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THE NATIONAL NEGRO WEEKLY
DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE DARKER RACES

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WHEN NEGRO SLAVES WERE REAL PROPER

by
The Honourable William Renwick Riddell, LL. D., F.R.S.C., etc., Justice of Appeal, Ontario.

In my article, *The Slave in Canada* published in *The Journal of Negro History* for July, 1920, I pointed out that an Imperial Statute of 1732, i.e., 5 George II, cap. 7, enacted "that from and after 29th, September, 1732, Negroes and other Hereditaments and Real Estates situate or being within the (British) Plantations in America" should be liable to be sold under execution. This Statute recognised the condition of Negroes to be identical with land, and consequently Real Estate. This was not wholly unlike the status of the former English Serfs *adscripti glebae* though recent researches have established conclusively that in addition to the Serfs *adscripti glebae* or otherwise, i.e., villeins regardent or villeins in gross, there were actual slaves in England, the personal property of the master, just as was his horse or cow—pure slavery as distinguished from villenage.

This Act of 1732 passed at Westminster was not the first legislation, and moreover, it was repealed in 1797, 37 George III, cap. 118. The earliest legislation I find dealing expressly with the status of slaves was in Virginia, when in 1705, an Act was passed, further explained and amended in 1727, in so many words declaring slaves to be real estate. This legislation continued in full force for nearly half a century; but in 1748-9, the Legislature of the Colony decided to repeal the existing Statutes in that regard.

While some of the English North American Colonies were relieved of transmitting their legislation to the Mother Country for the approval of the King, that is, in fact, the approval of the Home Administration, Virginia was not in that condition. Accordingly this Act with sixty-six others were sent across the Atlantic to the centre of the Empire for consideration by the Imperial Authorities. This particular act was accompanied by a representation by Sir William Gooch, the Lieutenant-Governor of the province, that "the policy and intention of the two laws, repealed by this Act were to enable the planter to annex Negroes to land, to keep estates

CANADIAN LEAGUE OFFICERS INSTALLED

The installation of the officers of the Canadian League for the Advancement of Colored People was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. Cromwell, William St. Mr. Wm. Berry was returned to office as president, Mrs. J. F. Jenkins returned as Recording Secretary; Miss Helen Fountain nominated cor. Sec.; Mrs. Thomson returned as treasurer.

After the banquet was served by the Committee, Miss M. Jackson, Mr. Cromwell, Mrs. F. Harris, Mrs. Wilson and Mrs. F. Drake, Mr. W. Myers acted as Master of Ceremonies.

in families, to increase the trade of Great Britain, to raise the credit of the colony and to strengthen it in point of defence." He added that these two repealed laws had "well answered the purpose for which they were enacted"; and, urging that it "would be greatly for the service of the colony that they should be continued in force", he asked that the repealing act should be disapproved. This act came under consideration along with other sixty-six acts, by the Board of Trade and Plantations, on August 6th, 1753, and the Board passed the whole legislation on to the Privy Council, the Board concurred with the Lieutenant-Governor in the advisability of disallowing the Act, and so represented to the Council. The Council did not act immediately upon the representations so made, but on August 9th referred them to a Committee; the Committee reported, October 16th, recommending the allowance of fifty-seven of the Acts, and the disallowance of ten, amongst them this repealing Act; and October 31st the recommendations were carried into effect, considering that no sufficient cause had been shown for the repeal.

It may be added that another act was disallowed at the same time, an act for the distribution of Intestate Estates, because it was thought that it had been passed "in consequence of the last-mentioned act, which declares slaves to be personal estate."

This interesting story will be found detailed in an official publication by His Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1911, Acts of the Privy Council, Colonial Series, Vol. IV, pp 131, 138, 9.

CERTAINTIES IN CHRIST AND RELIG'N

The age in which we live may truly be called the questioning age; an age of mental, economic and social unrest and disquietness. At no period in the past was the mind of man more active, more earnest, more critical in its habit, more analytic in its character and more determined in purpose—it is more critical than creative, more speculative than practical.

