

The Broad Ax

HEW TO THE LINE.

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Caustic Review

Attorney Edward E. Wilson Comments on Booker T. Washington's Article on the "Religious Life of the Negro."

The Broad Ax with commendable enterprise recently published an article in full written for the North American Review by Booker T. Washington. Whatever the merit of articles written for magazines by colored men, such articles or as much of them as possible, should appear in colored papers of large circulation in order that persons who do not read the great monthly periodicals or who happen to overlook something of interest concerning the Negro, may keep themselves informed.

Mr. Washington's article taken as a whole was far from a happy one. He showed a startling poverty of ideas on a subject with which intelligent colored men are most conversant—ideas most wretchedly expressed. He simply rehearses the white man's idea of the Negro as expressed in the newspapers, tells his inevitable Negro jokes, drags in Tuskegee and its doings, and bows away with a self-satisfied smirk. A man of acute intelligence might read Mr. Washington's article over and over again until the reader knew every word of it by heart and yet he would not have the slightest idea of the religious life of the Negro.

Prof. Washington begins by saying that it seemed to him that writers on the subject were too much disposed "to treat of it as something fixed and unchangeable." In the very next paragraph he says that when the Negro came to America he was a pagan. Now if the idea entertained by the Whites, of the religious life of the Negro is unchanged then the whites think the Negro a pagan in religion still—an assertion that few sane men would make in view of the fact that even Southerners boast as Mr. Washington does that Slavery gave the Negro "one great consolation, namely, the Christian religion and the hope and belief in a future life." And it would not be out of place to remark just here that Mr. Washington has in late years become enamored of the beauties of religion. Most of us can remember the time when he thought it highly original and witty to say that the Negro had too much religion; that he was getting Jesus and the white man was getting all the world. Yet it is no small credit to the keen scent that Mr. Washington has to changing public sentiment and the main chance that he at this time uncheatly his sword to do battle to the death under Christian banners.

This talk about the Negro's coming in contact with the Christian religion is merely a sop to the descendants of the men who with a cruelly unequalled in the world dragged helpless men and women from their homes and sold them into a slavery worse than hell. I, for one, believe that the Negro would have been better off left alone to develop whatever there was in him than to have been made the subject of white men's greed and lust, Christian white men at that—through three centuries of brutality. It is too well known for comment that wherever this same white man's Christianity has come in contact with backward races it has destroyed and corrupted them. In America white Christians have so corrupted the Negro's blood that the race is no longer a homogeneous one, but a race of many colors.

As said above Mr. Washington never falls to drag in his "nigger joke." The whites have become so accustomed to hear him make fun of his own people that no article or speech from him would be complete without a stunt in low comedy. This squares with the white man's idea that the Negro is a joke, without a serious thought; a light, brainless animal created to furnish fun for his super-

iors When the white man's vanity has been thus tickled he does not mind writing a check to teach the Negro to work and to keep him in his place. Men who are but slightly acquainted with the rules of logic know that you can prove nothing from a single example; but in this article on the Negro's religion, Mr. Washington seeks to prove by the language of some old Negro in slavery days that colored people in some communities believe that immorality and Christianity go hand in hand; or in other words that the profession of Christianity in no way shapes the Negro's conduct. Suppose this were true, even, would the Negro be any worse than his white Christian brother whom Mr. Washington worships?

Of course one wrong does not justify another; nor would the fact alone that the white, dominant race falls far short of living up to Christian principles justify the Negro in doing the same thing. Yet it is just here that Mr. Washington always leaves out the human equation in talking about the Negro. He applies to his poor black brother a standard of perfection, forgetting all the while that the great white man is everywhere exhibiting the very weakness for which Negroes are being taken to task. Without going outside the question of religion to call attention to the Alabamian's vagaries in other fields I think it fair to say that what is to be gathered from his rather hazy article on the Negro's religion is that religion does not shape the white man's conduct. Is the white man any nearer a Christian according to the principles laid down by Christ than the Negro? Has the white man forgiveness, or does he seek vengeance at every turn? Has he humility, or is he not puffed up and intolerant? Does he aid the weak, or does he ride rough shod over them; stealing their rights from them, murdering them, maiming, outraging their homes and refusing them justice in the courts?

Letting alone the white man's wars of aggression, what of the corruption in every city, county and state in America, not only in politics but in business of every kind? Could these things be if the white man shaped his conduct according to Christian principles? And is this the religious conduct that Mr. Washington asks the Negro to emulate? Oh well he may say I ask the Negro to follow true Christian principles. Why, I ask should the Negro with his limited opportunities be asked to do better than the whites with all those centuries of civilization that so dazzle Mr. Washington's eyes?

The truth of the whole thing is that the limelight of criticism is turned on the Negro and faults in him exaggerated which are left alone in other peoples and are regarded as defects necessarily resulting from imperfect human nature in an imperfect world. The wonder of it all is that a Negro who has been advertised to the dignity of leader is willing to drag out and hold up to a derisive public the weakness of his own people.

