nor known. Yet for that man's crime this man lieth maimed and murdered, his wife naked to shame, his children, to poverty and evil.
Hear us, O heavenly Father!

Doth not this justice of hell stink in Thy nostrils, O God? How long shall the mounting flood of innocent blood roar in Thine ears and pound in our hearts for vengeance? Pile the pale frenzy of blood-crazed brutes who do such deeds high on Thine altar, Jehovah Jireh, and burn it in hell forever and forever!
Forgive us, good Lord; we know not what we say!

Bewildered we are, and passion-tost, mad with the madness of a mobbed and mocked and murdered people; straining at the armposts of Thy Throne, we raise our shackled hands and charge Thee, God, by the bones of our stolen fathers, by the tears of our dead mothers, by the very blood of Thy crucified Christ: *What meaneth this?* Tell us the Plan; give us the Sign!
Keep not thou silence, O God!

SIT no longer blind, Lord God, deaf to our prayer and dumb to our dumb suffering. Surely Thou too art not white, O Lord, a pale, bloodless, heartless thing?
Ah! Christ of all the Pitiless!

Forgive the thought! Forgive these wild, blasphemous words. Thou art still the God of our black fathers, and in Thy soul's soul sit some soft darkenings of the evening, some shadowings of the velvet night.

But whisper—speak—call, great God, for Thy silence is white terror to our hearts! The way, O God, show us the way and point us the path.

Whither? North is greed and South is blood; within, the coward, and without, the liar. Whither? To death?
Amen! Welcome dark sleep!

Whither? To life? But not this life, dear God, not this. Let the cup pass from us, tempt us not beyond our strength, for there is that clamoring and clawing within, to whose voice we would not listen, yet shudder lest we must, and it is red, Ah God! It is a red and awful shape.
Selah!

In yonder East trembles a star.
Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord!

Thy will, O Lord, be done!
Kyrie Eleison!

Lord, we have done these pleading, wavering words.
We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord!

We bow our heads and hearken soft to the sobbing of women and little children.
We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord!

Our voices sink in silence and in night.
Hear us, good Lord!

In night, O God of a godless land!
Amen!

In silence, O Silent God.
Selah!

Done at Atlanta, in the Day of Death, 1906. W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS.

THE MOTON INCIDENT

Comments of Colored Contemporaries on Major Moton's Failure to Resent the Humiliation of His Wife and the Insult to the Colored People of the Country. Principal of Tuskegee Institute has not yet replied to the Open Letter of the Crisis and the Comments of the Press. Speak Out Major!

AN OPEN LETTER TO ROBERT RUSSA MOTON.

(From the Crisis.)

The Crisis hastens to extend to you on your accession to the headship of Tuskegee the assurances of its good will and personal respect. The Crisis does this all the more willingly because it has to some extent been the mouthpiece of many who have had occasion repeatedly to criticize the words and deeds of your predecessor. It would be a matter of hope and rejoicing if your assumption of new duties could be the beginning of a new era of union and understanding among the various groups of American Negroes.

But understanding and co-operation must be based on frank conference and clear knowledge. As a preliminary step to such understanding the Crisis ventures in this open letter to express to you publicly its hopes and fears.

It hopes that the aims of the colored American have become sufficiently clear to admit of no misunderstanding or misstatement. We desire to become American citizens with every right that pertains to citizenship:

1. The right to vote and hold office.
2. Equality before the law.
3. Equal civil rights in all public places, and in all public services.
4. A proportional share in the benefits of all public expenditures.
5. Education according to ability and aptitude.

With these rights we correlate our duties as men and citizens—the abolition of poverty, the emancipation of women, the suppression of crime and the overcoming of ignorance.

The Crisis assumes—indeed, it knows—that in these matters you believe substantially as we do, and that the real differences between us, if there be such, lie in matters of present emphasis and present procedure.

We assume, without demur, that following the late Booker T. Washington you will place especial emphasis on vocational training, property getting and conciliation of the white South. These are necessary and against these the Crisis speaks policies, but they have their pitfalls, this warning word:

1. Only the higher and broader training will give any race its ultimate leadership. This Mr. Washington came to realize, and this you must not forget.

