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DUSK OF DAWN

An Essay toward an Autobiography of a
Race Concept

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois

With a New Introduction by
Irene Diggs



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CHAPTER 1. THE PLOT

FROM 1868 to 1940 stretch seventy-two mighty years, which are incidentally the years of my own life but more especially years of cosmic significance, when one remembers that they rush from the American Civil War to the reign of the second Roosevelt; from Victoria to the Sixth George; from the Franco-Prussian to the two World Wars. They contain the rise and fall of the Hohenzollerns, the shadowy emergence, magnificence and miracle of Russia; the turmoil of Asia in China, India and Japan, and the world-wide domination of white Europe.

In the folds of this European civilization I was born and shall die, imprisoned, conditioned, depressed, exalted and inspired. Integrally a part of it and yet, much more significant, one of its rejected parts; one who expressed in life and action and made vocal to many, a single whirlpool of social entanglement and inner psychological paradox, which always seem to me more significant for the meaning of the world today than other similar and related problems.

Little indeed did I do, or could I conceivably have done, to make this problem or to loose it. Crucified on the vast wheel of time, I flew round and round with the Zeitgeist, waving my pen and lifting faint voices to ex-

plain, expound and exhort; to see, foresee and prophesy, to the few who could or would listen. Thus very evidently to me and to others I did little to create my day or greatly change it; but I did exemplify it and thus for all time my life is significant for all lives of men.

What now was this particular social problem which, through the chances of birth and existence, became so peculiarly mine? At bottom and in essence it was as old as human life. Yet in its revelation, through the nineteenth century, it was significantly and fatally new: the differences between men; differences in their appearance, in their physique, in their thoughts and customs; differences so great and so impelling that always from the beginning of time, they thrust themselves forward upon the consciousness of all living things. Culture among human beings came to be and had to be built upon knowledge and recognition of these differences.

But after the scientific method had been conceived in the seventeenth century it came toward the end of the eighteenth century to be applied to man and to man as he appeared then, with no wide or intensive inquiry into what he had been or how he had lived in the past. In the nineteenth century however came the revolution of conceiving the world not as permanent structure but as changing growth and then the study of man as changing and developing physical and social entity had to begin.

But the mind clung desperately to the idea that basic racial differences between human beings had suffered no change; and it clung to this idea not simply from inertia and unconscious action but from the fact that because of the modern African slave trade a tremendous economic

structure and eventually an industrial revolution had been based upon racial differences between men; and this racial difference had now been rationalized into a difference mainly of skin color. Thus in the latter part of the nineteenth century when I was born and grew to manhood, color had become an abiding unchangeable fact chiefly because a mass of self-conscious instincts and unconscious prejudices had arranged themselves rank on rank in its defense. Government, work, religion and education became based upon and determined by the color line. The future of mankind was implicit in the race and color of men.

Already in my boyhood this matter of color loomed significantly. My skin was darker than that of my schoolmates. My family confined itself not entirely but largely to people of this same darker hue. Even when in fact the color was lighter, this was an unimportant variation from the norm. As I grew older, and saw the peoples of the land and of the world, the problem changed from a simple thing of color, to a broader, deeper matter of social condition: to millions of folk born of dark slaves, with the slave heritage in mind and home; millions of people spawned in compulsory ignorance; to a whole problem of the uplift of the lowly who formed the darker races.

This social condition pictured itself gradually in my mind as a matter of education, as a matter of knowledge; as a matter of scientific procedure in a world which had become scientific in concept. Later, however, all this frame of concept became blurred and distorted. There was evidently evil and hindrance blocking the way of life. Not science alone could settle this matter, but force must come

to its aid. The black world must fight for freedom. It must fight with the weapons of Truth, with the sword of the intrepid, uncompromising Spirit, with organization in boycott, propaganda and mob frenzy. Upon this state of mind after a few years of conspicuous progress fell the horror of World War—of ultimate agitation, propaganda and murder.

The lesson of fighting was unforgettable; it was eternal loss and cost in victory or defeat. And again my problem of human difference, of the color line, of social degradation, of the fight for freedom became transformed. First and natural to the emergence of colder and more mature manhood from hot youth, I saw that the color bar could not be broken by a series of brilliant immediate assaults. Secondly, I saw defending this bar not simply ignorance and ill will; these to be sure; but also certain more powerful motives less open to reason or appeal. There were economic motives, urges to build wealth on the backs of black slaves and colored serfs; there followed those unconscious acts and irrational reactions, unpierced by reason, whose current form depended on the long history of relation and contact between thought and idea. In this case not sudden assault but long siege was indicated; careful planning and subtle campaign with the education of growing generations and propaganda.

For all this, time was needed to move the resistance in vast areas of unreason and especially in the minds of men where conscious present motive had been built on false rationalization. Meantime the immediate problem of the Negro was the question of securing existence, of labor and income, of food and home, of spiritual independence and

democratic control of the industrial process. It would not do to concentrate all effort on economic well-being and forget freedom and manhood and equality. Rather Negroes must live and eat and strive, and still hold unfaltering commerce with the stars.

Finally, I could see that the scientific task of the twentieth century would be to explore and measure the scope of chance and unreason in human action, which does not yield to argument but changes slowly and with difficulty after long study and careful development.

My intent in this book is to set forth the interaction of this stream and change of my thought, on my work and in relation to what has been going on in the world since my birth. Not so much its causal relation, for that in sheer limitation of opportunity was small; but rather of its intellectual relations, of its psychological interactions, and of the consequent results of these for me and many millions, who with me have had their lives shaped and directed by this course of events.

CHAPTER 2. A NEW ENGLAND

BOY AND RECONSTRUCTION

AS I have written elsewhere, "I was born by a golden river and in the shadow of two great hills." My birthplace was Great Barrington, a little town in western Massachusetts in the valley of the Housatonic, flanked by the Berkshire hills. Physically and socially our community belonged to the Dutch valley of the Hudson rather than to Puritan New England, and travel went south to New York more often and more easily than east to Boston. But my birthplace was less important than my birth-time. The Civil War had closed but three years earlier and 1868 was the year in which the freedmen of the South were enfranchised and for the first time as a mass took part in government. Conventions with black delegates voted new constitutions all over the South; and two groups of laborers—freed slaves and poor whites—dominated the former slave states. It was an extraordinary experiment in democracy. Thaddeus Stevens, the clearest-headed leader of this attempt at industrial democracy, made his last speech impeaching Andrew Johnson on February sixteenth and on February twenty-third I was born.

Less than a month after my birth Andrew Johnson passed from the scene and Ulysses Grant became President of the United States. The Fifteenth Amendment en-

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franchising the Negro as a race became law and the work of abolishing slavery and making Negroes men was accomplished, so far as law could do it. Meanwhile elsewhere in the world there were stirring and change which were to mean much in my life: in Japan the Meiji Emperors rose to power the year I was born; in China the intrepid Empress Dowager was fighting strangulation by England and France; Prussia had fought with Austria and France, and the German Empire arose in 1871. In England, Victoria opened her eighth parliament; the duel of Disraeli and Gladstone began; while in Africa came the Abyssinian expedition and opening of the Suez Canal, so fateful for all my people.

My town was shut in by its mountains and provincialism; but it was a beautiful place, a little New England town nestled shyly in its valley with something of Dutch cleanliness and English reticence. The Housatonic yellowed by the paper mills, rolled slowly through its center; while Green River, clear and beautiful, joined in to the south. Main Street was lined with ancient elms; the hills held white pines and orchards and then faded up to magnificent rocks and caves which shut out the neighboring world. The people were mainly of English descent with much Dutch blood and with a large migration of Irish and German workers to the mills as laborers.

The social classes of the town were built partly on land-holding farmers and more especially on manufacturers and merchants, whose prosperity was due in no little degree to the new and high tariff. The rich people of the town were not very rich nor many in number. The middle class were farmers, merchants and artisans, and ~~of wealth~~

a considerable expenditure for books which were not free in those days—more than my folk could afford; but the wife of one of the mill-owners, or rather I ought to describe her as the mother of one of my playmates, after some hesitation offered to furnish all the necessary school books. I became therefore a high school student preparing for college and thus occupying an unusual position in the town even among whites, although there had been one or two other colored boys in the past who had gotten at least part of a high school education. In this way I was thrown with the upper rather than the lower social classes and protected in many ways. I came in touch with rich folk, summer boarders, who made yearly incursions from New York. Their beautiful clothes impressed me tremendously but otherwise I found them quite ordinary. The children did not have much sense or training; they were not very strong and rather too well dressed to have a good time playing.

I had little contact with crime and degradation. The slums in the town were not bad and repelled me, partly because they were inhabited by the foreign-born. There was one house among colored folk, where I now realize there must have been a good deal of gambling, drinking and other looseness. The inmates were pleasant to me but I was never asked to enter and of course had no desire. In the whole town, colored and white, there was not much crime. The one excess was drunkenness and there my mother quietly took a firm stand. I was never to enter a liquor saloon. I never did. I donned a Murphy "blue ribbon." And yet perhaps, as I now see, the one solace that this pleasant but spiritually rather drab little town had

against the monotony of life was liquor; and rich and poor got drunk more or less regularly. I have seen one of the mill owners staggering home, and my very respectable uncle used to come home now and then walking exceedingly straight.