When we think of the tendencies of modern thought, the unsettled character of many of its conclusions—especially its charge against religion and theology—its claims and demands of those who are accepted as leaders, it is indeed not surprising that many should regard it with distrust and possible alarm; while other regard it as the outcome of the agonies of thought and depression through which the human mind has travelled. There are still men whose fidelity to truth cannot be questioned, who rejoice in the cleaning out of the accretions that have deformed the faith and hidden the beauties of that Christianity, which was, we believe, revealed by the Creator of the human mind.

It certainly is not a bad sign to find the thought of the age so much taken up with religion.

Christianity has stood the test of scientific investigation, the result of this discovery has not meant rejection, but greater religious progress.

The training of the human mind, the torch of human intelligence has but illumined her path; and gives greater confidence to her believers.

Christ, the head of the church—the once crucified and risen Saviour, the Redeemer of all that believe on His Name—and the intercessor for the saints, is more real in the mind and life of the nation than ever before.

Christianity presents itself with its phenomena to the mind for acceptance. It challenges observation. It presents its facts and asks that they be tested by the ordinary laws of evidence. It commends itself to human thought as a matter that may be brought within the range of our knowledge. The doctrine of certainty is repeatedly presented in the Scriptures.

It is difficult to conceive of a word expressive of absolute truth and trustworthiness, and intense faith, founded on truth, which the writers of the

"GREEN PASTURES"

(By R. E. Knowles)

In converse a good many years ago, with one of the most eminent and successful publishers in New York, he said to me: "The genuine religious interest a novel contains, the larger will be its sale—and the longer."

This tribute—not in terms of sale but in terms of popular and enduring appreciation—might surely be also paid to the masterpiece of other forms of art. For instance, in the realm of music, one thinks of the Messiah, or St. Matthew's Passion. In the world of pictures of the Crucifixion, or the Last Supper. And, barring Shakespeare's alone, the two masterpieces of English poetry would probably be conceded as *Paradise Lost* and *In Memoriam*.

This reflection on my part is born of "The Green Pastures," that epoch-making play at present attracting crowded throngs to its theatre of action, as it will attract them to the end. It is a significant fact that, with the exception of one other alone this religious drama holds the all-time record for length of life in New York City. Perhaps, although not artistically in order it may here be interpolated that, on the stage as well as in music and painting, a religious play holds the unchallenged record of the centuries.—I refer, of course, to the age-old Passion Play of Oberammergau.

In conversation with Mr. Harrison, on the stage "De Lawd," he answered my inquiry as to the probable secret of the remarkable reception this play has received—presented by colored folks and acclaimed by white—with this explanation; that, in these days of broken cisterns, cistern that hold no water, the human heart thirsts for any draught that revives the consciousness of the divine and helps

(Continued on page 6)

New Testament have not employed.

Christ as the Life, the Truth and the Way—carries a true sense of authority to the mind and heart, such as command attention and homage. His words are true saying of God, on which the world might lean and rest.

He is the restorer of the Breaches, the closer we live to Him and the Principles of His Doctrine the sooner the chaos of religion and economic depression will vanish.

T. H. J.

Pastor of Beth Emmanuel Church

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NEW LONDON SOCIETY FORMED

The Dunbar Social Guide, a newly organized society for young people held their first public and installation service in the auditorium of the B.M.E. Church on Sunday evening, March 16th. A well prepared programme was presented to a large appreciative audience. A candle light procession followed by a prayer by the Pastor, Rev. T. H. Jackson opened the programme. Three Negro spirituals including Let Us Cheer the Weary Traveler; No Hiding Place Down There and Hush Hush were well sung by an augmented chorus of 27 voices.

Mr. Norman Fountain read a poem from the works of Paul Lawrence Dunbar; Miss Vivian Knox played a well selected piano solo in her usual artistic manner; Mr. Robert Patterson, a very promising young violinist gave a duo.