2. Individual accumulation of wealth must gradually and inevitably give way to methods of social accumulation and equitable distribution.

3. Finally: Conciliation is wise and proper. But how far shall it go? It is here that the Crisis confesses to its deepest solicitude in your case. It cannot but remember its unanswered query of you in the case of the St. Louis luncheon. It has before it the heading of a Rochester paper which gives as your opinion that "from North one gets distorted view of South." And finally, there is the recent case of the Pullman car and your family.

The Crisis will assume in all of these cases that you have not been correctly reported; that you did not voluntarily give up lunching at the St. Louis City Club; that you did not assert that the South was maligned usually at the North, and above all, that you did not say that you had no sympathy with the attempt of members of your family to ride on Pullman cars in the South.

The Crisis knows only too well the way in which Southern newspapers put such sentiments into the mouths of colored leaders; but the point upon which we insist is this: that such atrocious statements cannot be always passed in silence.

We do not wish the principal of Tuskegee to spend his valuable time in answering calumnies and misstatements, but we do believe that when so monstrous a statement is made, as in the case of the Pullman car, something besides silence and acquiescence is called for.

We hope to see, therefore, at Tuskegee in the future a carrying out and development of the best of its past work and a continued attempt to come to terms of understanding with the best of the white South; but to these policies we hope to see added a policy of making it clearly understood to the people of this country that Tuskegee does believe in the right to vote; that it does not believe in Jim-Crow cars; that it recognizes the work of the Negro colleges, and that it agrees with Charles Sumner that "Equality of rights is the first of rights."

This, then, is the forward step at Tuskegee which the Crisis and its friends look for under your administration, and it desires to express its earnest hope, and indeed its faith, that you will not disappoint your fellow workers.

THE MOTON INCIDENT.

(From the Cleveland Gazette.)

Major Robert Moton has recently been installed as principal of Tuskegee, Ala., N. and I. Institute. He made a favorable impression while here in Rochester. Everyone regrets to know that his wife was subjected to such brutal treatment as to be driven out of a Pullman car in Alabama. It appears, according to reports, that the riding in a Pullman car by the Motons had been a subject of discussion before the journey was begun. Mrs. Moton felt that she was clearly within her rights to ride in a Pullman car anywhere it went. The white passengers complained of her presence and when everything was over, they depended upon the usual law-breaking officials of Alabama to drive a defenseless woman out of the car, in which she could travel with comfort and ease, into a "jim-crow" car, where vermin dwelt. It is very unfortunate for the white passengers that their selfish ease and comfort had made them snobs to the extent that they objected to the presence of the wife of the principal of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute—the school that the country says is "the colored man's finest educational asset." Is it possible that any white woman could be so robbed of the milk of kindness and womanly instincts that she would urge the driving of a refined mother out of her berth which she had purchased, which the company had accepted the money for, in order that white supremacy might get another boost? Above all do we regret the reported statement issued by Major Moton. He did not stand by his wife in her fight for her rights. He advised the submission to inhuman oppression. He is quoted as saying that he "has the highest regard for the traditions of the South, he having been born there." We commend him for his consideration of the South, but we are amazed however, at his forsaking his wife in this hour of her humiliation. We also have respect for the traditions of the South that are humane and just, but we denounce and oppose the recent "traditions of the South" which make them lynch, burn, oppress and degrade the colored race under the disguise of "Southern civility and greatness." The officer that ejected Mrs. Moton was a law-breaker and coward. The Pullman company that received her money and gave her a berth had the right to protect her. If we are to choose between life, respect and rights on the one hand and Tuskegee that will teach cringing sub-