I was born in a community which conceived itself as having helped put down a wicked rebellion for the purpose of freeing four million slaves. All respectable people belonged to the Republican Party, but Democrats were tolerated, although regarded with some surprise and hint of motive. Most of the older men had been soldiers, including members of my own family. The town approached in politics a pure democracy with annual town meeting and elections of well-known and fairly qualified officials. We were placidly religious. The bulk of the well-to-do people belonged to the Episcopal and Congregational churches, a small number of farmers and artisans to the Methodist Church and the Irish workers to the Catholic Church across the river. The marriage laws and family relations were fairly firm. The chief delinquency was drunkenness and the major social problem of the better classes was the status of women who had little or no opportunity to marry.

My ideas of property and work during my boyhood were vague. They did not present themselves to me as problems. As a family we owned little property and our income was always small. Spending money for me came first as small gifts of pennies or a nickel from relatives; once I received a silver dollar, a huge fortune. Later I earned all my spending funds. I can see now that my mother must have struggled pretty desperately on very

narrow resources and that the problem of shoes and clothes for me must have been at times staggering. But these matters seldom bothered me because they were not brought to my attention. My general attitude toward property and income was that all who were willing to work could easily earn a living; that those who had property had earned it and deserved it and could use it as they wished; that poverty was the shadow of crime and connoted lack of thrift and shiftlessness. These were the current patterns of economic thought of the town in my boyhood.

~~In Great Barrington the first glimpse of the outer and wider world I got, was through Johnny Morgan's news shop which occupied the front end of the post office. There newspapers and books were on display and I remember very early seeing pictures of "U. S." Grant, and of "Bill" Tweed who was beginning his extraordinary career in New York City; and later I saw pictures of Hayes and of the smooth and rather cruel face of Tilden. Of the great things happening in the United States at that time, we were actually touched only by the Panic of 1873. When my uncle came home from a little town east of us where he was the leading barber, he brought me, I remember, a silver dollar which was an extraordinary thing: up to that time I had seen nothing but paper money. I was six when Charles Sumner died and the Freedmen's Bank closed; and when I was eight there came the revolution of 1876 in the South, and Victoria of England became Empress of India; but I did not know the meaning of these events until long after.~~

In general thought and conduct I became quite thor-

~~oughly New England. It was not good form in Great Barrington to express one's thought volubly, or to give way to excessive emotion. We were even sparing in our daily greetings. I am quite sure that in a less restrained and conventional atmosphere I should have easily learned to express my emotions with far greater and more unrestrained intensity; but as it was I had the social heritage not only of a New England clan but Dutch taciturnity. This was later reinforced and strengthened by inner withdrawals in the face of real and imagined discriminations. The result was that I was early thrown in upon myself. I found it difficult and even unnecessary to approach other people and by that same token my own inner life perhaps grew the richer; but the habit of repression often returned to plague me in after years, for so early a habit could not easily be unlearned. The Negroes in the South, when I came to know them, could never understand why I did not naturally greet everyone I passed on the street or slap my friends on the back.~~

~~During my high school career I had a chance for the first time to step beyond the shadow of the hills which hemmed in my little valley. My father's father was living in New Bedford and his third wife who had greatly loved my own father wanted my grandfather to know and recognize me. The grandfather, a short thick-set man, "colored" but quite white in appearance, with austere face, was hard and set in his ways, proud and bitter. My father and grandfather had not been able to get along together. Of them I shall speak more intimately later. I went to New Bedford in 1883 at the age of fifteen. On the way I saw Hartford and Providence. I called on my uncle in Amherst~~

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schoolmarm was in full swing. The freed slaves, if properly led, had a great future. Temporarily deprived of their full voting privileges, this was but a passing setback. Black folk were bound in time to dominate the South. They needed trained leadership. I was sent to help furnish it.

I started out and went into Tennessee at the age of seventeen to be a sophomore at Fisk University. It was to me an extraordinary experience. I was thrilled to be for the first time among so many people of my own color or rather of such various and such extraordinary colors, which I had only glimpsed before, but who it seemed were bound to me by new and exciting and eternal ties. Never before had I seen young men so self-assured and who gave themselves such airs, and colored men at that; and above all for the first time I saw beautiful girls. At my home among my white school mates there were a few pretty girls; but either they were not entrancing or because I had known them all my life I did not notice them; but at Fisk at the first dinner I saw opposite me a girl of whom I have often said, no human being could possibly have been as beautiful as she seemed to my young eyes that fat-off September night of 1885.

CHAPTER 3. EDUCATION IN THE LAST DECADES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

TODAY both youth and age look upon a world whose foundations seem to be tottering. They are not sure what the morrow will bring; perhaps the complete overthrow of European civilization, of that great enveloping mass of culture into which they were born. Everything in their environment is a meet subject for criticism. They can dispassionately evaluate the past and speculate upon the future. It is a day of fundamental change. On the other hand when I was a young man, so far as I conceived, the foundations of present culture were laid, the way was charted, the progress toward certain great goals was undoubted and inevitable. There was room for argument concerning details and methods and possible detours in the onswEEP of civilization; but the fundamental facts were clear, unquestioned and unquestionable.

Between the years 1885 and 1894 I received my education at Fisk University, Harvard College and the University of Berlin. It was difficult for me at the time to form any critical estimate of any meaning of the world which differed from the conventional unanimity about me. Apparently one consideration alone saved me from complete conformity with the thoughts and confusions of then current social trends; and that was the problems

of racial and cultural contacts. Otherwise I might easily have been simply the current product of my day. Even as it was, the struggle for which I was preparing and the situations which I was trying to conceive and study, related themselves primarily to the plight of the comparatively small group of American Negroes with which I was identified, and theoretically to the larger Negro race. I did not face the general plight and conditions of all humankind. That I took for granted, and in the unanimity of thought and development of that day, this was scarcely to be wondered at.

It was a day of Progress with a capital P. Population in all the culture lands was increasing, doubling and more; cities everywhere were growing and expanding and making themselves the centers and almost the only centers of civilization; transportation by land and sea was drawing the nations near and making the lands of the earth increasingly accessible. Invention and technique were a perpetual marvel and their accomplishment infinite in possibility; commerce was madly seeking markets all around the earth; colonies were being seized and countries integrated in Asia, Africa, South America and the islands.

Above all science was becoming religion; psychology was reducing metaphysics to experiment and a sociology of human action was planned. Fighting the vast concept of evolution, religion went into its heresy trials, its struggle with "higher criticism," its discomfort at the "revised version" of the New Testament which was published the year I entered college. Wealth was God. Everywhere men sought wealth and especially in America there was extravagant living; everywhere the poor planned to

be rich and the rich planned to be richer; everywhere wider, bigger, higher, better things were set down as inevitable.

All this, of course, dominated education; especially the economic order determined what the next generation should learn and know. On the whole, looking at the marvelous industrial expansion of America, seeing the rise of the western farmer and the wages of the eastern mechanic, all was well; or if not, if there were ominous protests and upheavals, these were but the friction necessary to all advance. "God's in His heaven; All's right with the world," Browning was singing—that colored Robert Browning, who died just after I received my first bachelor's degree.

Had it not been for the race problem early thrust upon me and enveloping me, I should have probably been an unquestioning worshiper at the shrine of the social order and economic development into which I was born. But just that part of that order which seemed to most of my fellows nearest perfection, seemed to me most inequitable and wrong; and starting from that critique, I gradually, as the years went by, found other things to question in my environment. At first, however, my criticism was confined to the relation of my people to the world movement. I was not questioning the world movement in itself. What the white world was doing, its goals and ideals, I had not doubted were quite right. What was wrong was that I and people like me and thousands of others who might have my ability and aspiration, were refused permission to be a part of this world. It was as though moving on a rushing express, my main thought

was as to the relations I had to other passengers on the express, and not to its rate of speed and its destination. In the day of my formal education, my interest was centered upon the race struggle. The fight on the moving car had to do with my relations to the car and its folk; but on the whole, nothing to do with the car's own movement. My attention from the first was focused on democracy and democratic development and upon the problem of the admission of my people into the freedom of democracy. This my school training touched but obliquely. We studied history and politics almost exclusively from the point of view of ancient German freedom, English and New England democracy, and the development of the United States.

Here, however, I could bring criticism from what I knew and saw touching the Negro. I was brought up in the primary democracy of a New England village. I attended the town meeting every spring and in the upper room in that little red brick town hall, fronted by a Roman "Victory" commemorating the Civil War, I listened to the citizens discuss things about which I knew and had opinions: streets and bridges and schools, and particularly the high school. Baretown Beebe, a dirty, ragged old hermit, used regularly to come down from his rocks and woods and denounce high school education and expense. Regularly the responsible citizens of the town sat and listened and then quietly voted the usual appropriation. That one recurring incident was a splendid part of my education.

The rest of my early political knowledge came largely from newspapers which I read outside my curriculum. I

read of the contests of the Democratic and Republican parties, from the first seating of Hayes, through the administrations of Garfield and Arthur, Cleveland, Harrison, Cleveland again, and McKinley in 1895. All this complied with the conventional theory of party government, and while the issues were not as clear cut and the motives as unmixed as they ought to have been, nevertheless the increasing triumph of democratic government was in my mind unquestioned. The Populists as a third party movement beginning during this time, did not impress me.

The year before I entered college, England killed the arbitrary power of the Justice of the Peace and the County Squire, doubled the number of its voters and was forced into a struggle to yield Ireland home rule; eventually Japan attempted a constitution with elective representatives; Brazil became a republic while I was at Harvard, and during that time France fought successfully to curtail the political power of the Catholic Church.

