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# *THE NEGRO*

*An Asset of the  
American Nation*

by *Rodney W. Roundy*

*Associate Secretary*

*Home Missions Council*



*156 Fifth Avenue, New York City*

## *Foreword*

The Negro in America is commonly looked upon in terms of problem. His background of slavery, the common prejudice continuing through the years, the sensational methods of the press in luridly painting his misdeeds and weaknesses have continuously strengthened this impression. The mission of this leaflet is to state the Christian point of view in positive terms of accomplishment and promise. The writer's purpose will be achieved if this analysis helps in the attainment of balanced judgment among Christian men and women.

R. W. R.

## *The Negro— An Asset of the American Nation*

This year marks the three hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims on the "bleak New England Coast." Not only Congregationalists but leaders of Protestantism in Holland, England and the United States will appropriately and significantly observe the Pilgrim Tercentenary. In schools, churches, public gatherings and the secular and religious press worthy tribute will be paid to the rich contribution which the Pilgrim faith has made nationally to our own industrial, civic, intellectual and religious life. There will be an interdenominational observance of this great event. In seventy centers of America, leaders in all walks of life will fittingly recall the high values of Pilgrim ideas and ideals as also the achievements directly traceable from the essential qualities of Pilgrim character.

The Negro has been an American one year longer than the Pilgrim. The narrative of John Rolfe records that "about the last of August, 1619, came in a Dutch Man of Warre, that sold us twenty Negars." Last year was his Tercentenary. There has been no public notice paid to this fact. No interdenominational gatherings nor international programs were planned or executed. Rather was it a grim year of awful record in race clashes, race riots and the sway of Lynch law. The Negro, who came not to this land of his own will or wish, on the three hundredth anniversary of his arrival has received treatment of a kind to bring a blush of shame to every American who cherishes Pilgrim ideals of righteousness, of freedom under law and of decent Christian living. A record year in the crime of lynching is the tragedy of the Negro's Tercentenary. The riots of Chicago, Washington, Omaha, Knoxville, Longview, Tex., and Elaine, Arkansas, the lynchings at many points in the Southland, the sixty bombings of Negro property in Chicago with only two arrests and no convictions, have been the unplanned horrible way of celebrating not locally but nationally his landing on the shores of the Old Dominion State.

Yet I venture the assertion that the American sense of fairness requires from us, especially from those who owe most to American ideas, American institutions, American ideals an appreciation of that earlier Pilgrim who came to Jamestown in 1619. I propose an appraisal of the Negro's value to this country as an asset to our American nation. In writing as I do I am not unconscious of the

Negro's handicaps, his needs, his immaturities. But I propose a positive rather than a negative appraisal of his worth. His faults are patent; his elements of strength need emphasis.

### *The Negro is an Asset of Loyalty*

Loyal? Of course the American Negro is loyal. He has no other thought than loyalty. In the rising tide of war, despite provocation and the subtle temptations of a wily enemy, German propaganda fell absolutely flat when America was calling for enlistments. What a day followed for the Negro! How whole heartedly he entered into raising crops! How he did rejoice in co-operation with the white folks in Red Cross work, community welfare, "Thrift savings" and "Liberty loans." \$7,000,000 among the Philadelphia Negroes alone were raised for the various loans. Some quotas never would have been raised but for the co-operation of Negro citizens. And the armistice signed, how great was the set back when at many points North and South hatred was let loose in the attempts of bigoted white men to "teach the Nigger his place"! He believed that simple justice demanded different treatment than was received. He longed, he yearned, he prayed to hear a voice from the White House, that voice that had urged fairness to small nations, urging justice toward his race which had served and suffered with all other Americans. Did he turn Bolshevistic? Was there not cause? Save for exceptional individuals here and there, a few small scattered groups in large centers, the Negro had too much sense, and was too loyal to think, much less act "red." The Negro is not planning to upset America's government nor America's institutions. He is not a Bolshevik. He is loyal. He is an American.

### *The Negro Always a Patriot*

The Negro has always been an asset of patriotism in time of war. The United States has had no war in which he did not play his part. The first martyr in the Boston massacre, March 5, 1770, was of mixed Negro and Indian blood, Crispus Attucks. The Black Legion at the siege of Savannah on October 9, 1779, contributed valuable service in covering the retreat, repulsing the charge of the British and in saving the American and French army. It is estimated that there were thirty-five Negroes to each white regiment in the Revolutionary War. They were in the War of 1812. Commodore Perry referred to those who took part in the battle of Lake Erie as "absolutely insensible of danger." General Andrew Jackson was generous in his praise of the Negro's valor in the armies of the Southwest.

