

The Dawn of Tomorrow

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ALDRIDGE A SUCCESS C.L.A.C.P. HOLDS AS AN ACTOR FINE BANQUET

The recent great success of Richard B. Harrison, a native of London, Ont., in the role of Jehovah in the "Green Pastures" recalls the foreign successes of another American Negro who at one time gained abroad a fame and position which were denied to him in his own country. Ira Aldridge faced European audiences in the most ambitious plays of the drama. He was an actor of Shakespeare principally and on the continent ranked as one of the ablest tragedians of his time. There were no roles apparently in the whole range of the theatre that he considered beyond his power, and in most that he attempted he was rewarded with approval and reputation. He flourished at a time when the descriptive designation was popular and the title which he won for himself was "The African Roscius."

Aldridge died in Poland in a small town where he had stopped while on his way to St. Petersburg. That was in 1867 when he was about fifty years of age. One story of his birth places it in a suburb of Baltimore about 1810 and says that being apprenticed to a shipbuilder he picked up enough German from the sailors he met to constitute a fair knowledge of the language. Another story makes him the son of a colored preacher and places his birth about 1805.

He met Edmund Kean on one of the latter's trips to America and returned with him to England as a servant. Kean discovered his ability and encouraged him to cultivate his gifts. Aldridge appeared first at the Royal Theatre in London as "Othello" and was received with great favor. After playing for some time in England he decided to return to America but on his first appearance, at Baltimore, he was rejected and returned to England to commence a career which was destined to be most successful.

As an interpreter of Shakespearean plays he was particularly well received in England, especially in those parts to which his color was suited. For parts where his black skin would be a handicap he whitened his skin. He did the latter for "King Lear," a play in which he was very highly commended in Europe. When Madge Kendal was in the United States she told of having as a very young act-

The regular meeting of the C.L.A.C.P. met at the home of the President, Mr. Wm. Berry, 5 Front Street. The regular business over it was moved by the Executive Secretary, Mr. W. Myers and seconded that the retiring President, Mrs. Drake, be given a lifetime membership and that also a banquet at a later date be given the retiring and new officers for the coming year.

On Thursday evening, March 17th, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Cromwell, William St. a St. Patrick's Banquet was given in honor of Mrs. M. Drake, Mrs. G. Wilson and Mrs. E. De Groat, President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively also the new officers for the coming year.

The table was beautifully decorated with silver candlesticks holding long, lighted, tapering, green candles. The centre-piece green with lovely red roses. The supper was most beautifully served in all St. Patrick's contrast. Each one gave a toast or speech to the retiring President which along with the new President, Mr. W. Berry were guests of honor at the table. After an enjoyable evening of music and games the evening closed.

ress played Desdemona to the Othello of Aldridge.

Aldridge's career on the continent reads now like the contemporary progress of some popular prima donna. He received from monarchs decorations and orders of various kinds and in Russia, Germany and Austria was thus honored. During the years of his success in Europe he never failed to return to America and seek success in his own land. He was content with the position he had made for himself in Europe and it was only shortly before his death that he ever referred to the possibility of playing in America. Before leaving London on the last trip to Russia, during which he died, he told his friends that after his return to England he might once more try his fortunes in his native land. But death prevented this. He was a man of distinctively African traits in his appearance, his most striking peculiarity being the size of his head which measured 23½ inches in circumference.

JOYS AND GRIEFS OF EASTERTIME.

The daily weaving of our lives is strangely done—

Beside some strands of joy are threads of galling grief:

The sombre colours doubtlessly a time prevail,

Then threads of brighter hues bring the designed relief.

One shuttle shoots a cotton fibre o'er the warp.

As if the texture of the making web to spoil;

But, Ah! a swifter sends across its purest silk,

With seeming aim the former's baneful art to foil.

A portion of life's fadeless web is surely wrought

Awhile we journey back, each yearly Eastertime,

Through ages long, to sadly find that pangs of heart

Were ne'er divorced from joys of soul and acts sublime.

Unbidden, there arises up in full survey

The malice, scorn, and hate in minds of men

That swayed them to the doing of those dreadful deeds

Which writers of God's Book were forced to pen.

The upper room comes vividly into our minds,

The garden, mob, and judgment hall (so-called) we see;

The mocking robes, the reed, the crown of cruel thorns,

And then, at length, the crucified at Calvary.

We see the lifeless form borne from the Roman cross,

Then laid, midst scenes of grief, in Joseph's borrowed tomb;

Ah! yes, though age on age has wandered on its way

We deeply sense the darkness of that day of gloom.

These are the drabber hues that shock the muser's mind,

They, and no more, would spell discomfort and despair;

But by their side is triumph o'er both Sin and Death

Inwoven through the warp, with master weaver's care.

Because the sleeper in that rock-hewn, garden tomb

Called back unto Himself His deathless life divine,

The brightest strands that shine in life's immortal web

Are fondly woven there each yearly Eastertime.

Eastertime, 1932. —MACK

RECIPROCITY OF SLAVES BETWEEN MICH. AND U. CAN.

(by the Honourable William Renwick Riddell, LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.H.S., etc.)

One of the most curious conditions in the History of Negro Slavery was that existing in the early part of the last century between the United States and Canada, and especially between Michigan and Upper Canada.

As is well-known, when Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe of Upper Canada, in 1793 persuaded a reluctant Parliament to pass a measure of emancipation, the Statute of 1793, 33 George III, cap. 7 (U.C.), while it freed all coming into the Province, and every child born after the act (when it attained the age of 25) kept the slaves then in the Province in their condition of slavery unless manumitted—and rather discouraged manumission, be it said; see my "The Slave in Canada," Washington, 1920, pp. 55.

Consequently, until the Imperial Act of 1833, 3, 4, William III, cap 73 (Imp.) freed every slave under the British flag, there were always slaves in Upper Canada.

On the other side of the International Line, while the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 provided that there should be no slavery in the territory, later Michigan and much other territory, north of the Ohio River, neither Detroit nor other parts of Michigan found absolute freedom from Negro slavery; no few slaves were held in bondage despite the Northwest Ordinance.

The natural desire for freedom caused the slaves from each side of the International Line to flee to the other—the American slave when he touched Upper Canadian soil became forthwith free by virtue of the Act of 1793; while the Upper Canadian slave became free the instant he crossed the Line to Michigan by virtue of the Ordinance of 1787.

It is a well-established fact that during the War of 1812, there was a company of refugee Negroes from Canada enlisted in the Detroit forces to fight for the country that emancipated them; while at Niagara, there was a similar company of Negroes, enlisted to fight for the country that emancipated them, if it insisted in holding others of their race in bond-

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