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# The Colored American

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## The Premier Minstrel

### "The Smart Set," a Theatrical Aggregation of Colored Talent.

Messrs. Ernest Hogan and Billy McClain Capture the Nation's Capital. The Plot of the Play and the Growth of Colored Thespians.—The personnel of the Troup.

The smart Set, the theatrical aggregation in which Ernest Hogan and Billy McClain are the ruling stars has been with us. They left an impression for good as it concerns the colored people's capacity and aptitude for all lines of theatrical work. In many respects the show was a notable departure from the exhibitions of the past, in that it sought to put a better front to Negro life, surrounding it with just enough of comedianism and burlesque, as to make an excellent background, or setting for the whole.

Ernest Hogan in the minds of many cannot be supplanted, the premier comedianship lies between about three people, and Hogan has strong supporters for the place. In his peculiar line he can scarcely be excelled. He is evidently a student of nature; his comicalities and witticisms are the result of art so perfect, that it appears the individual. One would suspect Mr. Hogan to act on the streets precisely as he does on the stage, so near to nature is he. His power lies in his gestures, what he implies as much so as in what he says; he is a great comedian. He is also a philosopher as was proven by his dying request to his wife, "tell her to stay off of Indiana avenue."

Billy McClain makes good support for Mr. Hogan. He makes a clever villain and sport, the roles he assumes. Of course the audience is not enraptured with the character as is always noted. He acted his part well however, giving evidence of dramatic ability. Miss Margaret Jordan is a very pleasing singer with a graceful figure. Her prima donna work deserves much praise. Her movement, voice and figure caught the audience. H. Jackson Norris is a man of superb figure. His singing was a feature of the show. The age has not many more pleasing singers than Mr. Jackson. To say he sings grandly expresses it.

## Men of the Hour.



Mr. Ernest Hogan,  
NEW YORK'S PREMIER COMEDIAN AND SONG WRITER  
NOW WITH THE SMART SET COMPANY.

The singing of the Dinwiddie Quartette, was an acceptable feature, their voices were well modulated, sweet and harmonious.

The work of Marion Henry with Hogan thought she looked "good," there were others. She is blessed with a prepossessing figure, good voice, grace and dignity, the essentials for a successful stage career. She also knew how to put on her clothes, and she had them to put on. Ben Hunn's singing of "Gable," was a great hit with the audience.

Monana, the much sought for, was all right when she did put in her appearance. What little plot there is hinges on this Kentucky darling that has strayed away to the Hawaiians. Much of the finer work of the show is based on the habits of the islanders as they are supposed to be. The Rooster Lodge skit is about as clever as anything seen on the stage. The imitation is something fierce, the oldest

lodge man has never seen anything like it; it will certainly do.

The ensemble singing all along was good, much of which was operatic in effect and in the personnel the coon songs were good, but not so numerous as in similar shows of the past. The costuming was superb.

Taking it all in all there was but very little chance for adverse criticism.—The Freeman.

What do you think of the new dress of The Colored American? For verily, Solomon in all his glory approached not to this magnificence.

Admirers of Bishop Williams, and they are legion, take off their hats to Editor Cooper for the magnificent tribute of last week. The colored photograph issued as a supplement represents the highest development of pictorial art, and a handsome man has received worthily a handsome compliment.

## FORTY YEARS OF FREEDOM.

For the American Negro Hindrance and Progress

Rev. C. T. Walker, D. D., of New York, Pastor of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, and Gotham's Most Eloquent and Learned Divine, Tells of His Race and its Marvellous Progress and Achievements.—Facts and Figures.

The first day of January, 1863, the Immortal Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, liberating more than four million human slaves, who had been held in cruel bondage nearly 250 years. The signing of the Proclamation was the central act of his administration, and the greatest event of the 19th century. The history of my race is very similar to that of the Jewish nation.

The Jews were enslaved in Egypt for a period of 400 years, and endured great persecution under cruel taskmasters. It was the Providence of God that they should come in touch with Egyptian civilization, receive the necessary training and discipline to become a great nation, produce great leaders, statesmen, poets, Kings, Judges, prophets and scholars; and give a code of laws to the world. The Jew was carried from Canaan to Africa to be enslaved. The Negro was brought from Africa to America and enslaved.

God overthrew Egyptian slavery after sending ten plagues upon the Egyptian slave-holders; and overthrew American slavery by the plague of war, which lasted four years.

The Israelites numbered about three millions at the time of their emancipation; the American Negroes numbered four millions at the time of their liberation. The Jews returned to the land of their nativity by way of the Red Sea, passing Sinai to get laws, statutes and ordinances, camping in the wilderness forty years to receive discipline and training.

The Negro remained in the land that had been the theatre of his enslavement, and humiliation, and for forty years has been sailing upon the Red Sea, of trouble, persecution, discrimination, murder, lynching, burnings, mob rule, injustices, and disfranchisements.

The Negro as a slave deserved great credit for the Spirit of love and kindness he exhibited toward his former master. His loyalty and devotion during four years of the most cruel war in the annals of history is without a parallel. He guarded, defended, and supported defenseless women, and helpless children, while the master fought to tighten his chains. He kissed the hand that smote him; and wept over the dead body of his master, as sincerely as Jacob mourned for Joseph. While many northern states

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