

## A Negro City of 150,000 In the Heart of New York

(Christian Science Monitor)

Of all the foreign populations in New York City—Irish, Italian, German, Jew—no nationality has so compactly and localized a group as that of the Negro community, extending from Eighth Avenue to the Harlem River and from One Hundred and Thirtieth to One Hundred and Fifty-fifth Streets. Here are shops, theatres, churches, newspaper offices, beauty parlors, all in the hands of Negroes. Walk down One Hundred and Thirty-fifth Street from Washington Heights to the Harlem River, and almost all the people you will meet are Negroes. And you will observe that there are divisions and classes within this active, compact community. It is just like one of the shabby Negro quarters in the southern states where all the inhabitants have almost a common status. This is an organized, self-supporting group with strong individual characteristics. There are well-dressed men and women and there are many in working clothes. An aristocratic looking baby carriage is crumpled along. A dainty blue robe

and dainty white clothing wrap the baby inside. And a block further on comes a sturdy youngster in tatters. There are rich and poor, slums and boulevards, illiterate and educated in this city of 150,000 in the heart of New York. And there are many different types, many diverse beliefs and cultures, forced together by the common bond of color. So while the black city is unified in being not white, it is much less homogeneous in other respects.

### The Immigrants More Radical

Africans and West Indians jostle the American-born Negro at every turn. There are really few of the traditional southern plantation Negroes in this community. One hears the Spanish accent of the West Indian more often than the "old Virginia" dialect. And one hears often the crisp, staccato speech of the typical New Yorker, if there is such a person. The alien Negro is more sophisticated, as a rule. Often he is an intellectual and a radical. The home product is less aggressive, on the whole, is 100 per cent American, and inclined, when

aspiring to choose the ideal of Booker T. Washington and seek race equality through industrial progress.

In their shops and offices, their homes and schools and churches, these thousands of individual reactions, of personal problems, bound together in the one great problem of race. There is an air of self-assertion, not unpleasantly displayed, among the people on the street. It is their street, their community, and they go about with a sense of pride and responsibility that is often lacking when Negroes live among larger masses of whites. One meets the shuffling idler, as in every city street, but the alert worker is there too. A stalwart turbaned mammy shuffles by, and after her comes a lithe, narrow-hipped West Indian girl, her features almost without Negro characteristics, her skin hardly more than a dusky olive, with the rich rose showing through.

Six weekly newspapers of considerable influence and stability are published in the Negro Harlem community, and are distributed to a fair-sized public among colored readers throughout the United States. The editors are alert, intelligent men with a keen appreciation of the restless stirrings, the social and political ideals that dominate their neighbors. Churches and Sunday schools are active and hold a large place in the community life. Clubs of all sorts thrive, and the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. are managed by all-colored staffs.

### The "Colored Library"

On One Hundred and Thirty-fifth Street and Thirty-fifth Street pours a stream of over 2,000 Negro children. Deep black, mulatto, and dusky copper, their faces are the complex of care-free youth that one sees in any similar line of public school pupils anywhere. This school is now employing colored teachers on its staff with white ones, and the combination seems harmonious and efficient.

On One Hundred and Thirty-fifth street is the local branch of the New York Public Library, said to be the only "colored library" in the city, the only one of its sort anywhere. Here one may feel the pulse of the Negro community, its aspirations and difficulties, its joy and hope and bitterness, its peculiar aesthetic and intellectual reactions.

Under the capable direction of Miss Ernestine Rose this library, in the three years of its existence as a specifically planned center for Negro readers, has become a very real force in the life of the neighborhood. There is a mixed staff in the library, three Negro assistants serving with the white librarians, and Miss Rose finds that they all work together with personal and professional harmony. There are some white readers, but the majority are Negroes.

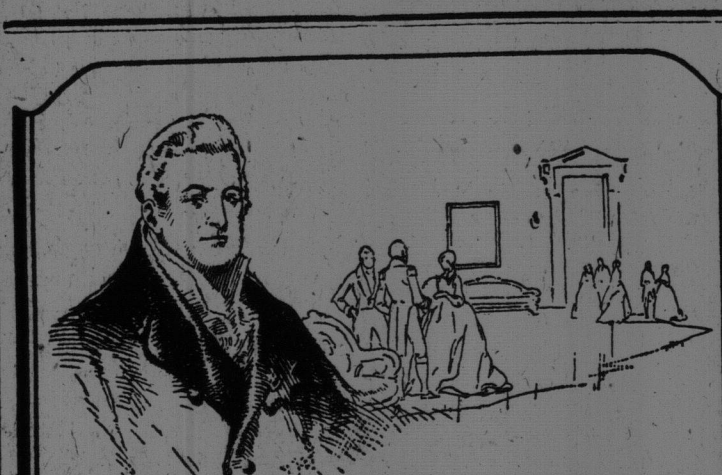
As soon as one steps into this library there comes a sense of its special appeal for the Negro. In front of the main doorway is Mike Warwick Fuller's beautiful statue of "Ethiopia." In a well-lighted alcove is a group of etchings by Albert Smith, including Booker T. Washington, Paul Laurence Dunbar and other distinguished