My problem then was how, into the inevitable and logical democracy which was spreading over the world, could black folk in America and particularly in the South be openly and effectively admitted; and the colored people of the world allowed their own self-government? I therefore watched, outside my textbooks and without reference to my teachers, the race developments throughout the world. The difficulty here, however, was securing any real and exhaustive knowledge of facts. I could not get any clear picture of the current change in Africa and Asia.

Lynching was a continuing and recurrent horror during my college days: from 1885 through 1894, seventeen hundred Negroes were lynched in America. Each death was

a scar upon my soul, and led me on to conceive the plight of other minority groups; for in my college days Italians were lynched in New Orleans, forcing the Federal government to pay \$25,000 in indemnity, and the anti-Chinese riots in the West culminated in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1892. Some echoes of Jewish segregation and pogroms in Russia came through the magazines; I followed the Dreyfus case; and I began to see something of the struggle between East and West in the Sino-Japanese War.

The three years at Fisk were years of growth and development. I learned new things about the world. My knowledge of the race problem became more definite. I saw discrimination in ways of which I had never dreamed; the separation of passengers on the railways of the South was just beginning; the race separation in living quarters throughout the cities and towns was manifest; the public disdain and even insult in race contact on the street continually took my breath; I came in contact for the first time with a sort of violence that I had never realized in New England; I remember going down and looking wide-eyed at the door of a public building, filled with buck-shot, where the editor of the leading daily paper had been publicly murdered the day before. I was astonished to find many of my fellow students carrying fire-arms and to hear their stories of adventure. On the other hand my personal contact with my teachers was inspiring and beneficial as indeed I suppose all personal contacts between human beings must be. Adam Spence of Fisk first taught me to know what the Greek language meant. In a funny little basement room crowded with apparatus,

Frederick Chase gave me insight into natural science and talked with me about future study. I knew the President, Erastus Cravath, to be honest and sincere.

I determined to know something of the Negro in the country districts; to go out and teach during the summer vacation. I was not compelled to do this, for my scholarship was sufficient to support me, but that was not the point. I had heard about the country in the South as the real seat of slavery. I wanted to know it. I walked out into east Tennessee ten or more miles a day until at last in a little valley near Alexandria I found a place where there had been a Negro public school only once since the Civil War; and there for two successive terms during the summer I taught at \$28 and \$30 a month. It was an enthralling experience. I met new and intricate and unconscious discrimination. I was pleasantly surprised when the white school superintendent, on whom I had made a business call, invited me to stay for dinner; and he would have been astonished if he had dreamed that I expected to eat at the table with him and not after he was through. All the appointments of my school were primitive: a windowless log cabin; hastily manufactured benches; no blackboard; almost no books; long, long distances to walk. And on the other hand, I heard the sorrow songs sung with primitive beauty and grandeur. I saw the hard, ugly drudgery of country life and the writhing of landless, ignorant peasants. I saw the race problem at nearly its lowest terms.

~~At Fisk I began my writing and public speaking. I edited the *Fisk Herald*. I became an impassioned orator and developed a belligerent attitude toward the color~~

outlines of economic battle. The Supreme Court stood staunchly behind capital. It outlawed the labor boycott, it denied the right of the states to make railway rates. It declared the income tax unconstitutional.

With all that, and the memory of the Panic of 1873 not forgotten, came the Panic of 1893 and the financial upheaval of 1907. Into this economic turmoil, politics had to intrude. The older role of free, individual enterprise, with little or no government interference, had to be surrendered and the whole political agitation during these days took on a distinct economic tinge and object. The impassioned plea of Bryan in 1896 that labor be not "crucified upon a cross of gold" could not be wholly ridiculed to silence. The Populist Movement which swept over the West and South, I began now to believe, was a third party movement of deep significance and it was kept from political power on the one hand by the established election frauds of the South, of which I knew, and by the fabulous election fund which made McKinley President of the United States. With this went the diversion of the Spanish war with its sordid scandals of rotten beef, cheating and stealing, fever and death from neglect. Politics and economics thus in those days of my teaching became but two aspects of a united body of action and effort.

I tried to isolate myself in the ivory tower of race. I wanted to explain the difficulties of race and the ways in which these difficulties caused political and economic troubles. It was this concentration of thought and action and effort that really, in the end, saved my scientific accuracy and search for truth. But first came a period of three years when I was casting about to find a way of ap-

plying science to the race problem. In these years I was torn with excitement of quick-moving events. Lynching, for instance, was still a continuing horror in the United States at the time of my entrance upon a teaching career. It reached a climax in 1892, when 235 persons were publicly murdered, and in the sixteen years of my teaching nearly two thousand persons were publicly killed by mobs, and not a single one of the murderers punished. The partition, domination and exploitation of Africa gradually centered my thought as part of my problem of race. I saw in Asia and the West Indies the results of race discrimination while right here in America came the wild foray of the exasperated Negro soldiers at Brownsville and the political-economic riot at Atlanta.

One happening in America linked in my mind the race problem with the general economic development and that was the speech of Booker T. Washington in Atlanta in 1895. When many colored papers condemned the proposition of compromise with the white South, which Washington proposed, I wrote to the *New York Age* suggesting that here might be the basis of a real settlement between whites and blacks in the South, if the South opened to the Negroes the doors of economic opportunity and the Negroes co-operated with the white South in political sympathy. But this offer was frustrated by the fact that between 1895 and 1909 the whole South disfranchised its Negro voters by unfair and illegal restrictions and passed a series of "Jim Crow" laws which made the Negro citizen a subordinate caste.

As a possible offset to this came the endowment of the General Education Board and the Sage Foundation; but

It must be remembered that the significance of these studies lay not so much in what they were actually able to accomplish, as in the fact that at the time of their publication Atlanta University was the only institution in the world carrying on a systematic study of the Negro and his development, and putting the result in a form available for the scholars of the world.

In addition to the publications, we did something toward bringing together annually at Atlanta University persons and authorities interested in the problems of the South. Among these were Booker T. Washington, Frank Sanborn, Franz Boas, Jane Addams and Walter Wilcox. We were asked from time to time to co-operate in current studies. I wrote a number of studies for the Bureau of Labor in Washington. I co-operated in the taking of the Twelfth Census and wrote one of the monographs. I not only published the Atlanta Conference reports, but wrote magazine articles in the *World's Work* and in the *Atlantic Monthly* where I joined in a symposium and one of my fellow contributors was Woodrow Wilson. At the same time I joined with the Negro leaders of Georgia in efforts to better local conditions; to stop discrimination in the distribution of school funds; to keep the legislature from making further discriminations in railway travel. I prepared an exhibit showing the condition of the Negro for the Paris Exposition which gained a Grand Prize. I became a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1900 and was made a fellow in 1904. I testified before Congressional Commissions in Washington and appeared on the lecture platform with Walter Page, afterwards war ambassador to England; I did a con-

siderable amount of lecturing throughout the United States. I had wide correspondence with men of prominence in America and Europe. Lyman Abbott of the *Outlook*; E. D. Morel, the English expert on Africa; Max Weber of Heidelberg; Professor Wilcox of Cornell; Bliss Perry of the *Atlantic Monthly*; Horace Traubel, the great protagonist for Walt Whitman; Charles Eliot Norton and Talcott Williams. I began to be regarded by many groups and audiences as having definite information on the Negro

At the very time when my studies were most successful, there cut across this plan which I had as a scientist, a red ray which could not be ignored. I remember when it first, as it were, startled me to my feet: a poor Negro in central Georgia, Sam Hose, had killed his landlord's wife. I wrote out a careful and reasoned statement concerning the evident facts and started down to the Atlanta Constitution office, carrying in my pocket a letter of introduction to Joel Chandler Harris. I did not get there. On the way news met me: Sam Hose had been lynched, and they said that his knuckles were on exhibition at a grocery store farther down on Mitchell Street, along which I was walking. I turned back to the University. I began to turn aside from my work. I did not meet Joel Chandler Harris nor the editor of the *Constitution*.

Two considerations thereafter broke in upon my work and eventually disrupted it: first, one could not be a calm, cool, and detached scientist while Negroes were lynched, murdered and starved; and secondly, there was no such definite demand for scientific work of the sort that I was doing, as I had confidently assumed would be easily forth-

coming. I regarded it as axiomatic that the world wanted to learn the truth and if the truth was sought with even approximate accuracy and painstaking devotion, the world would gladly support the effort. This was, of course, but a young man's idealism, not by any means false, but also never universally true. The work of the conference for thirteen years including my own salary and small office force did not average five thousand dollars a year. Probably with some effort and sacrifice Atlanta University might have continued to raise this amount if it had not been for the controversy with Booker T. Washington that arose in 1903 and increased in virulence until 1908.

There were, of course, other considerations which made Atlanta University vulnerable to attack at this time. The university from the beginning had taken a strong and unbending attitude toward Negro prejudice and discrimination; white teachers and black students ate together in the same dining room and lived in the same dormitories. The charter of the institution opened the doors of Atlanta University to any student who applied, of any race or color; and when the state in 1887 objected to the presence of a few white students, all children of teachers and professors, the institution gave up the small appropriation from the State rather than repudiate its principles. In fact, this appropriation represented not State funds, but the Negroes' share of the sum received from the Federal government for education. When later there came an attempt on the part of the Southern Education Board and afterwards of the General Education Board to form a working program between educated Negroes and forward-looking whites in the South, it gradually became an understood

principle of action that colored teachers should be encouraged in colored schools; that the races in the schools should be separated socially; that colored schools should be chiefly industrial; and that every effort should be made to conciliate Southern white public opinion. Schools which were successfully carrying out this program could look for further help from organized philanthropy. Other schools, and this included Atlanta University, could not.