There were 161 regiments and 178,975 Negro soldiers in the Union Army of the Civil War. Confederate enlistments should be added to the reckoning. Allegiance to his master's interests is quite as much to be reckoned a trait of patriotism as fighting for his people's freedom. The distinguished service of the Tenth Colored Cavalry coming to support Colonel Roosevelt and the Rough Riders in the first battle in Cuba at Las Guasimas should never be forgotten. El Caney and San Juan Hill are places where Negro troops took distinguished part.

"Ah, they rallied to the standard  
To uphold it by their might  
None were stronger in the labors,  
None were braver in the fight.

"So all honor and all glory  
To those noble sons of Ham,  
The gallant colored soldiers  
Who fought for Uncle Sam."

With such a background what would be the record of the World War? The American Negro's physical prowess was the greatest asset. In all wars the rank and file of the soldiers of all nations and colors have more work, plain drudgery, to perform than actual fighting. In this field the Negro did his part nobly. He was even enlisted for work quite as much as for fighting. "Thus at the front," says Frederic Palmer in "Our Greatest Battle." "The colored man kept open the passageway for supplies which the colored man had unloaded at the ports. He was truly the Hercules of physical labor for us."

"The Song of Noah's Crew" suggests one kind of work they did.

"Down in the vessel's innards,  
'Midst the whirlin' shafts and rods,  
The 'Black Gang' is a workin'  
In 'The Garden of the Gods,'  
A heavin' coal and ashes,  
(Which I'm glad their job ain't mine;)  
But they keep this boat a humpin'  
Thru the heavin' ocean's brine."

During the early months of the war no troops marched more proudly nor were received with more eclat than "Uncle Sam's Chocolate Soldiers," as they paraded New York's "Avenue of the Allies." 400,000 were called to the colors; 200,000 went overseas. In some Southern states the number of Negroes in service was almost equal to white enrollments; from Mississippi there were more Negroes than whites in the army. Des Moines, the Plattsburg of the race, trained more than a thousand Negro officers. For the first time in our national history it has been proved that, despite some failures, Negro officers demonstrated their fitness and capacity to command men of their own race.

Negro combat units overseas, whether in Flanders, in Champagne, in the Argonne Forest, in the Vosges, on the Meuse, or before Metz, lived up to their standards of bravery attained in previous struggles in America. The fact of failure of one Negro regiment in a line of trenches is not the whole case. Others than Negroes made failures during the war. Negro troops with sufficient training and especially the regiments brigaded with French regiments have unusual records of "courage, endurance and aggressiveness" to their credit. In the records of the American Expeditionary Forces it is written that colored troops of the 92nd Division were "in the hardest fighting of the last hour of the war," that the "old 15th New York" was farthest east, nearest the Rhine and that after the armistice were first of all Allied troops to reach the Rhine. Four Negro regiments (the 365th, the 369th, the 371st and the 372nd) won the signal honor of being awarded the Croix de Guerre as regiments. The Buffaloes returned with credit and honor together with the unusual distinction of their regimental colors decorated by the French High Command. Colonel Moss, their commander, a native Louisianan, demonstrated in his commanding genius what a white leader of high intellectual and moral tone, together with a real sense of justice, can accomplish as a leader of colored men.

The 369th regiment (Old New York National Guard with additions from all parts of the country) rendered conspicuous combat service. Col. Hayward says of his men:

"They were brave, clean men, my Old Fifteenth, and they have a record no regiment in any way can claim. They always fought hard, and they confined themselves only to fighting the Germans. In fourteen months there were only six cases of drunkenness. We went into action with but the scantiest training. After three weeks of instruction we were made part of the French army, and went into the trenches alongside of French veterans of four years' experience, and we held up our end. But our regiment paid the price, too. We went over with fifty-six officers and 2,000 men, and we returned with but twenty of the original officers and 1,200 men, but none of my boys was taken prisoner, nor did we yield a foot or an inch of ground." This regiment had the unique distinction of being 191 days on the firing line—a term of service five days longer than that of any American regiment at the front."

