

The Dawn of Tomorrow

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VOICE IN THE SOUTH by ROBERT DURR

Gertrude Schurgast in a feature article in World Order, official organ of the American Bahai Community, writes:

"My best friend is a lady belonging to the colored race. She holds her head up proudly and looks into your eyes. Her brown, unwrinkled face is crowned by beautiful silvery hair. She is one of those rare persons who combines strength of character with kindness.

"The other day I discovered a little picture on her mantle. It was a picture of a white woman in an old-fashioned, high-necked dress. Her hair, which was parted in the middle, was combed straight back and made her look rather severe. This was accentuated by her eyes, the most remarkable eyes I have ever seen, piercing, fearless, betraying an indomitable character.

"Who is that?" I asked her in surprise.

"That was my mother," she answered gently, and seeing my puzzled look, she added: "Her father was a white man, a slave-holder of Scotch-Irish stock. Her mother was a slave, mostly American-Indian blood. In those days slaves had to obey their masters. My grandfather must have loved his little white daughter who had inherited his looks and also his character. She was high-spirited and quick tempered. She was allowed to grow up together with the other children of his family. Nobody was to touch her. Whenever her step mother demanded that she call her stepbrothers 'Master,' she refused, saying that they all had the same father!

"Tell me more about her," I asked. "From early childhood the idea of serfdom must have been unbearable to her," she continued. "She and her mother spent hours and hours in their little cabin making candles, which she later sold. As soon as she had learned to sew, she began to make corsets for the town people. She had a large clientele and soon saved up enough money to buy her mother's and her own freedom. She married a Negro who was a member of the legislature in Alabama. 'My father,' continued my friend 'was sometimes hunted by the Ku Klux Klan, but they never hurt him, as they were afraid of 'The little woman.' Although she was only five feet tall, she soon represented a power in that little town of Livingston, Alabama.

"Even today, when you ask people there about Louisa Dotson, they will remember her. The white farmers especially remember her, for she often went to them demanding that they give better treatment to the poor Negroes whom they employed as sharecroppers. Those landowners always managed to settle the account with these workers in such a way that, at the end of the summer, there were no earnings left, only debts. Louisa Dotson made it her business to change this condition, throughout the years her sole purpose in life was to work for the advancement of her race. All her life she fought oppression and demonstrated to black and white alike, by her own conduct, the pride and dignity of human beings."

OWNER OF TRIBAL ROBE IS GOLD COAST INITIATE

He's never been near the shores of Africa but Otto F. Dannecker, 241 King St., Waterloo, Ont. is a close friend of a tribal ruler in the dark continent. He has permission to participate in any functions of this chief's family in the Gold Coast and he can demand an audience with the governor-general of the British colony.

These privileges are his because he owns a tribal robe, known as a Kente, given to him when he helped two natives of the tribe to help their own country.

Three years ago he assisted in bringing to Canada Seth Bansa, son of the late paramount chief of the Ewe tribe. Four weeks ago he saw another step complete in his foreign aid program. Through his efforts, Seth's fiancée, Agnes Menka, rejoined her future husband, whom she had not seen in four years.

For this assistance he received from Seth's brothers, Bernhard, the tribal garb, which classifies him as a close friend of the ruling head of 80,000 people. Mr. Dannecker's costume is only one of several kinds the tribesmen wear.

Each Kente has embroidered on it many symbols which indicate rank. The Waterloo man's garb is a type worn by members of the aristocracy. The costume, made of Gold Coast cotton, which has been woven and dyed in that country, can be worn at tribal festivals and on great occasions.

To Mr. Dannecker the Kente is a rich reward for the assistance he and his church, St. John's Lutheran, Waterloo, have given them. Through their help, Seth, a third-year student at Waterloo College, and Agnes, who has come to Canada to take a nursing assistant's course, will be able to aid their country.

Seth will complete his course next year. Agnes, who will study in Toronto for three months and then at the Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital for six months, will finish her course about the same time. Before they return home, they plan to be married here. Following their marriage, Seth will teach high school and Agnes plans to be a nursing assistant in their native land.

"Was she still a young woman at the time of the emancipation?" I asked.

"Yes, by then the family had saved enough money to buy a home. It was only a four-room house and much too small for the large family—there were fourteen children—but they had an enormous back yard. That's where my mother built a school house for Negro children. She herself, acted as the teacher.

"How did she manage with all those children? Were they all as dark as you?" "No, have you heard of Mendel's law of heredity? Well, we proved it. Some of us were white. (There is a brother I have never seen. He went to California and passed into the white race.) Some of us were dark, and some had the character traits of both races. But you asked me how she managed. That was not all my mother did. She by and by became well known as a dressmaker. All the prominent people in town used to get their clothes from her."

Louis Always A Popular Champ

Even the athletes—the professional baseball, football, boxing and basketball greats—owe a certain amount of respect to their followers. A sports writer tells the story of a time when he witnessed Larry Doby, Jackie Robinson, Satchel Paige and another Negro baseball player dining at a restaurant when a young mother brought her starry-eyed son to the table to get autographs. Doby, Robinson and Paige signed willingly but the fourth player—a real hero up to this point to the little boy—kept his head in his plate and completely ignored the child. The action was so rude that Satchel later remonstrated the player with a sharp "What's the matter with you? You aren't the man I used to know."

Joe Louis will probably always be a hero to the multitudes because he was the kind of a champion who did his honest best when it came to the common man. His refusal to become a big shot although an all-time great champion really paid off for Joe as he developed probably the most favorable press of any Negro public figure in history.