~~Even this would not necessarily have excluded Atlanta University from consideration at the hands of the philanthropists. The university had done and was doing excellent and thorough work. Even industrial training, in the South was often in the hands of Atlanta graduates. Tuskegee had always been largely manned by graduates of Atlanta and some of the best school systems of the South were directed by persons trained at Atlanta University. The college department was recognized as perhaps the largest and best in the South at the time. But unfortunately, at this time, there came a controversy between myself and Booker Washington, which became more personal and bitter than I had ever dreamed and which necessarily dragged in the University.~~

~~It was no controversy of my seeking; quite the contrary. I was in my imagination a scientist, and neither a leader nor an agitator; I had nothing but the greatest admiration for Mr. Washington and Tuskegee, and I had applied at both Tuskegee and Hampton for work. If Mr. Washington's telegram had reached me before the Wilberforce bid, I should have doubtless gone to Tuskegee. Certainly I knew no less about mathematics than I did about Latin and Greek.~~

~~an outrage.~~ I sent out from Atlanta in June, 1905, a call to a few selected persons "for organized determination and aggressive action on the part of men who believe in Negro freedom and growth." I proposed a conference during the summer "to oppose firmly present methods of strangling honest criticism; to organize intelligent and honest Negroes; and to support organs of news and public opinion."

Fifty-nine colored men from seventeen different states signed a call for a meeting near Buffalo, New York, during the week of July 9, 1905. I went to Buffalo and hired a little hotel on the Canada side of the river at Fort Erie, and waited for the men to attend the meeting. If sufficient men had not come to pay for the hotel, I should certainly have been in bankruptcy and perhaps in jail; but as a matter of fact, twenty-nine men, representing fourteen states, came. The "Niagara Movement" was organized January 31, 1906, and was incorporated in the District of Columbia.

Its particular business and objects are to advocate and promote the following principles:

1. Freedom of speech and criticism.
2. Unfettered and unsubsidized press.
3. Manhood suffrage.
4. The abolition of all caste distinctions based simply on race and color.
5. The recognition of the principles of human brotherhood as a practical present creed.
6. The recognition of the highest and best human training as the monopoly of no class or race.

7. A belief in the dignity of labor.
8. United effort to realize these ideals under wise and courageous leadership.

The Niagara Movement raised a furor of the most disconcerting criticism. I was accused of acting from motives of envy of a great leader and being ashamed of the fact that I was a member of the Negro race. The leading weekly of the land, the New York *Outlook*, pilloried me with scathing articles. But the movement went on. The next year, 1906, instead of meeting in secret, we met openly at Harper's Ferry, the scene of John Brown's raid, and had in significance if not numbers one of the greatest meetings that American Negroes have ever held. We made pilgrimage at dawn bare-footed to the scene of Brown's martyrdom and we talked some of the plainest English that has been given voice to by black men in America. The resolutions which I wrote expressed with tumult of emotion my creed of 1905:

"The men of the Niagara Movement, coming from the toil of the year's hard work, and pausing a moment from the earning of their daily bread, turn toward the nation and again ask in the name of ten million the privilege of a hearing. In the past year the work of the Negro hater has flourished in the land. Step by step the defenders of the rights of American citizens have retreated. The work of stealing the black man's ballot has progressed and the fifty and more representatives of stolen votes still sit in the nation's capital. Discrimination in travel and public accommodation has so spread that some of our weaker brethren are actually afraid to thunder against color dis-

crimination as such and are simply whispering for ordinary decencies.

"Against this the Niagara Movement eternally protests. We will not be satisfied to take one jot or tittle less than our full manhood rights. We claim for ourselves every single right that belongs to a freeborn American, political, civil, and social; and until we get these rights we will never cease to protest and assail the ears of America. The battle we wage is not for ourselves alone, but for all true Americans. It is a fight for ideals, lest this, our common fatherland, false to its founding, become in truth the land of the Thief and the home of the Slave—a by-word and a hissing among the nations for its sounding pretensions and pitiful accomplishment.

"Never before in the modern age has a great and civilized folk threatened to adopt so cowardly a creed in the treatment of its fellow-citizens, born and bred on its soil. Stripped of verbiage and subterfuge and in its naked nastiness, the new American creed says: fear to let black men even try to rise lest they become the equals of the white. And this is the land that professes to follow Jesus Christ. The blasphemy of such a course is only matched by its cowardice.

"In detail our demands are clear and unequivocal. First, we would vote; with the right to vote goes everything: freedom, manhood, the honor of your wives, the chastity of your daughters, the right to work, and the chance to rise, and let no man listen to those who deny this.

"We want full manhood suffrage, and we want it now, henceforth and forever.

"Second. We want discrimination in public accommoda-

tion to cease. Separation in railway and street cars, based simply on race and color, is un-American, undemocratic, and silly. We protest against all such discrimination.

"Third. We claim the right of freemen to walk, talk, and be with them that wish to be with us. No man has a right to choose another man's friends, and to attempt to do so is an impudent interference with the most fundamental human privilege.

"Fourth. We want the laws enforced against rich as well as poor; against Capitalist as well as Laborer; against white as well as black. We are not more lawless than the white race, we are more often arrested, convicted and mobbed. We want justice even for criminals and outlaws. We want the Constitution of the country enforced. We want Congress to take charge of the Congressional elections. We want the Fourteenth Amendment carried out to the letter and every State disfranchised in Congress which attempts to disfranchise its rightful voters. We want the Fifteenth Amendment enforced and no State allowed to base its franchise simply on color.

"The failure of the Republican Party in Congress at the session just closed to redeem its pledge of 1904 with reference to suffrage conditions at the South seems a plain, deliberate, and premeditated breach of promise, and stamps that party as guilty of obtaining votes under false pretense.

"Fifth. We want our children educated. The school system in the country districts of the South is a disgrace and in few towns and cities are the Negro schools what they ought to be. We want the national government to step in and wipe out illiteracy in the South. Either the

United States will destroy ignorance, or ignorance will destroy the United States.

"And when we call for education, we mean real education. We believe in work. We ourselves are workers, but work is not necessarily education. Education is the development of power and ideal. We want our children trained as intelligent human beings should be, and we will fight for all time against any proposal to educate black boys and girls simply as servants and underlings, or simply for the use of other people. They have a right to know, to think, to aspire.

~~"These are some of the chief things which we want. How shall we get them? By voting where we may vote; by persistent unceasing agitation; by hammering at the truth; by sacrifice and work.~~

~~"We do not believe in violence, neither in the despised violence of the raid nor the lauded violence of the soldier, nor the barbarous violence of the mob; but we do believe in John Brown, in that incarnate spirit of justice, that hatred of a lie, that willingness to sacrifice money, reputation, and life itself on the altar of right. And here on the scene of John Brown's martyrdom, we reconsecrate ourselves, our honor, our property to the final emancipation of the race which John Brown died to make free."~~

~~Meantime, I refused to give up the idea that a critical periodical for the American Negro might be founded. I had started in Memphis with the help of two graduates of Atlanta University the little printing shop that I have already mentioned, and from this was published weekly a paper called *The Moon* beginning in 1906. *The Moon* was in some sort precursor of *The Crisis*. It was published~~

~~for a year in Memphis and then the printing office given up and in 1907 in conjunction with two friends in Washington there was issued a miniature monthly called the *Horizon*. The *Horizon* was published from 1907 to 1910, and in the fall of 1910 *The Crisis* was born.~~

~~Gradually I began to realize that the difficulty about support for my work in Atlanta University was personal; that on account of my attitude toward Mr. Washington I had become *persona non grata* to powerful interests, and that Atlanta University would not be able to get support for its general work or for its study of the Negro problem so long as I remained at the institution. No one ever said this to me openly, but I sensed it in the worries which encompassed the new young President Ware who had succeeded Dr. Bumstead. I began to realize that I would better look out for work elsewhere.~~

~~About this time an offer came from the city of Washington. The merging of the white and colored school systems into one, had thrown colored folk into uproar lest their control of their own schools be eliminated. The new and rather eccentric W. C. Chancellor, superintendent of schools, wanted an assistant superintendent to put in charge of the Negro schools. To my great surprise he offered the position to me, while I was on a chance visit to the city. I asked for time to consider it. My reaction was to refuse even though the salary was twice what I was getting; for I doubted my fitness for such a job; but when I thought the matter over further and my position of Atlanta University, I began to wonder if I should not accept.~~

~~I was not called upon to decide, for forces started~~

clash of ideologies as biographical or sociological; as a matter of the actions and thoughts of certain men, or as a development of larger social forces beyond personal control. ~~I suppose the latter aspect is the truer.~~ My thoughts, the thoughts of Washington, Trotter and others, were the expression of social forces more than of our own minds. These forces or ideologies embraced more than our reasoned acts. They included physical, biological and psychological forces; habits, conventions and enactments. Opposed to these came natural reaction: the physical recoil of the victims, the unconscious and irrational urges, as well as reasoned complaints and acts. The total result was the history of our day. That history may be epitomized in one word—Empire; the domination of white Europe over black Africa and yellow Asia, through political power built on the economic control of labor, income and ideas. The echo of this industrial imperialism in America was the expulsion of black men from American democracy, their subjection to caste control and wage slavery. This ideology was triumphant in 1910.