Who knows better than General Pershing the worth of Negro soldiers? He had tested them in years of peace; he had gone into Mexico with them; he was their Generalissimo overseas. Of them he says: "I place the greatest confidence in the patriotism and devotion of our colored troops. Their work is splendid both in the front line and in the service of supplies."

## *Asset as a Worker*

In numbers alone Negroes constitute one-seventh of the working force of this country. The "twenty Negars" of 1619 have become thirteen millions in three hundred years. In this day when volume of production on farm-lands and in factories means so much the strong hands and sturdy muscles of the Negro peoples of our country have superlative values. Literally his brawn is contributing far more to the solution of a people perplexed by the problems of the high cost of living than is the brawn of the descendants of the Puritans. His honest labor to all America, yea, to the world is a pearl of great price.

In 1910 of the 3,178,554 Negro men listed in the census 981,922 were farm laborers and 798,509 were farmers. In other words, 56 per cent. were farmers, a meaningful fact in a day of America's "back to the farm" movement, increasingly significant in an agricultural program not only of cotton and corn, but of diversified crops. Add to the list of farmers of 1910 those employed in building and hand trades, saw and planing mills, as also railway firemen, porters, draymen, teamsters and coal miner operators but taking no account of Negro professional men and we have 71.2 per cent. of males "engaged in such work as represents the very foundation of American industry." And what of the women? 52 per cent. were farmerettes. It is no new thing for Negro women to be in the fields. 28 per cent. more were cooks and washerwomen. That is, 80 per cent. of the Negro women were doing some of the "hardest and most necessary work in our home and industrial life." The Negro in industry is one of America's greatest assets.

In all countries the man who tends the land is the country's glory and safeguard. Millet has painted the French peasant as "The Sower" and the "Gleaner." That artist will make a real contribution who paints for appreciative Americans the Negro cabin in a cornfield tended if not owned by the Negro farmer, or the entire Negro family in the field at cotton picking time or a Negro artisan among the whirling wheels of modern industry. Shaw's Monument on Boston Common proclaims the heroism of the Negro soldier in the Civil War. Another Boston statue shows Lincoln with his great arms stretched out in freedom giving power over a Negro slave. Some southern city will portray some day in bronze the faithfulness of the Negro Slave to the Southerner's home and estate in the day of his master's absence as a Confederate soldier. I propose a statue to the Negro artisan, as a fitting though belated recognition of three hundred years faithful and increasing services to American life. for long years limited to the South, now for the whole country.

## *His Industrial Success*

Too exclusively the Negro has been thought of in the terms of the domestic servant. In the right light it is an honorable distinction. At his best the domestic has belonged to the Order of the Knights of the Christian Round Table whose motto has been: "Whosoever will be great among you let him be your servant." He has often shown the real spirit and heart of "The Servant in the House." This old-time relation of life has gradually changed since the days of Emancipation. Only 21 per cent. of all Negroes were of this class in 1910. The movement away from domestic service has been greatly accelerated since the wartime demands in industry came upon us. Even before the Great War Negro laborers were multiplying in lumber camps, mines, iron mills, and all forms of industry in the Sunny South. Increasingly also they were coming North as industrial laborers. Only in Southern cotton mills did the "poor whites" reign supreme.

The coming of the war meant accelerated industry and a new day for Negro labor. Negroes were needed in great numbers in factories, mines, munition plants, docks, stockyards, freight yards and in many other places not previously entered. Negro women in greatly increased numbers found welcome also as clerks, factory hands, milliners, wrappers, checkers. Race was no hindrance when economic law made demands. A new day for the colored worker had dawned. His work was a success. The Department of Negro Economics of the United States Government in a careful study found that "with here and there an exception the Negro workers in the matter of turnover, absenteeism, wage scales, quantity and quality of the work on which they are employed, compared favorably with the white workers in the same plant on the same work. Here is substantial answer to the old charge of shiftlessness and laziness."

As a skilled workman he made good. 24,647 Negroes were employed by the United States Shipping Board when the armistice was signed. Of this number 4,962 were skilled workmen and 19,685 were unskilled. At the conclusion of the war these numbers were respectively reduced to 3,872 and 10,203. In the case of the skilled workers this was a 20.7 per cent. reduction. Of the unskilled 48 per cent. reduction. These facts are altogether to the good in testing the success of the Negro skilled laborer. Other investigations of the Department of Negro Economics in various industrial plants throughout the country emphasize the same truth. The skilled Negro has very largely retained his position in all places where he has gained foothold during the last few years. It is to be remembered that Charles Knight made the record as a riveter in the war period, having driven 4,875 rivets in nine hours in the Bethlehem Steel Plant at

Sparrow's Point, Md., and that Charles H. Jackson is the recent inventor of an armored diving suit, to be used as a device for marine salvage and permitting a descent of 360 feet beneath the water's surface.