"Listen to de Lambs", an anthem composed by Nathaniel Dett a Canadian born Negro composer, was very creditably sung by the chorus, the solo parts being taken by Miss Bernice Fountain, soprano.

Rev. Jackson addressed the club and installed the officers and in his own forceful manner delivered one of the most profound sermons ever given the young people in this community. He very successfully and emphatically linked together the name, object and motto of the organization with men of name and fame and brought to light some of the possibilities of a club of this type, each and every member who heard this masterpiece left the service more inspired and interested in the fundamental principles of the Dunbar Social Guide.

The following officers were installed: Stanley Drake—President; Bernice Fountain, Vice President; Margaret Jackson, Secretary; Evelyn Jenkins, Assist. Sec.; Vivian Knox Treasurer; Florence Drake, Pianist.

A hand carved gavel made by Rev. Jackson was presented to the president. Rev. Jackson is not only an intellectual genius, also a skilled workman.

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LONDON NOTES

The Dunbar Social Guide are preparing to present a very unique musicale in the near future. Read the Dawn for coming events.

Rev. J. T. Dawson, Gen. Supt of the B.M.E. Church paid his annual visit to the Church on Sunday and Monday, April 9th and 10th. Two very eloquent sermons were preached on Sunday to well attended services. The choir were at their best, the Supt. expressed his pleasure and congratulated the church on their efforts to make his official visit a success.

On Monday evening a programme was presented by the Dunbar Club at which time the Supt. addressed the church and reviewed general conditions. At the close of the program the ladies served a light lunch to all.

Mr. Herbert Boggess who was called to the bedside of his mother has returned to the city leaving his mother much improved.

Mr. Robert Patterson spent a few days with his people in Hamilton.

Mr. William Taylor who has been confined in the hospital for some weeks is still improving at this writing.

Mrs. Martha Brown a patient of the Ontario Hospital has a favorable condition. We wish for her a speedy recovery.

Mrs. Mary Coursey of 745 Grey St. was buried on March 31st. She was a beloved and respected citizen of London, and hosts of citizens and friends join her children, grandchildren and relatives in mourning their loss.

Mrs. Bertha Moxley who has been ill for some time died in Victoria Hospital March 31st and was buried from the B.M.E. Church on Monday, April 2nd. She leaves to mourn their loss two daughters a father and a host of friends. Rev. T. H. Jackson officiated at the funeral.

The Bell Boys Orchestra under the leadership of Cyril Rogers, played at St. George's Hall at a benefit dance for the unemployed of the city. Mr. Wilfred Danford of Muncey who is an accomplished musician was an added feature to the band as a cornetist.

Mr. Reginald Bryant of Hamilton was a guest of Stanley Drake while passing through the city.

Mr. M. Neeborn, who is studying at Western University paid a visit to his home during the Easter holidays.

Mrs. Fred Harris is able to be about after a short illness.

Mr. Harry Fountain Sr. is home again from the hospital. He has been suffering with a severe attack of appendicitis.

Mr. Stafford received quite a bit of damage to his car, also a severe shaking up when he lost control of his car and it ran into a telegraph pole enroute to attend the funeral of the late Mrs. Coursey.

The Busy Workers Sewing Guild will give a festival on the 23rd of May in St. George's Hall at which time a drawing will take place for the one holding the lucky number on a beautiful hand-made quilt. The ladies are also planning to give a very pleasant evening to all. Please remember the date.

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CANADA

Little Children Sav- iours of the World

(A young Jewish girl attends a colored church in Texas and writes of her reactions to this experience.)

by Fania Kruker

I strolled one Easter Sunday evening across the tracks of a small Texas town when the sad chanting of Negro voices came from a little church on the hill: "Come to Jesus" . . . What strange potency urged me, a Jewess, to enter the church? I hesitated at the entrance. One white among so many dark faces made my heart timid . . . I wanted to slip away, to go back . . . Seeing my reluctance, an elder of the church, with a white beard, white hair, and light-brown skin came forward to escort me down the aisle to the front seat. The little boys with eyes sparkling who sang the rest "Come to Jesus," stopped their song when the elder ordered them to move out that I might have the whole bench to myself. Sitting alone on the long wide bench, I felt terribly cramped.