CHAPTER 5. THE CONCEPT OF RACE

I WANT now to turn aside from the personal annals of this biography to consider the conception which is after all my main subject. The concept of race lacks something in personal interest, but personal interest in my case has always depended primarily upon this race concept and I wish to examine this now. The history of the development of the race concept in the world and particularly in America, was naturally reflected in the education offered me. In the elementary school it came only in the matter of geography when the races of the world were pictured: Indians, Negroes and Chinese, by their most uncivilized and bizarre representatives; the whites by some kindly and distinguished-looking philanthropist. In the elementary and high school, the matter was touched only incidentally, due I doubt not to the thoughtfulness of the teachers; and again my racial inferiority could not be dwelt upon because the single representative of the Negro race in the school did not happen to be in any way inferior to his fellows. In fact it was not difficult for me to excel them in many ways and to regard this as quite natural.

At Fisk, the problem of race was faced openly and essential racial equality asserted and natural inferiority strenuously denied. In some cases the teachers expressed this

theory; in most cases the student opinion naturally forced it. At Harvard, on the other hand, I began to face scientific race dogma: first of all, evolution and the "Survival of the Fittest." It was continually stressed in the community and in classes that there was a vast difference in the development of the whites and the "lower" races; that this could be seen in the physical development of the Negro. I remember once in a museum, coming face to face with a demonstration: a series of skeletons arranged from a little monkey to a tall well-developed white man, with a Negro barely outranking a chimpanzee. Eventually in my classes stress was quietly transferred to brain weight and brain capacity, and at last to the "cephalic index."

In the graduate school at Harvard and again in Germany, the emphasis again was altered, and race became a matter of culture and cultural history. The history of the world was paraded before the observation of students. Which was the superior race? Manifestly that which had a history, the white race; there was some mention of Asiatic culture, but no course in Chinese or Indian history or culture was offered at Harvard, and quite unanimously in America and Germany, Africa was left without culture and without history. Even when the matter of mixed races was touched upon their evident and conscious inferiority was mentioned. I can never forget that morning in the class of the great Heinrich von Treitschke in Berlin. He was a big aggressive man, with an impediment in his speech which forced him to talk rapidly lest he stutter. His classes were the only ones always on time, and an angry scraping of feet greeted a late comer. Clothed in black, big, bushy-haired, peering sharply at the class, his

words rushed out in a flood. "Mulattoes," he thundered, "are inferior." I almost felt his eyes boring into me, although probably he had not noticed me. "Sie fühlen sich niedriger!" "Their actions show it," he asserted. What contradiction could there be to that authoritative dictum?

The first thing which brought me to my senses in all this racial discussion was the continuous change in the proofs and arguments advanced. I could accept evolution and the survival of the fittest, provided the interval between advanced and backward races was not made too impossible. I balked at the usual "thousand years." But no sooner had I settled into scientific security here, than the basis of race distinction was changed without explanation, without apology. I was skeptical about brain weight; surely much depended upon what brains were weighed. I was not sure about physical measurements and social inquiries. For instance, an insurance actuary published in 1890 incontrovertible statistics showing how quickly and certainly the Negro race was dying out in the United States through sheer physical inferiority. I lived to see every assumption of Hoffman's "Race Traits and Tendencies" contradicted; but even before that, I doubted the statistical method which he had used. When the matter of race became a question of comparative culture, I was in revolt. I began to see that the cultural equipment attributed to any people depended largely on who estimated it; and conviction came later in a rush as I realized what in my education had been suppressed concerning Asiatic and African culture.

It was not until I was long out of school and indeed after the World War that there came the hurried use of

the new technique of psychological tests, which were quickly adjusted so as to put black folk absolutely beyond the possibility of civilization. By this time I was unimpressed. I had too often seen science made the slave of caste and race hate. And it was interesting to see Odum, McDougall and Brigham eventually turn somersaults from absolute scientific proof of Negro inferiority to repudiation of the limited and questionable application of any test which pretended to measure innate human intelligence.

So far I have spoken of "race" and race problems quite as a matter of course without explanation or definition. That was our method in the nineteenth century. Just as I was born a member of a colored family, so too I was born a member of the colored race. That was obvious and no definition was needed. Later I adopted the designation "Negro" for the race to which I belong. It seemed more definite and logical. At the same time I was of course aware that all members of the Negro race were not black and that the pictures of my race which were current were not authentic nor fair portraits. But all that was incidental. The world was divided into great primary groups of folk who belonged naturally together through heredity of physical traits and cultural affinity.

I do not know how I came first to form my theories of race. The process was probably largely unconscious. The differences of personal appearance between me and my fellows, I must have been conscious of when quite young. Whatever distinctions came because of that did not irritate me; they rather exalted me because, on the whole, while I was still a youth, they gave me exceptional posi-

tion and a chance to excel rather than handicapping me.

Then of course, when I went South to Fisk, I became a member of a closed racial group with rites and loyalties, with a history and a corporate future, with an art and philosophy. I received these eagerly and expanded them so that when I came to Harvard the theory of race separation was quite in my blood. I did not seek contact with my white fellow students. On the whole I rather avoided them. I took it for granted that we were training ourselves for different careers in worlds largely different. There was not the slightest idea of the permanent subordination and inequality of my world. Nor again was there any idea of racial amalgamation. I resented the assumption that we desired it. I frankly refused the possibility while in Germany and even in America gave up courtship with one "colored" girl because she looked quite white, and I should resent the inference on the street that I had married outside my race.

All this theory, however, was disturbed by certain facts in America, and by my European experience. Despite everything, race lines were not fixed and fast. Within the Negro group especially there were people of all colors. Then too, there were plenty of my colored friends who resented my ultra "race" loyalty and ridiculed it. They pointed out that I was not a "Negro," but a mulatto; that I was not a Southerner but a Northerner, and my object was to be an American and not a Negro; that race distinctions must go. I agreed with this in part and as an ideal, but I saw it leading to inner racial distinction in the colored group. I resented the defensive mechanism of avoiding too dark companions in order to escape notice

and discrimination in public. As a sheer matter of taste I wanted the color of my group to be visible. I hotly championed the inclusion of two black school mates whose names were not usually on the invitation list to our social affairs. In Europe my friendships and close contact with white folk made my own ideas waver. The eternal walls between races did not seem so stern and exclusive. I began to emphasize the cultural aspects of race.

It is probably quite natural for persons of low degree, who have reached any status, to search feverishly for distinguished ancestry, as a sort of proof of their inherent desert. This is particularly true in America and has given rise to a number of organizations whose membership depends upon ancestors who have made their mark in the world. Of course, it is clear that there must be here much fable, invention and wishful thinking; facilitated by poor vital statistics and absence of written records. For the mass of Americans, and many Americans who have had the most distinguished careers, have been descended from people who were quite ordinary and even less; America indeed has meant the breaking down of class bars which imprisoned personalities and capabilities and allowing new men and new families to emerge. This is not, as some people assume, a denial of the importance of heredity and family. It is rather its confirmation. It shows us that the few in the past who have emerged are not necessarily the best; and quite certainly are not the only ones worthy of development and distinction; that, on the contrary, only a comparatively few have, under our present economic and social organization, had a chance to show their capabilities.

I early began to take a direct interest in my own family as a group and became curious as to that physical descent which so long I had taken for granted quite unquestioningly. But I did not at first think of any but my Negro ancestors. I knew little and cared less of the white forebears of my father. But this chauvinism gradually changed. There is, of course, nothing more fascinating than the question of the various types of mankind and their intermixture. The whole question of heredity and human gift depends upon such knowledge; but ever since the African slave trade and before the rise of modern biology and sociology, we have been afraid in America that scientific study in this direction might lead to conclusions with which we were loath to agree; and this fear was in reality because the economic foundation of the modern world was based on the recognition and preservation of so-called racial distinctions. In accordance with this, not only Negro slavery could be justified, but the Asiatic coolie profitably used and the labor classes in white countries kept in their places by low wage.

It is not singular then that here in America and in the West Indies, where we have had the most astonishing modern mixture of human types, scientific study of the results and circumstances of this mixture has not only lagged but been almost non-existent. We have not only not studied race and race mixture in America, but we have tried almost by legal process to stop such study. It is for this reason that it has occurred to me just here to illustrate the way in which Africa and Europe have been united in my family. There is nothing unusual about this interracial history. It has been duplicated thousands of times

too seldom revealed their source material. I was in West Africa only two months, but with both eyes wide. I saw children quite naked and women usually naked to the waist—with bare bosom and limbs. And in those sixty days I saw less of sex dalliance and appeal than I see daily on Fifth Avenue. This does not mean much, but it is an interesting fact.

The primitive black man is courteous and dignified. If the platforms of Western cities had swarmed with humanity as I have seen the platforms swarm in Senegal, the police would have a busy time. I did not see one respectable quarrel. Wherefore shall we all take to the Big Bush? No. I prefer New York. But my point is that New York and London and Paris must learn of West Africa and may learn.

The one great lack in Africa is communication—communication as represented by human contact, movement of goods, dissemination of knowledge. All these things we have—we have in such crushing abundance that they have mastered us and defeated their real good. We meet human beings in such throngs that we cannot know or even understand them—they become to us inhuman, mechanical, hateful. We are choked and suffocated, tempted and killed by goods accumulated from the ends of the earth; our newspapers and magazines so overwhelm us with knowledge—knowledge of all sorts and kinds from particulars as to our neighbors' underwear to Einstein's mathematics—that one of the great and glorious joys of the African bush is to escape from "news."