What Mr. Washington says about Negroes' getting property is all well enough as is also his talk about too much emotion. Even here, however, a little wider knowledge of the peoples of the world and their religions and condition would have saved Mr. Washington from some slips that will appear humiliating to him some time in the future.

I almost forgot one thing I desired to call attention to and this is that the newspapers north and south delight to print any utterances derogatory to



BOOKER T. WASHINGTON.

The great wizard of Tuskegee, who does not claim to be a business man, but an educator, therefore he is simply using the National Negro Business League, to further his personal aspirations.

the Negro. Following in the trail of Mr. Washington you find now and again some ignoramus with his picture in the newspapers because he has had something to say funny or destructive of the Negro. We have a number of such ninnyes in Chicago. Unlike Mr. Washington they get no money for their efforts—only some transient notoriety.

Mr. Washington is careful to throw some sop to the A. M. E. and A. M. E. Zion churches. They are too strong to be ignored. But how he reasons that money raised by them shows that less money has been spent for whisky and "gim cracks" would puzzle the most acute logician. Unless, indeed, Mr. Washington would have us believe that the money collected by the churches would surely have gone for these vain things and for nothing else had it not been so collected.

One can easily discover from a number of paragraphs in Mr. Washington's article why he said so little about the real religious life of the Negro. The wizard (to use a sobriquet invented I believe by an admiring coadjutor) was anxious to tell about Tuskegee. That was on his mind, and broke in on his thoughts, when perchance he might otherwise have been coherent. What Tuskegee had to do, with the religious life of the Negro on this great continent would be interesting to know. Its best wishes will hardly claim that in this country it is revolutionizing the religious life of Negroes. Nobody can blame Mr. Washington for loving the child of his creation but he should be wise enough to take warning from troublesome prattle of various other fathers about the particular brightness of their children. One would hardly like to say that Mr. Washington used his opportunity of giving the public some valuable information on the Negro's religious life, to advertise further his much overvalued institution. At all events, one can rejoice that the wizard did not drag in his Business League. Of course he forgot as usual that there were hundreds of other schools in the country begun years ago on a Christian not a material basis.

Dr. Washington always presents a pathetic figure when he tries to philosophize. He is at his happiest on materialistic subjects or when cracking jokes on the Negro for diversion of white audiences. He should take the advice he gives to the Negro, not to leave the field for which he is best fitted. A sample of his philosophy which is nothing more than arrant commonplace, is as follows:—"It is one of the compensations which hardships bring that the race problem is a thing so real and so present to the Negro people that it enters as a mo-

tive into everything they do." I wonder would he say that it enters into buying gim cracks, giving dances, excursions and picnics, things that Mr. Washington as well as others has condemned and deplored. Again the wizard gets off this astounding piece of triteness:—"In this great modern world, where every individual has so many interests and life is so complicated there is a tendency to let religion and life drift apart." Here he confirms what I said that it was not the Negro's conduct alone that was not informed by religion. Again Mr. Washington says:—"They (referring to colored people) are realizing that God has assigned to their race a man's part in the task of civilization." Think of it a race having a man's part! But what's the use. The Negro's thoughts, feelings, hopes, and aspirations will never be known by the white public until that public learns to give real men a hearing in its press and magazines.

EDWARD E. WILSON.

Rev. W. Sampson Brooks, the Hustling Pastor of St. Stephens Church.

No preacher in this city is performing a greater work for their followers than Rev. W. Sampson Brooks, the hard working and the hustling pastor of St. Stephens Church, Austin, avenue and Robey street. He is completely remodeling and enlarging it and when finished it will compare favorably with any church owned by the Afro-Americans in Chicago.

Rev. Brooks saved \$800 over the price wanted by the contractors by giving the workman so much per day and he himself assisted to carry the brick and the hod, which shows that he is not afraid of hard work and that he is the right preacher in the right place.

ENGLEWOOD NEWS.

Mr. William H. Bannister, 6216 Justine, departed this life Wednesday night, Aug. 2. The funeral was from the residence Saturday. Burial at Mount Greenwood.

Mr. McKinney, 6039 Loomis street, has suffered another attack of paralysis and is in a serious condition.

The Barbecue given by the Presbyterian church was a grand success. The rally at Shiloh Church last Sunday netted more than the amount asked for.

Mr. Lloyd Smith has been appointed representative for The Broad Ax in Englewood.

"Four Years Among the Mormons." Sunday afternoon, August 13th, at 4 o'clock, Julius F. Taylor will address the "St. Mark Literary." 47th and State streets, on "Four Years Among the Mormons."

News and Comment

On Our Yankee Metropolis

The Negro National Business Men's League Convenes Here Greater Part of Next Week. Notes on Our Professional Men.