For a moment there was a hush in the church. The two little boys, having moved to a chair near the window, sat humped and silent, and looking at me with curious eyes. Unconsciously I put my hand out and beckoned them to return and sit by me. There was no response. Only hurt was in their eyes. I saw another child not far away. His tiny brown little hands were clutching his mother's red dress and his little head snuggled against her breast. The mother instinct stirred in me. The mother in me wanted to hug the baby in the two year old but he too looked strangely at me.

I was glad when the choir struck up again: "Come to Jesus . . . Come to Jesus . . . hm . . . hm . . . And the hm . . . hm . . . hm . . . slowly died away. I waited for the next note but instead the minister began reading the Scriptures. "O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes . . . "Amen." . . . "Hallelujah" "That's so" rose from all over the place; from the old man with the white beard and white hair and light brown skin, from the younger ones and from the children. The harsh whistling of a train struck a discordant note in the harmony of sounds . . . "And hast revealed them into babes," I unconsciously repeated, and turned to glance at the two little boys whose song I had silenced.

"Come to Jesus," was again sung at the end of the services. And the hm hm . . . hm . . . that followed slowly died away. And I did not listen for another note. I sat there ashamed and grieved. I had heard not the voices of the choir but the passion of a people, the pain of the Negro race, souls that had endured through generations—bondaged souls . . . And there rose from the background of these people the struggles of the Jews. And I, a Jewess, could feel our kindred miseries from our kindred hurts. My mind travelled swiftly far beyond the little Negro church, beyond the sea, to Czarist Russia . . . the home of

Continued on page 4

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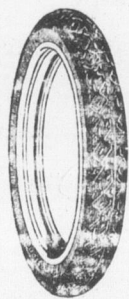
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**LITTLE CHILDREN
SAVIORS OF
THE WORLD**

Continued from page 3

my own frightened childhood. I could hear the cries of hate and war and injustice. The little dark children whose song I had silenced and I with my own frequently silenced songs were one.

It was one o'clock in the morning. I tossed and turned. My heart was cold and uneasy. I could not sleep. Strange and haunting and painful was the night. The two little dark faces loomed before my eyes. They shrank and cowered. Their puzzled glances were more than I could bear. One little boy about seven. The other about ten.

I could see a Negro church upon a small hill from where one looked down into a sluggish stream to watch the sticks and fallen leaves float upon its surface—a polluted stream. On the other side by the railroad tracks dirty wooden houses, dirtier with the soot from trains. Little children dangerously near the tracks and care less of the whistles of the trains and the smoke and grime.

What was there that robbed me of peace? The thought of injustice for which, indirectly, I was responsible?

On a sleepless night things come back with greater vividness, and the truth unfolds more clearly and the pain of truth pierces more deeply. "Oh, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, Thou that hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes..." How much of the hurt do children feel? I recalled my own childish days. The hurts and the pains and the humiliations. "Out of hurt these children may become saviors of the world," I mumbled and fell asleep as the picture faded.

Dawn. The coming of another day. Half awakened from my heavy sleep and half conscious I saw the rising sun of mingled red and yellow and black and white, and little faces red and yellow and black and white all working together—probable saviors of a humanity that would know no polluted streams.

And from far away I felt rather than I heard the song, "Come to Jesus... hm... hm..." And while I reached out to catch the dying tune, I heard another muffled distant note, "Little children—saviors of the world."

TORONTO NOTES

Mrs. R. Williams is able to be about after suffering from injuries received when she was knocked down by a truck while alighting from a street car.

Mrs. Lillian Richardson is quite ill in the hospital. Her condition is somewhat improved.