On the other hand, African life with its isolation has deeper knowledge of human souls. The village life, the

forest ways, the teeming markets, bring in intimate human knowledge that the West misses, sinking the individual in the social. Africans know fewer folk, but know them infinitely better. Their intertwined communal souls, therefore, brook no poverty nor prostitution—these things are to them un-understandable. On the other hand, they are vastly ignorant of what the world is doing and thinking, and of what is known of its physical forces. They suffer terribly from preventable disease, from unnecessary hunger, from the freaks of the weather.

Here, then, is something for Africa and Europe both to learn; and Africa is eager, breathless, to learn—while Europe? Europe laughs with loud guffaws. Learn of Africa? Nonsense. Poverty cannot be abolished. Democracy and firm government are incompatible. ~~Prostitution is world old and inevitable.~~ And Europe proceeds to use Africa as a means and not as an end; as a hired tool and welter of raw materials and not as a land of human beings.

I think it was in Africa that I came more clearly to see the close connection between race and wealth. The fact that even in the minds of the most dogmatic supporters of race theories and believers in the inferiority of colored folk to white, there was a conscious or unconscious determination to increase their incomes by taking full advantage of this belief. And then gradually this thought was metamorphosed into a realization that the income-bearing value of race prejudice was the cause and not the result of theories of race inferiority; that particularly in the United States the income of the Cotton Kingdom based on black slavery caused the passionate belief in

Negro inferiority and the determination to enforce it even by arms.

I have wandered afeld from miscegenation in the West Indies to race blending and segregation in America and to a glimpse of present Africa. Now to return to the American concept of race. It was in my boyhood, as I have intimated, an adventure. In my youth, it became the vision of a glorious crusade where I and my fellows were to match our mettle against white folk and show them what black folk could do. But as I grew older the matter became more serious and less capable of jaunty settlement. I not only met plenty of persons equal in ability to myself but often with greater ability and nearly always with greater opportunity. Racial identity presented itself as a matter of tramels and impediments as "tightening bonds about my feet." As I looked out into my racial world the whole thing verged on tragedy. My "way was cloudy" and the approach to its high goals by no means straight and clear. I saw the race problem was not as I conceived, a matter of clear, fair competition, for which I was ready and eager. It was rather a matter of segregation, of hindrance and inhibitions, and my struggles against this and resentment at it began to have serious repercussions upon my inner life.

It is difficult to let others see the full psychological meaning of caste segregation. It is as though one, looking out from a dark cave in a side of an impending mountain, sees the world passing and speaks to it; speaks courteously and persuasively, showing them how these entombed souls are hindered in their natural movement, expression, and development; and how their loosening from prison would

be a matter not simply of courtesy, sympathy, and help to them, but aid to all the world. One talks on evenly and logically in this way, but notices that the passing throng does not even turn its head, or if it does, glances curiously and walks on. It gradually penetrates the minds of the prisoners that the people passing do not hear; that some thick sheet of invisible but horribly tangible plate glass is between them and the world. They get excited; they talk louder; they gesticulate. Some of the passing world stop in curiosity; these gesticulations seem so pointless; they laugh and pass on. They still either do not hear at all, or hear but dimly, and even what they hear, they do not understand. Then the people within may become hysterical. They may scream and hurl themselves against the barriers, hardly realizing in their bewilderment that they are screaming in a vacuum unheard and that their antics may actually seem funny to those outside looking in. They may even, here and there, break through in blood and disfigurement, and find themselves faced by a horrified, implacable, and quite overwhelming mob of people frightened for their own very existence.

It is hard under such circumstances to be philosophical and calm, and to think through a method of approach and accommodation between castes. The entombed find themselves not simply trying to make the outer world understand their essential and common humanity but even more, as they become inured to their experience, they have to keep reminding themselves that the great and oppressing world outside is also real and human and in its essence honest. All my life I have had continually to haul my soul back and say, "All white folk are not scoundrels

nor murderers. They are, even as I am, painfully human."

One development continually recurs: any person outside of this wall of glass can speak to his own fellows, can assume a facile championship of the entombed, and gain the enthusiastic and even gushing thanks of the victims. But this method is subject to two difficulties: first of all, not being possibly among the entombed or capable of sharing their inner thought and experience, this outside leadership will continually misinterpret and compromise and complicate matters, even with the best of will. And secondly, of course, no matter how successful the outside advocacy is, it remains impotent and unsuccessful until it actually succeeds in freeing and making articulate the submerged caste.

Practically, this group imprisonment within a group has various effects upon the prisoner. He becomes provincial and centered upon the problems of his particular group. He tends to neglect the wider aspects of national life and human existence. On the one hand he is unselfish so far as his inner group is concerned. He thinks of himself not as an individual but as a group man, a "race" man. His loyalty to this group idea tends to be almost unending and balks at almost no sacrifice. On the other hand, his attitude toward the environing race congeals into a matter of unreasoning resentment and even hatred, deep disbelief in them and refusal to conceive honesty and rational thought on their part. This attitude adds to the difficulties of conversation, intercourse, understanding between groups.

This was the race concept which has dominated my life, and the history of which I have attempted to make the

leading theme of this book. It had as I have tried to show all sorts of illogical trends and irreconcilable tendencies. Perhaps it is wrong to speak of it at all as "a concept" rather than as a group of contradictory forces, facts and tendencies. At any rate I hope I have made its meaning to me clear. It was for me as I have written first a matter of dawning realization, then of study and science; then a matter of inquiry into the diverse strands of my own family; and finally consideration of my connection, physical and spiritual, with Africa and the Negro race in its homeland. All this led to an attempt to rationalize the racial concept and its place in the modern world.

CHAPTER 6. THE WHITE WORLD

THE majority of men resent and always have resented the idea of equality with most of their fellow men. This has had physical, economic, and cultural reasons: the physical fear of attack; the economic strife to avert starvation and secure protection and shelter; but more especially I presume the cultural and spiritual desire to be one's self without interference from others; to enjoy that anarchy of the spirit which is inevitably the goal of all consciousness. It is only in highly civilized times and places that the conception arises of an individual freedom and development, and even that was conceived of as the right of a privileged minority, and was based on the degradation, the exclusion, the slavery of most others. The history of tribes and clans, of social classes and all nations, and of race antipathies in our own world, is an exemplification of this fight against equality and inability even to picture its possibility.

The result is that men are conditioned and their actions forced not simply by their physical environment, powerful as mountains and rain, heat and cold, forest and desert always have been and will be. When we modify the effects of this environment by what we call the social environment, we have conceived a great and important truth. But even this needs further revision. A man lives today not

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only in his physical environment and in the social environment of ideas and customs, laws and ideals; but that total environment is subjected to a new socio-physical environment of other groups, whose social environment he shares but in part.

A man in the European sixteenth century was born not simply in the valley of the Thames or Seine, but in a certain social class and the environment of that class made and limited his world. He was then, consciously or not, not fully a man; he was an artisan and until he complied with the limitations of that class he was continually knocking his hands, head and heart against an environment, composed of other classes, which limited what he could and could not do and what he must do; and this greater group environment was not a matter of mere ideas and thought; it was embodied in muscles and armed men, in scowling faces, in the majesty of judge and police and in human law which became divine.

Much as I knew of this class structure of the world, I should never have realized it vividly and fully if I had not been born into its modern counterpart, racial segregation; first into a world composed of people with colored skins who remembered slavery and endured discrimination; and who had to a degree their own habits, customs, and ideals; but in addition to this I lived in an environment which I came to call the white world. I was not an American; I was not a man; I was by long education and continual compulsion and daily reminder, a colored man in a white world; and that white world often existed primarily, so far as I was concerned, to see with sleepless vigilance that I was kept within bounds. All this made me

limited in physical movement and provincial in thought and dream. I could not stir, I could not act, I could not live, without taking into careful daily account the reaction of my white environing world. How I traveled and where, what work I did, what income I received, where I ate, where I slept, with whom I talked, where I sought recreation, where I studied, what I wrote and what I could get published—all this depended and depended primarily upon an overwhelming mass of my fellow citizens in the United States, from whose society I was largely excluded.

Of course, there was no real wall between us. I knew from the days of my childhood and in the elementary school, on through my walks in the Harvard yard and my lectures in Germany, that in all things in general, white people were just the same as I: their physical possibilities, their mental processes were no different from mine; even the difference in skin color was vastly overemphasized and intrinsically trivial. And yet this fact of racial distinction based on color was the greatest thing in my life and absolutely determined it, because this surrounding group, in alliance and agreement with the white European world, was settled and determined upon the fact that I was and must be a thing apart.

It was impossible to gainsay this. It was impossible for any time and to any distance to withdraw myself and look down upon these absurd assumptions with philosophical calm and humorous self-control. If, as happened to a friend of mine, a lady in a Pullman car ordered me to bring her a glass of water, mistaking me for a porter, the incident in its essence was a joke to be chuckled over; but in its hard,

cruel significance and its unending inescapable sign of slavery, it was something to drive a man mad.