Negroes. And the reading rooms are filled with Negro readers and with lines of children waiting for books to be checked. A serious-faced little girl is poring over school references, while her small brother touches the backs of a long row of books with caressing fingers. This little black boy, playing familiarly about the book shelves, will never know the handicap of those older people to whom public libraries have been closed. That is one gain that has been made for his race, and a comparatively new gain, too. The librarians have to keep emphasizing the fact that the library is for everybody and that it is free, because a good many of the older people have not yet learned this strange fact. They remember libraries as something from which they were barred.

### BRITISH COLONIAL TOBACCO Cultivation in Overseas Dominions Being Encouraged.

England is showing an increasing interest in the growing of tobacco in her colonies, according to J. M. Macmillan, director of J. M. Macmillan Ltd., tobacco and merchants of London, who is at Hotel Pennsylvania, New York. Mr. Macmillan will study conditions in the tobacco growing areas of the U. S.

"There are many of the British colonies throughout the world, where the soil and climate is admirably adapted to the growing of tobacco," he said. "But so far, the cultivation of the leaf is in its infancy in most of these places as in India and Borneo and many others. If people would only realize that capital invested in good tobacco-growing land is sure of a large and safe return, they would probably flock to put their money in it. However, England is doing all she can to foster interest in tobacco production throughout her possessions, and the results of this effort are slowly beginning to have an effect."



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## IS WRITING HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Charles Mair, Veteran Canadian Author, is Visiting Victoria.

(Victoria Colonist.)

"We do not want it to be narrow in character. We want it on the contrary, to be broad in its view and its interest, at the same time reflecting the noble history and traditions of this great country." In these words Charles Mair, well-known Canadian writer, summed up the characteristics of the Canadian literature that should be hoped for, in an interview with a Colonist reporter. He was pleased to say that a literature was developing in this country.

Mr. Mair, accompanied by his daughter, Mrs. Cann, of Calgary, is on a few weeks' visit to Victoria. He is in his eighty-fifth year, is apart from the little touch of asthma, in excellent health and shows little evidence of the eventful life which he has lived. As pathfinder, soldier and poet his name is known all over the Dominion.

In the field of literature Mr. Mair's name is possibly best known by his dramatic work "Tecumseh," in which he weaves through the medium of blank verse the heroic period in Canadian history of the war of 1812, with Tecumseh, the loyal Indian chief, as the central figure. A new edition of this work is being issued shortly. He has, however, written a number of shorter poems, and as a member of the Royal Society of Canada he contributed to its records a valuable work on "The American Bison," a subject with which Mr. Mair was familiar due to the fact that he spent so many years on the Canadian prairies.

At present he is writing his autobiography, which should indeed be a very interesting work, covering the development period of Canada's history. Associated directly with the country's history in its making, he has a valuable fund of information to give. His connection with the Canadian Northwest dates back to the beginning of things in the way of settlement. As a result of his reports on the country the first flood of immigration went to that section of the Dominion. He was on the ground when the first Red rebellion took place and was, in fact, a prisoner with Scott, who was put to death by the rebels. Mr. Mair made his escape and for many years served his country on the prairies before he was called upon in the second Red rebellion to again serve under arms.

Mr. Mair has kept in close touch with the development of Canadian literature. The earlier school of writers was contemporaneous with him when he was actually engaged in writing, and while of late years he has not been very active in writing himself, he has kept in touch with the various writers and their work. Speak-

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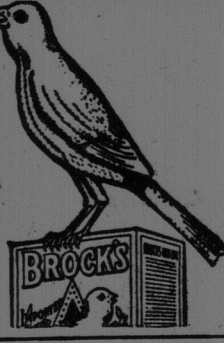


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ing with a Colonist reporter yesterday, he expressed his satisfaction that Canadian writers were attaining to high standards.

Mr. Mair is one of the two original members still living of the "Canada First" movement which was organized in Toronto in 1868. The other member now living is Col. George Denison of Toronto. This organization, which followed closely on confederation, had for its object the sinking of provincialism in the newly-created dominion and the replacing of it by a broad

spirit of Canadianism. There has recently been some allusions to the organization and Mr. Mair is dealing at some length with it and its objects in his autobiography. Some phases of the early days after the confederation of Canada were influenced in no small measure by the pressure that the "Canada First" organization was able to bring to bear. Mr. Mair believes that this body alone prevented the recall of the expedition of what was afterwards Lord Wolseley and his force in the days of the first Red rebellion.

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