mission to wrong and injustice in order to exist in the world, we choose the former. Between Major Moton and his courageous wife in this instance there is no real choice. Fair-minded men and women of all races sympathize with and stand by Mrs. Moton. If Tuskegee is to be continued as a mill to turn out colored boys and girls who are spineless and cowards when their civil rights are at stake, the sooner it goes to the wall the better it will be for all concerned. Great buildings, imposing machinery, beautiful grounds and varied industries amount to naught when the real thing, MANHOOD, is crushed out. The Major Moton should understand now that Tuskegee is a nation's school. The millions now being sought for from all races should remain in hiding from the inhuman and brutal practices of the worst element of the South as to determine its policy. If the best whites of the South acquiesce in it, then we say move Tuskegee where it can develop character and MANHOOD. The "jim-crow" car must be fought and the time is opportune to fight when one of the foremost women of the land has been so shamelessly humiliated and apparently forsaken by her strong defender. Major Moton's task is a difficult one, but let him start right. If the advice given his brother and wife is characteristic of what he will give students, we quake and tremble for colored boys and girls.

(REV.) WM. A. BOYD,
Rochester, N. Y.

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commodations" are not provided, and in which the conditions are seldom sanitary or pleasant.

Major Moton's First Duty.
(From the New York News.)

The future of the great work at Tuskegee, may call for an offending silence, but it will never be helped long or to any great degree by an abrupt surrender of the race's rights. Major Moton's first duty to himself and his race is to set himself now and at all times four square with the progress of his people.

Has Shown His Hand.
(From the Cleveland Gazette.)

Four days after the inauguration as principal of Tuskegee, Ala., Normal and Industrial Institute the South forces Major Moton to "show his hand" and there is not even a "deuce" in it for the race. One thing sure and that is from a racial standpoint he is certainly no improvement upon Booker T. Washington.

Unfit to Teach Our Children.
(From the Martinsburg Pioneer-Press.)

This paper has no retraction to make in the Major Moton affair. It thought then and knows now that no improvement was made by his promotion. Booker T. Washington's palliation gave us double work for manhood rights not only in the South but the North as well for untold years to come, and his successor's ambition is to be patted on the back and be called "a good darkey"—to the lower regions with the "good darkey" class. Any man who goes back on his wife when abused for contending for her rights paid for, to ride in a Pullman car, is unfit to lead and teach our children.

Stand Squarely for Justice.
(From the Omaha Monitor.)

Major Moton, please don't assume the attitude of an apologist. We are hoping for big things from you. We know and appreciate the difficulties of your position. Stand squarely and firmly for justice to your race. No apology is due from either Mrs. Moton or yourself, because as a cultured and refined woman she preferred to ride in a Pullman rather than in a "Jim Crow" car in which "equal ac-

crooking the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift may follow fawning" brings wealth from the great masses of white people alright, but it also brings a vast amount of contempt. There is so much bowing, cringing and nauseating servility shown by some of our people, is it any wonder announced, and therefore vastly superior that even the 25th class of white people feel that they are the Lord's prior to all colored people?

THE HAND PICKED LEADER.
(From the Kansas Elevator.)

The Elevator would like to know if the time has not arrived when colored men should select their own leaders instead of leaving the delicate task to the hands of designing men of the opposite race, and if any colored man can serve two masters at one and the same time, and if as a general proposition the "hand picked leader" is not always against his race?

Shun Them as Vipers.
(From the Martinsburg Pioneer-Press.)

Just as long as the negro believes "he has a place," and is constantly jerking off his hat when out of it, he will be the cause of many others enduring hardships forever and aye. As long as a certain class of whites take to this class of sycophants, the more rightly those who wear their sovereignty under their own hats, should denounce, discard and shun them as they would a viper.

All American Citizens.
(From Qur Dumb Animals, Boston, Mass.)

Four colored men shot to death and two burned alive in Early county, Georgia, December 30. Sam Bland and Will Stewart lynched in Dodge county, Georgia. Another colored man hanged to a telephone pole in Forest City, Arkansas. A colored woman, Mrs. Cordella Stevenson, whose son was accused of burning a white man's barn, taken from her home and hanged by a mob near Columbus, Mississippi.

A few weeks' record. All American citizens. Had one of them been killed on a steamship sunk by a submarine what a flood of patriotic oratory would have been poured forth in the name of the "nation's honor." Apparently it makes a difference where American citizens are killed and who kills them.