There is such a thing as the thriftless Negro. He is still with us in sufficient though decreasing numbers. The real Negro is the working Negro. When new industries are planned and new developments projected the colored man is included in the reckoning. He is on the Railroad section as well as in the Pullman car and diner. We find him in the stockyards of Chicago, the automobile industry of Detroit, the rubber works of Akron, the steel mills of Pittsburgh, Cleveland and other mid-western cities. The Negro was the determining factor in the steel strike of 1919. At last, all too tardily, the American Federation of Labor has admitted him to membership in the union. His number is multiplying among the long-shoremen of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York. He digs coal in the mines of Kentucky, West Virginia, Indiana, and Kansas. Even after the war is over he is among the shipbuilders of Portsmouth, Newark, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Norfolk and Newport News. In the latter place 5,500 skilled Negro laborers work with white men side by side. Mr. Homer L. Ferguson, native of North Carolina, "the most human shipbuilder in America," sounds a real warning: "Don't you dare come down from the North to this yard and tell us that the black man in the South is an industrial failure—you who only use him as an elevator boy or a parlor-car porter or a chauffeur and refuse to give him an equal industrial opportunity with white labor." Varied industries in many places have called 300,000 to 500,000 from cabins, farms and plantations of the Southland for work that must be done—work left undone unless the strong hands of Negroes do it.

### *A Rising Race*

A progressive race, rather than a static one, is a national asset. In his poem, "Howard at Atlanta," Whittier struck the note which has been finely resounding in Negro life in all the years since "Linkum's Soldiers" emancipated a race.

"And he said: 'Who hears can never  
Fear for or doubt you;  
What shall I tell the children  
Up North about you?'  
Then ran round a whisper, a murmur,  
Some answer devising  
And a little boy stood up; 'Massa,  
Tell 'em, we're rising.'"

The Negro has been divinely endowed with the quality of quickly adjusting himself to his environment "whether to the tropical malarial swamps of Africa where man and

beast are sluggish," to the plantation life of slavery in the South, to experiences of developing freedom when the bonds of slavery were cast aside, or to the larger life of economic and social expansion of an era of the Great War and succeeding reconstruction. He can be depended upon to adapt himself to the common ideals of American living. What the Negro becomes in America vitally depends upon what America, which he loves, becomes and the way in which the best of American life gives itself in assuring to all men freedom of movement, security of life and property, common justice and the square deal.

In educational scales the Negro has not been found wanting. He has risen remarkably. He has been significantly American in banishing the evil of illiteracy and ignorance. Dr. Philander P. Claxton, United States Commissioner of Education, writes as follows:

"The people from the North, out of the goodness of their hearts, gave money in large quantities for the establishment of schools for the education of the Negroes in the Southern States. Public schools also gradually helping illiteracy was brought down to 75 per cent., and to 60 per cent., and to 45 per cent., and it stood at 30 per cent. in 1910. Only about 25 per cent. now cannot read and write, and of these between the ages of 10 and 20, about 15 per cent. Nothing like it ever happened before at any time or any place in the history of the world. No other race ever rose from illiteracy to literacy so rapidly as the colored people of the Southern States. Already there is less illiteracy than there was among the white people of the whole United States when they gained their freedom, and less than among the white people of the Southern States only fifteen years ago." New facts coming out of new experience would indicate more illiteracy than evidenced by this statement. Yet the achievement of fifty years has been so notable that the essential truth of Commissioner Claxton's words bears unquestioned witness to real Americanism.

## *Negro Leaders*

The Negro is an asset to essential Americanism in the leadership which his race has produced. In the later slavery and early reconstruction days the only Negro of national proportion was Frederick Douglass. No wonder that his picture along with that of Booker Washington is to be found hanging on the walls of Negro cabins and in the front rooms of the better and best Negro homes. The famous Atlanta speech of the Founder of Tuskegee won the interest and allegiance of the South. A people capable of producing such leaders is the richer as a race, vindicates the cause of education and possesses living assets for all American life.