For long years it seemed to me that this imprisonment of a human group with chains in hands of an environing group, was a singularly unusual characteristic of the Negro in the United States in the nineteenth century. But since then it has been easy for me to realize that the majority of mankind has struggled through this inner spiritual slavery and that while a dream which we have easily and jauntily called democracy envisages a day when the environing group looses the chains and compulsion, and is willing and even eager to grant families, nations, sub-races, and races equality of opportunity among larger groups, that even this grand equality has not come; and until it does, individual equality and the free soul is impossible. All our present frustration in trying to realize individual equality through communism, fascism, and democracy arises from our continual unwillingness to break the intellectual bonds of group and racial exclusiveness.

Thus it is easy to see that scientific definition of race is impossible; it is easy to prove that physical characteristics are not so inherited as to make it possible to divide the world into races; that ability is the monopoly of no known aristocracy; that the possibilities of human development cannot be circumscribed by color, nationality, or any conceivable definition of race; all this has nothing to do with the plain fact that throughout the world today organized groups of men by monopoly of economic and physical power, legal enactment and intellectual training are limiting with determination and unflagging zeal the develop-

ment of other groups; and that the concentration particularly of economic power today puts the majority of mankind into a slavery to the rest.

There has been an understandable determination in the United States among both Negro and white thinkers to minimize and deny the realities of racial difference. The race problem has been rationalized in every way. It has been called the natural result of slavery; the effect of poverty and ignorance; the situation consequent upon lack of effort and thought on the part of Americans and of other races. But all this reasoning has its logical pitfalls: granted that poverty causes color prejudice, color prejudice certainly is a cause of poverty. Ignorance leads to exploitation and mistreatment, but the black child is more often forced into ignorance and kept there than the white child. Thus it is impossible for the clear-headed student of human action in the United States and in the world, to avoid facing the fact of a white world which is today dominating human culture and working for the continued subordination of the colored races.

It may be objected here that so general a statement is not fair; that there are many white folk who feel the unfairness and crime of color and race prejudice and have toiled and sacrificed to counteract it. This brings up the whole question of social guilt. When, for instance, one says that the action of England toward the darker races has been a course of hypocrisy, force and greed covering four hundred years it does not mean to include in that guilt many persons of the type of William Wilberforce and Granville Sharpe. On the other hand because British history has not involved the guilt of all Britons we cannot

jump to the opposite and equally fallacious conclusion that there has been no guilt; that the development of the British Empire is a sort of cosmic process with no individual human being at fault. In the history of England, France, America, Germany and Italy, we have villains who have selfishly and criminally desired and accomplished what made for the suffering and degradation of mankind. We have had others who desired the uplift and worked for the uplift of all men. And we have had a middle class of people who sometimes ignorantly and sometimes consciously shifted the balance now here, and now there; and when, in the end, this balance of public opinion, this effective social action, has made for the degradation of mankind or in so far as it has done this, that part of England which has allowed this or made it possible is blood-guilty of the result. So in America, not the philosophy of Jefferson nor the crusade of Garrison nor the reason of Sumner was able to counterbalance the race superiority doctrines of Calhoun, the imperialism of Jefferson Davis, nor the race hate of Ben Tillman. As a result white America has crucified, enslaved, and oppressed the Negro group and holds them still, especially in the South, in a legalized position of inferior caste.

With the best will the factual outline of a life misses the essence of its spirit. Thus in my life the chief fact has been race—not so much scientific race, as that deep conviction of myriads of men that congenial differences among the main masses of human beings absolutely condition the individual destiny of every member of a group. Into the spiritual provincialism of this belief I have been born and this fact has guided, embittered, illuminated

~~and enshrouded my life~~ Yet, how shall I explain and clarify its meaning for a soul? Description fails—I have tried that. Yet, lest I omit the most important thing in the life of an American Negro today and the only thing that adequately explains his success, failures and foibles, let me attempt its exposition by personifying my white and colored environment.

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When, for example, the obsession of his race consciousness leaves him, my white friend, Roger Van Dieman (who, I hasten to add, is an abstraction and integration and never existed), is quite companionable; otherwise he is impossible. He has a way of putting an excessive amount of pity in his look and of stating as a general and incontrovertible fact that it is "horrible" to be an Exception. By this he means me. He is more than certain that I prove the rule. He is not a bright person, but of that famous average, standardized and astonished at anything that even seems original. His thesis is simple: the world is composed of Race superimposed on Race; classes superimposed on classes; beneath the whole thing is "Our Family" in capitals, and under that is God. God seems to be a cousin, or at least a blood relative, of the Van Diemans. "Of course," he says, "you know Negroes are inferior."

I admit nothing of the sort, I maintain. In fact, having known with some considerable intimacy both male and female, the people of the British Isles, of Scandinavia, of Russia, of Germany, north and south, of the three ends of France and the two ends of Italy; specimens from the Balkans and black and white Spain; the three great races

of Asia and the melange of Africa, without mentioning America, I sit here and maintain that black folk are much superior to white.

"You are either joking or mad," he says.

Both and neither. This race talk is, of course, a joke, and frequently it has driven me insane and probably will permanently in the future; and yet, seriously and soberly, we black folk are the salvation of mankind.

He regards me with puzzled astonishment and says confidentially:

"Do you know that sometimes I am half afraid that you really believe this? At other times I see clearly the inferiority complex."

The former after lunch, I reply, and the latter before.

"Very well," he says, "let's lunch."

Where? I ask quizzically, we being at the time in the Roaring Forties.

"Why—oh, well—their refusal to serve you lunch at least does not prove your superiority."

Nor yet theirs, I answer; but never mind, come with me to Second Avenue, where Labor lives and food is bad.

We start again with the salad.

"Now, superiority consists of what?" he argues.

Life is, I remark, (1) Beauty and health of body, (2) Mental clearness and creative genius, (3) Spiritual goodness and receptivity, (4) Social adaptability and constructiveness.

"Not bad," he answers. "Not bad at all. Now I contend that the white race conspicuously excels in beauty, genius, and construction, and is well abreast even in goodness." And I maintain that the black race excels in beauty,

goodness, and adaptability, and is well abreast in genius.

"Sheer nonsense and pure balderdash. Compare the Venus of Milo and the Apollo Belvedere with a Harlem or Beale Street couple."

I retort: in short, compare humanity at its worst with the Ideal, and humanity suffers. But black folk in most attributes of physical beauty, in line and height and curve, have the same norms as whites and differ only in small details of color, hair and curve of countenance. Now can there be any question but that as colors, bronze, mahogany, coffee and gold are far lovelier than pink, gray, and marble? Hair is a matter of taste. Some will have it drab and stringy and others in a gray, woven, unmoving mass. Most of us like it somewhere between, in tiny tendrils, smoking curls and sweeping curves. I have loved all these varieties in my day. I prefer the crinkly kind, almost wavy, in black, brown, and glistening gold. In faces, I hate straight features; needles and razors may be sharp—but beautiful, never.

"All that is personal opinion. I prefer the colors of heaven and day: sunlight hair and sky-blue eyes; straight noses and thin lips, and that incomparable air of haughty aloofness and aristocracy."

And I, on the contrary, am the child of twilight and night, and choose intricately curly hair, black eyes, full and luscious features; and that air of humility and wonder which streams from moonlight. Add to this voices that caress instead of rasp, glances that appeal rather than repel, and a sinuous liteness of movement to replace Anglo-Saxon stalking—there you have my ideal. Of course, you

can bury any human body in dirt and misery and make it horrible. I have seen the East End of London.

"Beauty seems to be simply opinion, if you put it that way."

To be sure. But whose opinion?

"Bother beauty. Here we shall never agree. But, after all, I doubt if it makes much difference. The real point is Brains: clear thinking, pure reason, mathematical precision and creative genius. Now, without blague, stand and acknowledge that here the white race is supreme."

Quite the contrary. I know no attribute in which the white race has more conspicuously failed. This is white and European civilization; and as a system of culture it is idiotic, addle-brained, unreasoning, topsy-turvy, without precision; and its genius chiefly runs to marvelous contrivances for enslaving the many, and enriching the few, and murdering both. I see absolutely no proof that the average ability of the white man's brain to think clearly is any greater than that of the yellow man or of the black man. If we take even that doubtful but widely heralded test, the frequency of individual creative genius (when a real racial test should be the frequency of ordinary common sense)—if we take the Genius as the savior of mankind, it is only possible for the white race to prove its own incontestable superiority by appointing both judge and jury and summoning its own witnesses.

I freely admit that, according to white writers, white teachers, white historians, and white molders of public opinion, nothing ever happened in the world of any importance that could not or should not be labeled "white." How silly. I place black iron-welding and village democ-

racy, and yellow printing and state building, side by side with white representative government and the steam engine, and unhesitatingly give the palm to the first. I hand the first vast conception of the solar system to the Africanized Egyptians, the creation of Art to the Chinese, the highest conception of Religion to the Asiatic Semites, and then let Europe rave over the Factory system.

"But is not well-being more widely diffused among white folk than among yellow and black, and general intelligence more common?"

True, and why? Ask the geography of Europe, the African Slave Trade and the industrial technique of the nineteenth-century white man. Turn the thing around, and let a single tradition of culture suddenly have thrust into its hands the power to bleed the world of its brawn and wealth, and the willingness to do this, and you will have exactly what we have today, under another name and color.

"Precisely. Then, at least, the white race is more advanced and no more blameworthy than others because, as I insist, its native intelligence is greater. It is germ plasma, seed, that I am talking about. Do you believe in heredity?"

Not blindly; but I should be mildly surprised to see a dog born of a cat.

"Exactly; or a genius born of a fool."

