

Dawn of Tomorrow

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18th, 1924.

Editorial

THE ETHIOPIAN CHURCH.

In the Dearborn Independent of October 4th, appears an article by Thos. C. Taylor, on "Black Africa Unified by Strange Forces" Referred to is the Ethiopian Church and the power it is drawing unto itself by uniting all of black Africa. The article reads in part: "Of the many movements of political and social importance which are claiming attention at the present time, one of the most interesting has been accorded somewhat less notice than its position seems to entitle it to. Throughout all the squabbles of Europe's vociferous national groups, and the commotion brought about by the development in Russia of the new and uncompromising imperialism which claims no less than the whole world for the Bolshevik brand of Kutler, a great force bearing upon the future of all Africa has progressed steadily.

"Looking at its record of the past twenty years, one finds in it a force characterized by vigor without aggression. It has not burdened the world with its propaganda. There is no evidence that it has struck at liberty of thought a single blow. It has not cleared a way for itself over the bodies of men slain. Its function has been, not to scatter and burst, but to gather and bind; and it is binding the Negro peoples of Africa to a purpose and a racial consciousness of much moment. It is the Ethiopian Church: Ethiopia for the Ethiopian."

"In its name there is the measure of its aims and the range of its outlook. It uses the title "Ethiopian" in its widest and historic sense. The church is not a growth of the so-called Ethiopia on the border of Abyssinia's ruler; and that is not its field. When imperial Egypt stood among the mighty of the earth, there lay far to the southward, beyond the great S bend of the sacred river a black, unknown and dreaded land—Ethiopia. The imperial emissaries roved its fringes only, taking thence ivory, precious metals and wild men. . . . "Ethiopia" signified all that vast continent of Africa bordering upon and south of the Equator. To the Ethiopian church "Ethiopia" has that meaning still."

Contributing to the success of the Ethiopian Church have been the earnest efforts and sacrifices of all or nearly all of the religious denomina-

tions of the present age. Pioneer missionaries went among the Africans and gave them the rudiments of an education. They established stations, built churches and began to teach and to live out the idea that all men are brethren. But following closely in their wake came the tradesmen and government officials with a different code of ethics. They began to practice caste and discrimination, not only in religious but in secular affairs. Native missionaries who were among the founders of this new faith, men whose lives and purposes were clean, were not considered good enough at death to be entered into the church burial plot. The African with his newly awakened conscience and with the new idea of God and the brotherhood of man sunk deeply into his being was now amazed and much disturbed. However, one thing was plainly evident to him: his new neighbor preached one thing and practiced another. The native was no longer wholly unlettered. He could read and reason and he could make deductions. Something was wrong either with the white man or with his religion.

And all the while, like a latent magnet, the Ethiopian Church lay and drew unto itself the disillusioned, the malcontents—all who had been taught to believe in the brotherhood of man. For it offered a haven where all men could worship God as equals. The Ethiopian Church has spread no propaganda. It has simply lay quiet and grown till to-day it represents the most potent source of strength, the most united body in South Africa. No political party can deny or overlook its strength or its possibilities. It must be reckoned with by those who attempt to shape the destiny of Africa for indeed it represents an overwhelming majority of Africa's population.

We may glean an idea of the unity it is bringing among the native tribes when we recall that even the Malabes and the Mashones, most bitter enemies for centuries, have recently united in war against the whites.

We black folk are proud of the accomplishments of the Ethiopian Church for it has not only shown the black people the power of unity, it has not only preserved self respect among the natives and given shape to that rising tide of energy, but it has also saved countless millions to Christianity, which, under the present order of things—class distinction, racial prejudice—standards set up by white men—would have been swept away by the forces of Mohammedanism or some other movement. For ere long these countless millions must be reckoned with by the powers that be of the world.

VANCOUVER, B.C., NOTES

Mr. W. L. Smith of Bancouver, B.C. departed this life very quietly on Sept. 27th at 9.15 p.m. in St. Paul's Hospital in his 60th year. He leaves to mourn his loss a loving wife, and daughter and mother as well as a host of friends. Mr. Smith has been for more than 20 years a faithful employee of the C.P.R. as a porter and has served well in his work. For years he has been in charge of the Porter's Rest. He will be greatly missed from his position.

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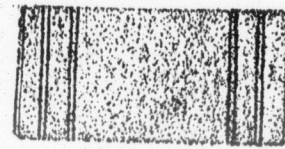
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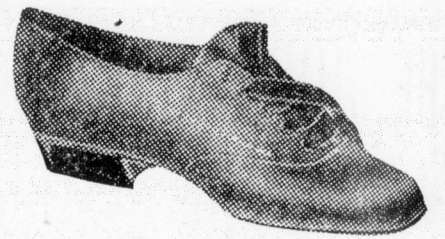
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