But these two are not the only leaders. They now are numerous in all walks of life, both North and South. Herein is vindicated the soundness of the American emphasis on education. The education of Negroes has produced leaders, all kinds of education have tended to this result for all kinds of leadership were needed. In a critical time of storm and stress in these days of reconstruction finer growths have come into fruition, a steadying dynamic has been operating through the avenues of trained men and women. Whether Booker Washington was right or Dubois was right in educational emphasis is beside the mark. Both were right. Certainly the times have shown that the greatest danger lay in ignorance, the greatest security in training. The same kind of education that was good for the white man was good for the Negro. The results have been racial self respect, racial influence in sanity and self control, racial patience and forbearance, real achievements of Americanism. Is there not reason and right for Reverdy C. Ransom to proclaim prophetically:

"I see, now near at hand, the opening day of the darker races of mankind in which Americans of African descent stand forth among the first Americans."

### *Progress in Business*

The Negro's commercial progress has been remarkable. Increasing numbers of his race have shown unshakable evidence of that soundest principle of American business success—thrift. In 1866 the Negroes of the country North and South owned 12,000 houses, operated 20,000 farms, conducted 2,100 businesses and had \$20,000,000 of accumulated wealth. Fifty years later the number of homes owned had increased to 600,000, one out of very four, the operated farms to 981,000, the number of businesses to 45,000 and the accumulated wealth to \$1,110,000,000. In 1867 four hundred Negroes were engaged in about forty lines of business; in 1917 they were engaged in two hundred lines and had \$50,000,000 invested. Today there are seventy or more safe and sound banks in the hands of capable Negro financiers. Already members of the race have received grants for a thousand patents. In 1866 the valuation of property used for higher education was \$60,000; in 1916 it was \$21,500,000. For the same dates the valuation of church property increased from \$1,500,000 to \$76,000,000. Were the figures for increase along all lines for the last five years available a much more marked contrast would appear.

## *Negro Literature*

A Negro literature has been produced. Dunbar has become the Bobbie Burns of a race's heart throbs. James Weldon Johnson has made addition to American literature in his "Fifty Years and Other Poems." Booker Washington has told the story of his life and work in volumes truly biographical and American. J. W. Holloway's new volume of poems adds to the unveiling of the Negro's inner life. No one can get away from the passion and appeal of Dubois' "Soul of Black Folks." Nor can he fail in appreciation of the treatment of vital themes and of the literary quality of "Darkwater," even though the extremes in statements and dramatic setting are not appealing. Braithwaite, literary editor of the Boston Transcript, Isaac Fisher of Fisk University, Kelly Miller and many others write for a nation as well as a race. Can nobler American ideals be put into prose or poetry than in those words in which Kelly Miller, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts of Howard University pledges the Negro youth of today:

"I will never bring disgrace upon my race by any unworthy deed or dishonorable act; I will live a clean, decent, manly life, and will ever respect and defend the virtue and honor of womanhood. I will uphold and obey the just laws of my country and of the community in which I live and will encourage others to do likewise; I will not allow prejudice, injustice, insult or outrage to cower my spirit or sour my soul, but will ever preserve the inner freedom of heart and conscience; I will not allow myself to be overcome of evil but will strive to overcome evil with good; I will endeavor to develop and unceasingly to quicken the sense of racial duty and responsibility; I will in all these ways aim to uplift my race, so that, to everyone bound to it by ties of blood, it shall become a bond of ennoblement, and not a byword of reproach."

### **The Negro Press.**

There are four hundred Negro newspapers and periodicals in the land. This influence, largely for good, is being multiplied. Few of these publications are radical in appeal, none are really "red." The following from a western paper with wide circulation in the South well illustrates the loyal constructive quality of the editorial point of view:

"We have never carried the red flag. We have never thrown a bomb nor wrecked a railroad. We have never betrayed the secrets of our government to the enemy. We have never joined in any bolshevik movement, and, what is more to the point, we never will. When we shoulder a gun it will never be against our government. Are we then asking too much of the powers that be to throw the full protection of the law about us, and give us a man's chance?"

