

Dawn of Tomorrow

Published weekly in the interests of and for the Advancement of the colored people of Canada.

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Editorial

THE NEGRO'S CONTRIBUTION

In the current issue of The Dawn we are proud to publish several articles which portray the colored people's progress since the days of slavery and which also tell of what they have added to the present civilization. When Columbus and other explorers landed upon this continent there were among their crews, Negroes, some of whom were skilled pilots and artisans and even teachers. These black men brought with them the arts, the culture and the gifts of Africa, and America today is enjoying the blessings of the heritage which these men brought.

But later Negroes came by shiploads, not of their own free will, but as slaves, to till the soil, to clear the forests, to build railways to build beautiful cities and palatial homes, to make of this continent one of the foremost countries of God's green earth.

But before they came they must have known how to work, else how could they have served America so well. In their African homes they must have learned the art of building else how could they have builded so magnificently here? Excavation in Africa reveals the fact that their architecture was among the foremost of the ancient world. Negroes began their careers as inventors soon after they landed here. One of the most useful additions to the cotton gin was invented by a slave in the early seventies. Of course patent rights were granted, not to him but to his master. In many other instances masters were given patent rights for inventions of their slaves since the law would grant no patent rights to slaves. The invention which gave the shoe industry its greatest impetus, one which placed the American shoe industry ahead of that of any other country, was the invention of a Negro.

The race has launched out into every line of human endeavour compatible with American life and has proven its members are the peers of men of any race. Its record is one which should inspire not only respect but admiration of all classes of citizens for the world knows with what thorns and thistles the Negro's pathway has been strewn. Where assistance and encouragement should have been given the Negro has met taunts and rebuffs, unjust criticisms, lack of opportunities to show his ability.

But the greatest heritage which the Nile, through her dark children, sent to the Mississippi, was the spirit of

patience, forbearance, long suffering, humility and the power to enchant the world through music. What a people is capable of doing cannot be judged until it actually does it. But we do know that no other race has ever suffered like the Negro has suffered and has still greeted the world with a smile on his face and with a song in his heart. When the first twenty slaves had landed at Jamestown, they, unlike the Hebrew captives who hung their harps upon the willows by the river of Jordan and began to weep and mourn—these Negroes began to sing a strange new, weird, sweet song in a strange and new land. This song was free from hate, from the spirit of revenge and retaliation. But it did breathe the spirit of regret, perhaps, for lost loved ones, the spirit of brotherly love among all men. The world listened and called it beautiful. Down through the ages of slavery days their children sang this song and many more. The blood of Africa was still strong in their veins and so they were compelled to sing—to sing of light and love and mercy and kindness and beauty and man and God. To these old songs and to hundreds that followed the world still listens and calls them beautiful! wonderful!! To this folklore America is indebted for its only original music. Imagine America shorn of all of its Negro wit and humor, of its Negro music, its Negro musicians and Negro bards. If we could imagine this we know that we would sense a hum-drum, lonely world, a world in which you and I would not care to dwell, and if today the whole world had caught and retained the Negro's trustful, God-like, humble and contrite spirit, the success of the Disarmament Conference, now sitting at London, would be a thing assured. We are therefore not only proud of the fact that we are of the Negro race but we are proud of the part which we have played (in so far as we have been allowed to share) in shaping the destiny of the ages.

Struggle of the Negro Musician

Continued from page 1

chestra of the Prince of Wales in Brighton. In 1791 he played under the baton of Josef Haydn in London. In 1802 he went on a tour over the continent and played the Kreutzer Sonata, in public, with Beethoven. In 1811 he took the degree of Mus. Bac. at Cambridge University.

This is stated here by way of contrast with the reception given to a very much greater Negro musician, just one hundred years later, when he came to America. I refer to the late Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, who was a man of fine breeding, accustomed to mingling in excellent London social circles, where his color was not in any way a bar. In fact it played no significant part in his life in London, as far as his opportunities were concerned. But when he came to America he found that he had to be exploited either as a Negro or as an object of sympathy. He wanted none of this. It was my happy privilege once to have a two-hour private interview with him; and I can hear him saying now in a mildly scolding tone, "They make me tired! They

The Negro a Business Asset

By Matthey Bullock

The United States of America has great natural resources; its diversified soil and climate are all that could be desired; but its real greatness is found in the character of the men and women gathered from every quarter of the globe, who make up its cosmopolitan population. The Negro constitutes a considerable part of this number, being one-tenth of the entire population.