Master Ernest Richardson underwent a slight operation having his tonsils removed. He is doing nicely.

Dr. Wyke is still away on his honeymoon.

Mr. J. A. Pinkney has returned to his home from the hospital after an attack of pneumonia.

Little Miss Ross, daughter of the late Mrs. J. Ross, D'Arcy St., is unable to be about suffering from injuries received while playing on the street.

SHALL WE LIVE AGAIN?

Victor Hugo's great soul found utterance in his later years for these thoughts, which will find an echo in many hearts:

"I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest once cut down; the new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know towards the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds."

"You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets and the roses, as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvellous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history."

"For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and in verse; history, philosophy, drama, song; I have tried all. But I feel that I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say like many others, 'I have finished my day's work.' But I cannot say, 'I have finished my life.' My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight, romance, tradition, satire, ode and it opens on the dawn."

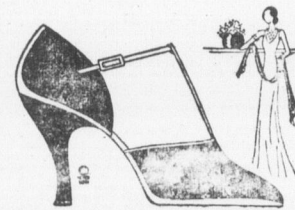
"Christian preaching was never, I am convinced, as generally intelligent, as reasonable, as helpful, as Christian in its ethical quality as it is in these countries to-day. Speaking still generally, preachers to-day understand the Bible better than they ever did before, are quite as honest and sincere as preachers ever were, are immeasurably better trained with immeasurably broader and more sympathetic outlook, and on the whole are more conscientious and earnest than ever before—Here and there may possibly be found a bitter hostility to everything that is believed to be erroneous, but that most effective of all the devil's schemes for destroying Christianity—the persuading of Christian people to show their love for God by hating some of His possibly mistaken children, has never found the hearts of men as unresponsive to its poisonous influence as to-day."

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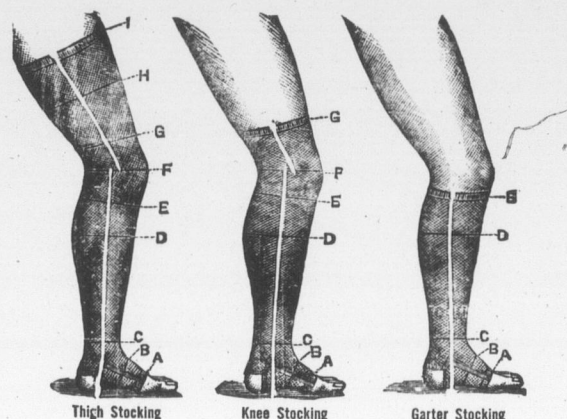
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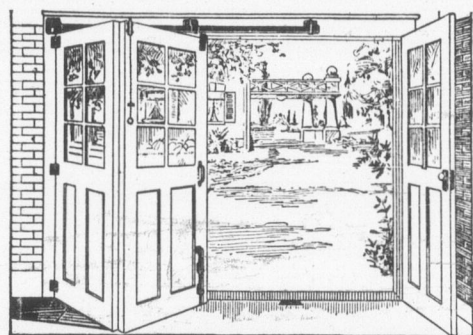
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"GREEN PASTURES"

(Continued from page 1)

faltering faith to lay hold upon the great personal Reality of a Father who is in heaven.

In challenge of this, of course, the superior and sophisticated will say that "The Green Pastures" gives no theologically acceptable conception of the Supreme Father of us all; and there are not lacking those who scoff at, and who even affect to have their religious sensibilities outraged by the representation of God as talking colloquially with His people, as familiarly eating with them, even as accepting and offering "a ten-cent cigar" as one of the amenities of his relation to the children of His hands among whom He moves.

Now, to make oneself clear, there is no disposition, in this present analysis, to defend such obviously rather grotesque representation. Except thus far—that it should ever be borne in mind, without which mental reserve this play can be neither properly enjoyed nor fittingly appraised, that "The Green Pastures" purports only to show forth, by and large, the Negro's conception of heaven, of its pursuits and joys, and especially of its eternal King.