"The Broad Ax" New York representative attended the services at St. Mark's Church Sunday evening, and was deeply impressed, even thrilled with the excellent recital of Rev. W. H. Brooks, pastor of St. Mark's in W. 53rd street, which was a stand, and a plea, yea, a demand for justice (not revenge) to the colored Americans who, as victims of the recent race riots (a deplorable and an inexcusable condition to arise in this, the first city of the Western Hemisphere) and a curse to our civilization. Dr. Brooks can not receive too much support in this effort to have justice meted out to our people here, many of who, though innocent of even a thought of doing harm, have been taken from their peaceful labors (in the heat of these devilish and fiendish tumults) and torn to pieces, shot, kicked and even clubbed to death, by vicious Irish Hounds and (not Irish gentlemen) are never given a fair show before the corrupt judges and grafting lawyers and deceitful two-faced cowards (adorned in the majestic blue uniforms of the law's service) who are nothing more than confidants of grafting hypocrites, under whom they serve. The whole police organization of New York needs a cleaning out and real men who have the interests of all the citizens (regardless of color or religion) at heart, should be substituted for those we now stand for, and who have brought such a stain on our fair city's name, and who have ruined many innocent men for life, physically. The head of the police department, Mr. McAdoo, has promised Rev. Brooks to take hold of the matter and correct and punish all who were found guilty of starting or taking part in the recent local troubles.

Rev. Brooks is to be congratulated upon progressing so far in this local fight for justice and manhood's rights. It is to be hoped that Dr. Johnson, collector Anderson, Rev. Hutchens, C. Bishop and our countless other prominent and public men will rally to the call of Dr. Brooks until he secures the majority of the race's support, in the vital cause, which is the cause of humanity, and without the disguise though of less proportion is the real cause of the persecuted Hebrews in demoralized Russia to-day. "He who would be free" or free his fellowmen, should be the first to strike the blow. We never can secure our genuine manhood's rights until we lay aside our petty prejudices, organize as a manly unit, and demand justice, and a square deal.

The National Negro Business Men's League convenes in this city August 16, 17 and 18, and may extend the convention a few days longer. It is sincerely hoped that our Western and Southern states will be amply represented, especially Georgia, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, Ohio, and the several other states as well. Come on, ye kings, and prospective kings of commerce, and of industry, and make this the greatest convention the League has had. Watch The Broad Ax's special letter on the convention's deliberations, etc., etc.

According to a message from Mount Laurel, Va., (Halifax county) a searching party has been formed and sent out to capture a colored man, named Early Mosely, who it is claimed, beat an old, white "hoodoo" woman to death. As is generally the claim, this

Negro (who happens to be missing) is said to have confessed his guilt before he left. (?)

A report from Elizabeth, N. J., says a reward has been raised from \$300.00 to \$500.00 for the capture of Chas. Long, a colored man, who it is said, murdered Mathew Cunningham, of Trenton, N. J. Chas. King told the authorities he saw a Negro disappear into a Dismal Swamp, between So. Plainfield and Rahway. Perhaps Long believes in that late yet timely ejaculation: "Taint no disgrace to run," etc.

Our popular and able young physician, Dr. Gustavus Henderson, M. D., paid the New York editor of The Broad Ax a very pleasant call. He is established in an elegant suite of offices at 202 E. 99th St., Manhattan, and can always be found to consult or treat patients from 8 to 10 a. m., and 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 p. m. In the several years the Doctor has been practicing he reports a steady increase in his patients at the same time having effected cures in many seemingly hopeless cases. Dr. Henderson reads this journal.

Messrs. C. King and J. Young, the well known tonsorial artists are now proprietors of the hair cutting parlors formerly owned by Mr. L. L. Williams. There are four first-class attendants ready to serve you with their skilled art from 7 a. m. until 8 p. m. A pleasant and experienced lady manicure artist always is in attendance. There is also an electric face and body massage department with a clever masseur to render you almost new after a siege of business care, etc. And The Broad Ax is always on sale at "King and Youngs," 107 W. 32nd St., Manhattan. It can also be had at J. Jones, barber shop, at 109 W. 31st St.; also at the N. Y. office of The Broad Ax, 57 W. 134th St., Harlem. Five cents per copy. Secure sample copy free, by personal or written application, addressed to Mr. C. B. Cooke.

Rev. S. Timothy Tice, presiding elder of the A. M. E. Church, N. Y. (Dist. of G. N. Y.) has appointed Rev. P. E. Batson, to assume the duties of pastor of Bishop's Chapel in 134th St., Harlem. Rev. Batson succeeds J. C. Ayler, the former pastor.

Cards have reached us announcing the Eleventh Annual "Summer Nights Outing" and picnic of the famous Hotel Belmen's Beneficial Association, at 126th St. and 2nd avenue, N. Y., Tues. eve, Sept. 12th. The New Amsterdam M. A. Band and H. L. Anderson will furnish music alternately. Popular bellmen have been invited from Philadelphia, Boston, Washington City and Dear Old Chicago. Many of the latter have promised to attend.

Mr. Ernest Hogan and his winning Nashville students are still headliners at The Paradise Roof Gardens, where they have been a continuous hit all summer. It is said that many of the ideas used in the production of this musical act were originally suggested by our popular mandolin soloist and teacher, Chas. Croley, who organized the well known musical four known as the Monarch String Quartette. Young Croley has entertained in most all the exclusive resorts and hotels, private clubs, etc., in Greater N. Y., and is deserving of more consideration than is conceded to him from many of those whom he first made it pos-

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