## *The Negro in Art*

The week following Christmas, 1919, the new Dunbar Theatre on South Broad Street, Philadelphia was opened to the public. It was built from money invested by colored people from all over the country but largely of Philadelphia. Its cost was \$400,000. Its arrangements and appointments made a most creditable structure from architectural and dramatic points of view. Its manager is a colored man. It is one of a series of theatres located in all the large northern cities. On the evening of my attendance the Lafayette Players, a colored troupe presented "Within the Law." The play was simple and wholesome. The dramatic action was good. There were no forced attempts at scenic effect nor efforts in song or action to approach the suggestive in the name of art, Greek or any other. The moral tone was positive. The audience entirely colored was attentive, appreciative, enthusiastic. Six or eight years ago no colored group of players would have dared to make so serious an attempt. They would have confined themselves to elocutionary productions or plantation melodies if in serious tone or, if in lighter vein, to the ordinary minstrel performance.

First among Negro musicians ranks Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. Those familiar with his Hiawatha production as well as "Atonement" realize his artistic standing among eminent composers. Harry T. Burleigh, composer and singer, whose name for many years has been associated with St. George's in New York City, thrills and inspires all classes of men. Roland W. Hayes is fast becoming a great tenor of his race. During the past season he has been singing to large audiences of both races throughout the country. He soon goes to Africa as a student to uncover new facts and melodies coming up through Negro life from its native haunts to its present habitat. Dett's "Listen to the Lambs" and similar compositions have helped to bring freshly to a world audience the old "spiritual." Will Marion Cook with his orchestra and accompanying singers has been pleasing English audiences during the past season.

Turning from composers and singers of outstanding reputation to a painter, Henry O. Tanner's work is of such quality that "The Resurrection of Lazarus" hangs in the Luxembourg Galleries of Paris. The director of the gallery pronounces the picture "an expression of exalted achievement." "The Betrayal," "The Annunciation," "Christ and Nicodemus" and "The Flight into Egypt" are to be found in various American Galleries. Meta Warrick Fuller of Philadelphia, a sculptor, in her "Secret Sorrow" particularly obtained the praise of Rodin as he said: "You are a sculptor; you have the sense of form." Without the work of Negroes America would be the loser in masterpieces of art and literature.

## *Innate Qualities*

The Negro's emotional endowment is a national asset. With him emotion needs balancing by rational processes but it must always be remembered that the "sense of reality roots itself in feeling." As Prof. Work puts it: "the Negro is not so different from other men in his thought as he is in his feelings. In thought, he is generic; in feeling more specific. His feelings are broader and deeper than those of other men and they have more directive influence and power over him than other men's feelings have upon them." Hence arises the great power of the Negro preacher in the realms of justice and faith. Real preachers are contributors to the inner wealth of a nation's life. Many so-called Negro preachers have been ignorant and immoral but, when true to their calling in the best sense, few men have wielded greater relative influence for good in directing action than those who have become the prophetic voices of their people's better life. Crudely they have often spoken but always effectively. With a better education they are becoming and will be even more potent in mental and spiritual influence.

**The Negro is optimistic.** He dares to hope—is there any higher form of courage? His hopes have been deferred—but he has hoped on. He has drunk deeply at the well of persistence, as the melody runs "Goin' to hold out to the end, Let trials come as they will come," "Keepa inching along! Jesus will come by and by."

His optimism is so genuine that he is fundamentally good natured rather than easy going. Who dare say America needs not that tonic in her life? Pres. King for many years president of the American Missionary Association whose service to the Christian education of the Negro are most noteworthy has said: "The pure Negro seems often to have a temperamental kindness of disposition, a good-natured readiness to make the most of a situation, and to find none insufferable, that, while it may often be an obstacle to advancement, has a great gift to make to the contentment and happiness of life. It is possible to make life quite too strenuous, to live so completely in the future as never really to live in the present, —to take no enjoyment in life as it passes. And this is the certain danger of the American rush. The Negro's tendency has in it, a real element of strength, and much suggestion for an over-enterprising people that has become frantic in its haste."

The Negro even enjoys his religion. Would an aeroplane visitor from the East say that of the Anglo-Saxon as he sees the lines on his face when he comes from his place of Sabbath worship? Happiness to the Negro is not a by-product; it is the direct result of his faith. With a soul which is assured that all things will turn out according to the laws of right, really believes that "God's in

his Heaven" he has joy in believing. Clouds may sometimes overcast the sky; these are only incidents in the life of faith. As Prof. Work puts it; in his "Folk Song of the American Negro": "The believer can smile through tears and shout Hallelujah in a minor strain." So, for every sorrow song like "Nobody Know the Trouble I See," there are many of those blasts of joy, like "Great Camp Meeting," "Shout All Over God's Heaven" and "Golden Slippers."