Which brings me to my main point and purpose in this article: viz., the shallow right we superior folks have to smile disdainfully at our colored brothers' rather grotesque imaginings as to what our Maker is like, so long as we defend, and even adopt, the far grotesquer views that highly educated Christians have cherished for themselves, and have arrogantly thrust upon others, of the one common Father of us all.

For many of the cultured Christians white and glistening, have through the centuries represented God as dwelling in marble indifference far apart, living only for His own glory, demanding homage and praise and interminable, hallelujahs and hosannas from His children. A mighty section, and they the most intellectual of all, commonly known as the Calvinists, have insisted—and Calvin sent at least one man to the stake for his heresy—that the Judge of all the earth would eternally punish countless souls for an unbelief to which they were fore-ordained from before the foundation of the world. And eloquent and intellectual white preachers, right up to your day and mine, have taught that part of the joy of the saints in glory would be their accessibility to witness far beneath them the writhings of the damned.

And who among us, if fifty or sixty years of age, has not sat and listened in the good old days of "missionary meetings," to Evangelical advocates of their cause who have stood, watch in hand, and cried: "Do you know that, since I began to speak to you, this number or that of thousands of heathen have passed down to eternal torment?"—because they had not believed in One of whom they had never heard.

And the same cultured lips, not of poor untutored people but of thoughtful and reflective theologians who were the pride of university and seminary, have taught us again and again that He with whom we have to do has

King of Kings at Patricia

Greatest Production of Passion Play

Cecil B. DeMille's magnificent production of "The King of Kings" comes to the Patricia today Tuesday and Wednesday. With H. B. Warner in the role of Christ; with twelve noted players and thousands of others in the cast, it is truly the spectacle of the age. The drama opens with the Redemption of Mary of Magdalene and sweeps on through the Raising of Lazarus, the driving of the money-lenders from the Temple, the betrayal of Judas, the agony of Gethsemane, the trial of Jesus, the way of the cross, the crucifixion and concluding with a remarkable scene of the resurrection. Appropriately the picture is presented at this time of year and every effort should be made to let the children see this great drama. The picture is synchronized with a musical score by a symphony orchestra of one hundred, and a choir of fifty together with sound effects. In keeping with the reverential and awe inspiring theme there is of course no talking. Prices are the regular Patricia low prices and the performances are as usual continuous from 1.30 to 11 every day.

nothing but contempt for all goodness all morality, all honesty and purity and heart-kindness, however akin to that of the Great Shepherd Himself, if these virtues existed apart from "faith" in a fixed dogma, a "plan" of salvation, an acceptance of a Person and a dogma, by whose meditation alone a Father's mercy and forgiveness could be assured, said forgiveness impossible until a debt was paid, until "justice" should be "satisfied." Until such fixed process was believed, all mere morality of life and goodness of living were but as "filthy rags", to use the favorite term of the orthodox who so stoutly contended—men who could forgive their own children out of hand and of heart—that a certain technique was indispensable before a prodigal could dare to throw himself into his father's arms.

On these matters, my whole life-thought was changed by reading one paragraph from John Stuart Mill. This philosopher believed this, at least—that man is created in the image of His Creator. And this is what he wrote: "I will concede nothing to be a virtue in God that I would not esteem a virtue in man. And I will acknowledge nothing to be a blemish in man that I would not appraise a blemish in God. If for that I must go to hell, then to hell I must go!" If the builders of creeds would but make this manifesto their own, what a pillar of cloud by day, what a pillar of fire by night, would it not be to their stumbling feet!

This, from seeing "The Green Pastures," has been my abiding gain—viz., the duty of the humble heart and of the charitable mind. It is so easy to come away and say: "Poor untutored children of nature—and so that is their conception of the Eternal One!" How chastened must be the complacency of our superior selves if we but honestly look into the face of our own long-surviving orthodox misrepresentations, more grotesque and more fatal far.

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