SAILOR TO MOVIE STAR — Japanese Problem Film Makes Star of Navy's Danny Williams

The first American GI to win stardom in a Japanese movie is a tall, Alabama-born Negro sailor who won plaudits of Japanese critics in his very first film appearance. Playing the role of an Army sergeant in Yassa Mossa, a social problem movie about Japan's huge crop of occupation babies, Daniel A. Williams is credited with turning in the best dramatic performance in the film which starred some of Japan's top actors and actresses.

Williams (in real life a chaplain's assistant and a very religious man) plays the role of Simon Mueller, a Negro sergeant who falls in love with a prostitute and fathers a child by her. It is his sympathetic handling of what could have been an objectionable role to the Japanese people which won him acclaim.

The movie Yassa Mossa was produced by Japan's leading film company, the Schochiku Studios as a full-budgeted feature that took more than three months to film. Costing more than \$83,000—an enormous budget for a Japanese film—Yassa Mossa featured a carefully chosen cast including Chikage Awashima-san (often called "the Bette Davis of the Orient") and Mayumi Kuratsan, one of Japan's leading stage actresses who made her first screen appearance in this picture.

The movie's title is taken from a popular Japanese novel of the same name. Yassa Mossa is a somewhat slangy Japanese term meaning "a state of confusion."

Brilliant Bishop Speaks 5 Languages, 3 Dialects

An Ascetic-looking man with close-cropped black hair and a clergyman's benign eyes, Bishop Bowers is both a rugged organizer and an ecclesiastical scholar. He wears glasses for reading, plays the organ, and is a first-rate wit. He has a high, almost shrill voice, a slow engaging smile. A stern, uncompromising administrator, he works hard, runs a diocese that is both efficient and spiritual.

The Bishop is brilliantly educated, and speaks five languages fluently—French, German, Italian, Greek and Latin. He also speaks three African dialects—Ga, Twi and Ewe. Even though a Roman Catholic prelate, he has a rare racial patriotism which proved a valuable asset in racial strife-ridden Africa where Bishop Bowers served as a missionary for ten years. The bishop's mother is so fair that she could pass as a white person. But he says, "It's a good thing I was born dark as I am—it broke the color caste system within my own family."

LITTLE PEOPLE

Not long ago singer Lena Horne and her husband held a cocktail party for the press in the exclusive Key Room at the Chez Paree in Chicago where Lena was nightly packing the house with appreciative and demonstrative customers.

Lena was being the gracious hostess, seeing that writers and photographers from the papers had full glasses and that the hors d'oeuvres were going around. She was talking to a magazine editor and a theater critic from one of the Chicago dailies when a short, middle-aged Negro came through the door and paused momentarily, his eyes searching the room for a familiar face.

Quietly excusing herself, Lena left the high-powered journalists and walked across the room to greet the stranger even more warmly than she had greeted the rest of the guests. She talked with him gaily for a while introduced him to her husband and then rounded up a photographer and had her picture taken with him before he left. As he walked out the door, the room buzzed with questions as the guests asked each other who the man was whom Lena had welcomed so warmly.

Not many know to this day that the man was not an out-of-town journalist or an old friend of the family's.

"Oh, him?" Lena said when asked directly. He's the attendant here in the men's washroom."

This incident points up one of the secrets of Lena Horne's success. She has reached the top of the heap but she has not forgotten that it is the thousands of little people—washroom attendants, laborers, clerks, secretaries, high school kids and college students—who make up a large part of her following and who are behind her success.

RECENT SURVEY

A recent survey of Negro churches in the South reveals that more Negro churches are decreasing in membership than are increasing—39.3 per cent are increasing, 11.8 per cent are stationary, and 48.9 per cent are decreasing.

In the Southern states our state and federal government provides 2143 county agricultural agents for whites and only 357 Negro agents, a ratio of 6 to 1.

Out of 1,388 Negro families interviewed in 17 counties, 47.3 per cent had received no pastoral call during the past 12 months.

Of the 570 churches studied, there were 7 churches per county without any hymnals or song books of any kind.

Nearly half of the pastors of the Negro churches, 43.3 per cent have never gone beyond the 8th grade, and 58.2 per cent have never gone above high school. The average is a 9th grader.

The training of a new type of Negro minister is one of the biggest tasks before the American Church today.

Some large city churches are providing a scholarship of \$100 to \$300 each year to help train one new Negro minister.

The Negro Church is not doing so well. In one denomination, the Methodist, the Negro section is growing only one-ninth as fast as the rest of the Church.

During the last fifteen years nearly three million Negroes have migrated to the northern states, but the white churches in the North have done little for their new Negro neighbors.

Young Negroes are going to modern high schools and colleges, but on Sunday in church they often find the same old rousements and rallies. The Negro Church is far behind in the training of its leaders.

The average theological seminary for training white ministers has 208 students. The seventeen Negro seminaries, that provide a similar B.D. course (above college), have a total of 224 students. In other words it takes all seventeen Negro seminaries to provide one adequate student body. The average Negro seminary has only 5 juniors, 4 middlers and 4 seniors or a total of 13 students.

All of our American Negro churches combined need a total of 862 new ministers a year. This year the total B.D. graduates from Negro seminaries was 66, or only seven per cent of the number needed.

Most Negro ministerial students come from poor homes where there is not enough money to pay for a three-year seminary course. Each one needs about \$500 a year for three years. If he had this training he would give an average of 32 fruitful years to the ministry of the church. The Rural Department, Drew Seminary, Madison, N.J., has just completed a study of 21 outstanding Negro pastors to show how much a trained Negro pastor can accomplish. This bulletin is entitled, "Go Down, Moses," and is being sent out for just the cost of printing (40c).