

women were not allowed to vote though they had fully qualified in every way. It is these whose affidavits are being secured.

More serious and more distressing, however, was the situation found in Orange County where the election clash at Ocoee occurred. News despatches of November 4th told of the killing of six colored men, one by lynching, and of two white men, when Mose Norman, a colored man attempted to vote although he had not registered nor paid his poll tax. The facts, secured on the spot, reveal an entirely different story. Three weeks prior to election the local Ku Klux Klan sent word to the colored people of Orange County, that no Negroes would be allowed to vote and that if any Negro tried to do so, trouble could be expected. Norman refused to be intimidated. The registration books at Orlando show that he had qualified and registered. He was unpopular with the whites because he was too prosperous he owned an orange grove for which he had refused offers of \$10,000 several times. The prevailing sentiment was that Norman was too prosperous "for a nigger." When Norman went to the polls he was overpowered, severely beaten, his gun taken away from him (he had gone prepared for he knew there were no limits to which the Ku Klux Klan would not go) and ordered to go home. He went instead to the home of July Perry, another colored man, who likewise was unpopular in that he owned his own home and was foreman of a large orange grove owned by a Northern white man. The community felt that the job he had belonged to a white man. A mob formed, went out and surrounded the colored settlement, applied kerosene, burned twenty houses, two churches, a school-house and a lodge hall. Perry and the other beleaguered Negroes fought desperately. Two members of the mob were killed and two were wounded. Perry, with his arm shot away, was taken to Orlando and placed in jail. Shortly afterwards, a detachment of the mob went to the county jail, at Orlando, to which the sheriff voluntarily turned over the keys. The mob took Perry just outside the city and more dead than alive, lynched him.

In the meantime, the colored men, women and children trapped in the burning houses fought desperately against insurmountable odds. Negroes attempting to flee were either shot down or forced back into the flames. The number killed will never be known. I asked a white citizen of Ocoee who boasted of his participation in the slaughter how many Negroes died. He declared that fifty-six were known to have been killed—that he had killed seventeen "niggers" himself. Almost before the embers had died down, eager souvenir hunters searched like vultures with ghoulish glee among the ruins for the charred bones of the hapless victims. The effect upon the adult white citizens was distressing enough—an air of meritorious work well done—but more appalling was the attitude of the children of the country. When asked about the rioting, and eleven year old white girl, intelligent and alert, told exultingly of "the fun we had when some niggers were burned up." The outlook for a more enlightened generation to come is indeed unpromising when a little girl can exhibit so callous an attitude towards such a revolting crime.

And thus the story runs. This and many other issues of the New Republic could be filled with tale after tale of unbelievable horror—how a wealthy

colored physician of Quinsy was surrounded at the polls by a mob, members of which spat on his face and dared him on pain of death to wipe because he had advised colored citizens to qualify, register and vote; how in Live Oak two colored business men, undertakers, merchants and land owners, were, for the offense beaten into unconsciousness and ordered to leave homes, property and families; how one of them has left and the other lies near the point of death from a paralytic stroke brought on by the beating; how among those burned alive at Ocoee were a mother and her two weeks old baby. The examples given are enough.

The question involved is not simply that of barring a few Negroes from voting. It involves a condition which will allow any white man, whether highly intelligent or densely ignorant owning much property or abjectly poor, to vote, while all Negroes are disfranchised it matters not how intelligent or worthy of the franchise they may be. This situation is not one which is wholly sectional but one which is so fundamental that no citizen of America, North or South, can disregard it.

What is the remedy? The United States Supreme Court has declared unconstitutional, laws providing for the punishment of persons who by threats of violence have prevented citizens from voting. But there are no definite steps which can be taken. First, a complete and exhaustive Congressional investigation of the elections of 1920 should be made. Second, under the revisions of Section 19 of Chapter 3 of the Federal Criminal Code due punishment should be meted out to those persons who committed the crimes referred to above and the many more which a real Congressional investigation would disclose. The section referred to is headed, Offenses Against the Elective Franchise and Civil Rights of Citizens and reads in part:

If two or more persons conspire to injure, oppress, threaten or intimidate any citizen in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the Constitution or laws of the United States—they shall be fined not more than five thousand dollars and imprisoned not more than ten years, and shall, moreover be thereafter ineligible to any office, or place of honor, profit or trust created by the Constitution or laws of the United States:

With this statute is to be coupled the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution which reads:

The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude.

The tense feeling now existing indicates that definite action must be taken at an early date to correct the monstrous evils underlying the race problem. Unless they are taken, it is not at all improbable that our race riots have just begun.

WALTER F. WHITE

The South African tree snake, long regarded as harmless, has been found to possess a highly active venom.

The exhaust of an airplane motor is made wholly inaudible, it is claimed, by a new Swiss manufacture.