**The Patience of the Negro** is a national asset. Go back over the three hundred years of the race in this land of America. Has it been a history of insurrection? Far from it. Was there not cause? Was fear the restraining element? No, a thousand times, no. It was chiefly the patience of the slave, not that, of a people. In recalling his own experience with Negro troops in the Civil War Thomas W. Higginson wrote: "I often ask myself why it was that, with this capacity for daring and endurance the Negroes had not kept the land in a perpetual flame of insurrection. The answer was to be found in the peculiar temperament of the race, in their religious faith, and in the habit of patience the centuries had fortified." Shall not impatient hasty America, the country of Americanitis, in taking its account of stock place on the credit side this inexhaustible resource? With millions of people multiplying, wealth accumulating, life on all hands becoming more complex and miscellaneous, the Negroes themselves extending their habitations to all parts of the land, let us thank God and take courage for this fact of patience.

**The Negro has a growing wholesome self respect** revealing itself in terms of good sense.

Is there not worthy expression of this conquering gift in that interpretation which comes to us from Inez A. Godman, a colored woman of Madison, Conn.

"Of all troubled Races in this troubled old world the American Negro has the most inspiring trouble. The Negro in this country is comparatively fresh in his problems. He has not ages of race quarrels and animosities to overcome. His Race is making a new start in a new country where the great majority of his fellow countrymen believe in giving him a fair show. They may be rather apathetic about expressing their belief—we Americans don't care to bother—but the belief is there just the same and it gives a very different foundation upon which to build from a very different foundation upon which to build from that—for instance, of the Armenian Race in Turkey. This is a land of plenty and in a good degree the Negro has his chance to it. Troubles. To be sure; to be sure! Things are being born these days and there is no birth without travail. What are troubles to the worthy soul but stepping stones to glory. Would you like it young men if the way of the Negro was easy and soft; now would you? Not on your life! The way of ease brings no honor. If the soul is worthy it prefers the progress of the Race to its own peace and comfort.

"Somewhere among our boys and girls today are the future leaders of the Race. No one can spot them now but they walk among us with earnest eyes and eager souls, and upon the fibre of their souls depends the future of the Race. Perhaps you don't

care about the future of the Race. Perhaps you care only for your own pleasure. Step aside then for God's sake, step aside. He is molding, forming a new Race in His mighty crucible. If you are not willing to be born again by fire toddle away as fast as your toothpick toes and steeple heels can carry you. God's needs are great just now. Clear the way for those more worthy. If the mothers of the Race hitch their wagon to a star and the sons and daughters of the Race forge propellers and wings for the wagons, the star ahead, alone, will set the only limit for the Race."

The Religion of the Negro is a national asset. How effectively has Dean Benjamin Brawley of Morehouse College spoken for his race: "Not only however, does the Negro give promise because of his economic worth; not only does he deserve the fullest rights of citizenship on the basis of his work as a soldier; he brings nothing less than a great spiritual contribution to civilization in America. His is a race of enthusiasm, imagination, and high spiritual fervor. He revels in the sighing of the wind, the falling of the stars, the laughter of children, and already his music is recognized as the most original that the country has produced; from his deep-toned melodies wafts a note of intolerable pathos. But over all the doubt and fear through which it passes there still rests with the great heart of the race an abiding trust in God. Around us every where are commercialism, politics, graft—sordidness, selfishness, cynicism. We need faith and hope and love, a new birth of idealism, more fervent faith in the unseen; and the stone that the builders rejected is become the head of the corner. Already the work of some members of the race has pointed the way to great things in the realm of conscious art; but above even art soars the great world of the spirit. This it is that America most sadly needs; this it is that her most fiercely persecuted children bring to her."

### *The Response*

What shall be the answer of thoughtful, sober, Christian Americans who believe in the "square deal"? Shall it be anything less than full protection for the Negro's life and property, economic justice involving equal opportunities for labor with all others along with equitable pay, the preservation of the sanctity of his home, the girlhood and womanhood of his race, adequate facilities for recreation, wholesome amusement and entertainment, equal travelling accommodations for equal pay, adequate educational facilities to be furnished by state and nation and the qualifications for the use of the franchise as for all men and women. Shall it be anything less than a man's chance for manhood qualities? For the members of the Christian Church throughout our land shall it not be the application of the principles of the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount? For colored and white men alike everywhere the standard is "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."