

MISGUIDED FRIENDS

As paradoxical as it may seem, there are times when we wish to be delivered from our friends, at least the kind of friends who are so insistent that we get what is rightfully due us that they unconsciously accept favors that ultimately prove disastrous to the very ends for which they are striving. We can accept these blunders in good faith when they are made by members of the other race, because we realize that the viewpoint is everything, and as much as one conscientiously delves into a subject or attempts to put themselves in the other fellow's place, it is absolutely impossible to do so.

In a general way a sympathetic member of the white race has an idea of our hardships and suffering because of our color. They know that we are unjustly discriminated against, they know that we are denied rights and privileges, even the most learned and wealthy among us, that are accorded the most lowly and ignorant of any other racial group. They know that they can take our life in the most barbarous way in certain sections of the country without fear of paying the penalty for their crime. They know that they made the law and administer it according to their judgment; if that be warped and narrow we are the sufferers, and since the Dred Scott decision some are attempting to make us believe we have no rights the white man is bound to respect.

What could be more detrimental to the cementing of the different races and factions in this country than separation on account of race or color? What sort of a country would this be if every component element was to live distinct and apart from the other—the Germans, Irish, French, English, Italian, and so on? But isn't that just as logical as to attempt this sort of thing with our people? What would have happened during our recent war, when the United States needed every man under the Stars and Stripes able to shoulder a gun, to protect her interests? Suppose these nations named had received at the hands of their government the same treatment we did? Would they have proven themselves to be 100 per cent American, as we did?

Some of our friends within and without our ranks are attempting to have large plants such as the Ford Automobile Company open up "Jim Crow" departments, so that we can man the whole plant from laborer to chief boss. In the city of Chicago a misguided politician is seeking to have the telephone company set aside the Douglas exchange exclusively for our girls, while others have been to the board of education with a petition to have separate schools in order to give more work for our young women teachers.

Taking the most charitable view of things, it must be admitted that such friends are far more detrimental to the welfare of our race than the vitriolic utterances and the detestable actions of a score of Vardamans, Tillmans, Hoke Smiths and men of their ilk, because the world knows these men are our avowed enemies, they acknowledge their enmity openly, thereby lessening the sting, while this other heavy fire comes from our misguided friends within our own ranks, and the average white person, quick at snap judgment and wise enough at the same time to see that their own ends are furthered, lend their aid to any movement that has for its object the separation of the races.

We are attempting at every turn to break down the bars, to erase the line that kept this country in the past from being what it claims, a democracy, and the fight will continue as long as one obstacle is placed in the way of our progress. The Negro of yesterday, let it be known, is not the Negro of today, thanks to the extra stiffening the war put in our backbones. Perhaps right here it might be well to quote a conversation a New Orleans street car conductor had with an old ex-slave recently who dared to sit in front of the "screen." "Get up out of there," said the conductor, "and sit behind that screen, where all you * * *

belong." The old gentleman straightened up, looked the enemy square in the face, and said, "Man, my son died over in France, fightin' for you an' de United States and what dey calls democracy of de world, an' I'm goin' to die right here in dis seat if you tries to move me." He rode unmolested to the end of his journey.

That is the spirit of today, and the man or woman who advocates anything less than a full measure of citizenship has no place in our ranks, and deserves the condemnation of the great mass who are struggling with might and main to reach a higher plane. We must needs have friends and well wishers, but better would it be for us to travel the weary way alone than to attempt to carry the added burden imposed on us through the efforts of misguided and misinformed friends to help us by any plan that imposes segregation.—Chicago Defender.

STOLEN FROM THIEVES

A wandering auctioneer had gathered about him a merry throng of villagers. He held up a battered violin.

"What offers for this ancient fiddle?" he inquired, pathetically. "Look it over. Notice the blurred finger marks of remorseless time. Observe the stains of hurrying years. To the merry notes of this fine old instrument the brocaded dames of fair France may have danced the minuet."

By this time the crowd was becoming exceedingly interested.

"Ha," continued the auctioneer, "it bears an abrasion—perhaps a touch of fire. It may be the very fiddle on which Nero played while Rome burned. Now, what offers?"

From the back of the crowd came a mournful answer, "A tanner!"

"It's yours, sir!" replied the auctioneer.

Although it was snowing hard, the shabby looking man still maintained his position by the butcher's cart wheel.

When that worthy returned from handing in the family turkey, and his conversation with the pretty housemaid, the beggar was still in the same posture, one hand resting on the cart wheel.

"What do you want?" inquired the butcher.

The man made no reply, but wearily raised his hand, disclosing a match.

"What are you going to do?" asked the puzzled butcher, now slightly alarmed.

The man yawned, pulled himself together with a supreme effort and spoke:

"It's all right," he drawled. "I'm only holding my match to your wheel so that when you start it will light."

The tickets for the raffle were selling in thousands. McGregor wasn't having any, however. He called the whole thing a swindle. Eventually his friends persuaded him to buy one ticket. Who should win the pony but McGregor!

When the prize was brought to him he surveyed it gloomily, and finally said:

"I told ye the whole thing was a swindle!"

"What's the matter?" asked his friends.

"Where's the whip?" hissed McGregor.

In a village in Ireland the mother of a soldier met a priest who asked her if she had had bad news.

"Shure, I have, sir," she said. "Pat has been killed."

"Oh, I'm very sorry," said the priest; "did you have word from the war office?"

"No," she said, "I heard it from himself."

The priest looked perplexed and said: "But how is that?"

"Shure," she said, "here is the letter, read it yourself."

The letter said: "Dear mother: I am now in the holy land."

It was Dora's first trip on the ocean and the water kept on going seesaw and slippside and heaveho, and all sorts of uncomfortable, disagreeable things; so that Dora began to

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get a little giddy and dazed and tired and hazy.

Clasping a large doll in her arms, she stood upon the deck by her mother's side.

"Mamma!" she suddenly exclaimed, and her face turned to a delicate pale green.

"Yes, darling; what is the matter?"

"Oh, nothing, mamma! But I—I don't fink the rabbit I had for dinner could have been quite—quite dead!"

On the mantelpiece of his dressing room at Drury Lane treater Alfred Lester has an array of quaint little wooden figures of Chinese workmanship. They were sent to him by a friend from Shanghai. I saw them the other day.

"This one is supposed to be me," said Lester, gloomily pointing to a little man in a cart. "It's either a hoodoo or a mandarin going to church—I forget which."

"You are an hour late this morning, Sam," said an employer to his Negro servant.

"Yes, sah. I know it, sah. I was kicked by a mule on my way, sah."

"That ought not to have detained you an hour, Sam."

"Well, you see, boss, it wouldn't have if he'd only have kicked me in dis direction, but he kicked me de other way!"

Last Christmas a vicar was invited to dinner at the house of one of the leading men in the town. At the dinner table he was placed opposite a goose.

The lady of the house was seated on the vicar's left. Seeing the goose, he remarked:

"Shall I sit so close to the goose?"

Finding his words a bit equivocal, he turned round to the lady and said, in a most inoffensive tone:

"Excuse me, Mrs. Blank, I meant the roast one."

A well known judge was trying a case in which there was a dispute about a water supply. As he had just partaken of a hearty luncheon and counsel's argument was decidedly long winded he began to nod suspiciously. All at once the barrister thundered out:

"What we want, your honor, is water!"

"Very little in mine, please; very little in mine," said his honor, suddenly starting up.

"Now you wouldn't think to look at him that that man was a judge, would you?"

"I don't know as I'd pick him out for a judge, but a glance at his nose would be sufficient to convince me that he had something to do with the bar."

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