While it is generally conceded that the Negro has made a distinct contribution to our developing American culture, there are those who are of the opinion that he has added nothing to the business life of the nation. The discussion on this proposition is the purpose of this article.

The Negro has had very little experience in the manipulations of modern business but prior to his enslavement in Europe and America he was widely known as a trader. Dr. George A. Reisner in his recent lecture, "Ancient Trade Relations Between Egypt and Ethiopia," says, "the products of Central Africa, resin, oil, gold, silver, skins of wild animals, ivory and other things went over to Greece 3500 years ago." And another writer has referred to Egypt as "a channel by which the genius of Negroland was drafted off into the service of the Mediterranean and Asiatic culture." These black people not only carried on a flourishing trade with Egypt and the Near East but roamed over the then known world in search of trade. Their wanderings can be easily traced to Asia and the islands of the Pacific and there is very good authority for the statement that they even visited America prior to its discovery by Columbus. The black man in America is the lineal descendant of this roaming trading, Ethiopian.

Four million Negroes were given their freedom as a result of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. They left their former masters to begin life as free men without food, clothing, shelter or money and were forced to compete for a living in a business world, the technique of which was entirely new

are forever alluding to racial color!" He knew that there was no line in real art. All he asked was that his work be given the same recognition no more nor less, as that of the others.

So, taking the life of Coleridge-Taylor as an illustration, the Negro musician born in Europe and brought up in Europe has not even begun to have the struggles of his American brother. He may suffer poverty, as many have as students. But, after requisite preparation, attempts to publicly present his work are not met with obstructions on every hand over there. Yet, senseless prejudices are bound to survive in any country. As late as Mozart's time, musicians were no higher socially than lackeys and servants. And was not that great master kicked down the back stairway by one of his irascible patrons?

(To be continued)

to them. And that is not all. During the past sixty years the Negro has been forced to contend with probably the greatest obstacles which have ever confronted a minority group. It is quite certain that no minority group in modern times has been placed in a similar position. He has been required to find a solution for all the problems common to men in this high-powered machine age and a few additional ones aimed at him alone.

The Negro began his business career without money or credit, with few exceptions, has continued to operate on a small scale. And like all proprietors of small business he has been forced to face the keenest competition. He must compete with the four thousand chain store systems of the country which are not only driving the small dealer out of business but through purchasing direct from the manufacturers, are also eliminating many of the wholesale dealers. He must compete with the great mail order houses which have reduced the cost of merchandising to a minimum. He must also compete with the increasing number of self-service stores which can always undersell the small retailer. These are tremendous handicaps which must be overcome by every small dealer if he would survive in business.

However, the Negro business man labors under certain disadvantages which are unknown to other business men in America. In the first place, he is handicapped by the great American prejudice which reflects itself in his business. Shortly after the Civil War, and even before that time, individual Negroes built up thriving business enterprises which were allowed to expand and grow so long as they could meet the common demands of competition. Then little by little there developed among the white people a prejudice against patronising a business conducted by Negroes. This condition finally became so widespread that Negroes were forced to confine their business activities almost entirely to members of their own race. And when it is realized that Negroes themselves have been forced into restricted occupations which do not pay a living wage, the fate of the Negro business man is easily determined.

Then, it seems that the Negro is expected to conduct his business without credit. He is asked to make brick without straw. A great financier once said that the best security for a loan is the character of the borrower. However, this does not seem to be true when the prospective borrower is a Negro. He may be a man of the highest character; he may even be a depositor of the bank from which the loan is requested, but when he applies for a loan some reason is generally found why his securities should not be accepted.

However, in spite of these handicaps, the Negro has made some very definite contributions to the business life of the country. When he learned that he was considered a poor risk by the old line insurance companies, he formed companies of his own, directing into the channels of business millions of dollars which otherwise might not have been saved. He has established 70,000 business enterprises and purchased 232,

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