No, no; on the contrary, I rather expect fools of geniuses and geniuses of fools. And while I stoutly maintain that catiness and doginess are as far apart as the East from the West, on the other hand, I just as strongly believe

that the human ass and the superman have much in common and can often, if not always, spawn each other.

"Is it possible that you have never heard of the Jukes, or of the plain results of hereditary degeneration and the possibilities of careful breeding?"

It is not possible; they have been served up to me ad infinitum. But they are nothing. I know greater wonders: Lincoln from Nancy Hanks, Dumas from a black beast of burden, Kant from a saddler, and Jesus Christ from a manger.

"All of which, instead of disproving, is exact and definite proof of the persistence of good blood."

Precisely, and of the catholicity of its tastes; the method of proof is this: when anything good occurs, it is proof of good blood; when anything bad occurs, it is proof of bad blood. Very well. Now good and bad, native endowment and native deficiency, do not follow racial lines. There is good stock in all races and the outcropping of bad individuals, too; and there has been absolutely no proof that the white race has any larger share of the gifted strains of human heritage than the black race or the yellow race. To be sure, good seed proves itself in the flower and the fruit, but the failure of seed to sprout is no proof that it is not good. It may be proof simply of the absence of manure—or its excessive presence.

Granted, that when time began, there was hidden in a Seed that tiny speck that spelled the world's salvation, do you think today it would manifest itself crudely and baldly in a dash of skin color and a crinkle of hair? Is the subtle mystery of life and consciousness and of ability portrayed in any such slapdash and obvious marks of difference?

X

driver, nor the starvation wage, nor the disgust of the Yankee, nor the call of the cotton crop, has yet convinced the common black variety of plantation laborer that one day in the week is enough for rest and play. He wants two days. And, from California to Texas, from Florida to Trinidad, he takes two days while the planter screams and curses. They have beaten the English slavey, the French and German peasants, and the North Italian contadini into twelve-hour, six-day slaves. They crushed the Chinese and Indian coolie into a twenty-four-hour beast of burden; they have even made the American, free, white and twenty-one, believe that daily toil is one of the Ten Commandments. But not the Negro. From Monday to Friday the field hand is a slave; then for forty-eight golden hours he is free, and through these same forty-eight hours he may yet free the dumb, driven cattle of the world.

Then the second thing, laughter. This race has the greatest of the gifts of God, laughter. It dances and sings; it is humble; it longs to learn; it loves men; it loves women. It is frankly, baldly, deliciously human in an artificial and hypocritical land. If you will hear men laugh, go to Guinea, "Black Bottom," "Niggertown," Harlem. If you want to feel humor too exquisite and subtle for translation, sit invisibly among a gang of Negro workers. The white world has its gibes and cruel caricatures; it has its loud guffaws; but to the black world alone belongs the delicious chuckle.

"But the State; the modern industrial State. Wealth of work, wealth of commerce, factory and mine, skyscrapers; New York, Chicago, Johannesburg, London and Buenos Aires!"

This is the best expression of the civilization in which the white race finds itself today. This is what the white world means by culture.

"Does it not excel the black and yellow race here?"

It does. But the excellence here raises no envy; only regrets. If this vast Frankenstein monster really served its makers; if it were their minister and not their master, god and king; if their machines gave us rest and leisure, instead of the drab uniformity of uninteresting drudgery; if their factories gave us gracious community of thought and feeling; beauty enshrined, free and joyous; if their work veiled them with tender sympathy at human distress and wide tolerance and understanding—then, all hail, White Imperial Industry! But it does not. It is a Beast! Its creators even do not understand it, cannot curb or guide it. They themselves are but hideous, groping higher Hands, doing their bit to oil the raging devastating machinery which kills men to make cloth, prostitutes women to rear buildings and eats little children.

Is this superiority? It is madness. We are the supermen who sit idly by and laugh and look at civilization. We, who frankly want the bodies of our mates and conjure no blush to our bronze cheeks when we own it. We, who exalt the Lynched above the Lyncher, and the Worker above the Owner, and the Crucified above Imperial Rome.

"But why have you black and yellow men done nothing better or even as good in the history of the world?"

We have, often.

"I never heard of it."

Lions have no historians.

~~"It is idiotic even to discuss it. Look around and see the~~

sciously defended them; when the world lies today it is to a world that pretends to love truth.

"In other words, according to you, white folk are about the meanest and lowest on earth."

They are human, even as you and I.

"Why don't you leave them, then? Get out, go to Africa or to the North Pole; shake the dust of their hospitality from off your feet?"

There are abundant reasons. First, they have annexed the earth and hold it by transient but real power. Thus, by running away, I shall not only not escape them, but succeed in hiding myself in out of the way places where they can work their devilry on me without photograph, telegraph, or mail service. But even more important than this: I am as bad as they are. In fact, I am related to them and they have much that belongs to me—this land, for instance, for which my fathers starved and fought; I share their sins; in fine, I am related to them.

"By blood?"

By Blood.

"Then you are railing at yourself. You are not black; you are no Negro."

And you? Yellow blood and black has deluged Europe in days past even more than America yesterday. You are not white, as the measurements of your head will show. "What then becomes of all your argument, if there are no races and we are all so horribly mixed as you maliciously charge?"

Oh, my friend, can you not see that I am laughing at you? Do you suppose this world of men is simply a great

layer cake with superimposed slices of inferior and superior races, interlaid with mud?

No, no. Human beings are infinite in variety, and when they are agglutinated in groups, great and small, the groups differ as though they, too, had integrating souls. But they have not. The soul is still individual if it is free. Race is a cultural, sometimes an historical fact. And all that I really have been trying to say is that a certain group that I know and to which I belong, as contrasted with the group you know and to which you belong, and in which you fanatically and glorifyingly believe, bears in its bosom just now the spiritual hope of this land because of the persons who compose it and not by divine command.

"But what is this group; and how do you differentiate it; and how can you call it 'black' when you admit it is not black?"

I recognize it quite easily and with full legal sanction; the black man is a person who must ride "Jim Crow" in Georgia.

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My mythical friend Van Dieman is not my only white companion. I have others—many others; one and one especially I want to bring to your attention not because of his attitude toward me but rather because of his attitude toward himself. He represents the way in which my envisioning white group distorts and frustrates itself even as it strives toward justice and all because of me. In other words, because of the Negro problem. The average, reasonable, conscientious, and fairly intelligent white American faces continuing paradox.

This other friend of mine is free, white, and twenty-

Peace, Good Will, Freedom, the Golden Rule and Poverty! My God, what a Paradise, despite death and accident, cold and heat—what? That fellow Gandhi is the only human leader today with the right idea. It's magnificent. It's tremendous."

"Plain living and high thinking," I suggest.

"Of course," he responds, "only—well, one wants some Beauty—travel, gowns, palaces, diamonds, and Grand Opera—"

I intervene, "But don't forget the preceding lines: 'never to blend our pleasure or our pride, with sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.'"

"But—well, that brings me down out of the clouds," he complains. "This can't be a world of saints. We have got to have wealth and servants. Servants must be cheap and willing and the mean ought not to be so sensitive. Perhaps they are not. But why not have a world of gentlemen—well-policed, everybody in his place; all the rich, courteous and generous and all the poor appreciative; propaganda for the right, love of country and prosperous business; White World leading the Colored as far as the darkies can go. Certainly despite all your democracy, blood will tell. Now that seems to be *practical*. They've got something like that in England. Or at least, they think they have.

"But if I put this thing to the club, as man to man, no sooner have I mentioned England than they're in arms. England, dammit, has a bigger navy and merchant marine than we, with which she monopolizes the world-carrying trade; she patronizes and despises us, and then pats us on the back when her chestnuts are red-hot; she rules a bigger

empire. And France won't pay us and has a big black army; and Russia is stirring up Revolution with a big Red army; and Germany! Good Lord! Hitler is anti-Christ. I tell you what, we got to watch out. America is the greatest nation on earth and the world is jealous of her. We got to be prepared if it takes a billion a year for powder and guns. We've got to be disciplined; a stern, severe code for the lazy and criminal; training for boy scouts and militia. We must put patriotism before everything—make 'em salute the flag, stop radical treason, keep out the dirty foreigners, disfranchise niggers and make America a Power!

"Well, I like America. Darn it! I *love* it. My father died for it, although not in war—and I am reasonably willing to. There's no doubt about it, lambs have got no business prowling about lions and—oh, Hell! Honest to God, what do you think Asia and Africa would do to us, if they got a chance?"

"Skin us alive," I answer cheerfully, loving the "us."

"Well, then! Skin them and skin 'em first and keep 'em skinned. I'm a He-White-Man, get me?"

"Then look at these other columns. Suppose they are not logical, correct, compelling. We cannot run this world without the police and courts of Justice. We must not be discourteous even to the pushing, careless, impudent American fellow-citizen, but something is due our own self-respect. Can we get on without being exclusive? I don't mean downright snobbishness, but be careful, nice, 'aristocratic' in the best meaning of the term. Finally, we of the upper class must have money. We must have it, no matter how we get it, or civilization is lost."

~~Well, now, if we cannot do without these things, then, they must become our rule of life. But no sooner have you settled it this way than there comes that business of being an American. Can we give that up? Can we go in for Humanity and the International? Lord knows I'd like to but somehow, I can't see it. Suppose America disarmed like Denmark, gave up poison gas, big battleships and dinky little officers in khaki? Suppose we continue to neglect discipline for the mob and stop teaching thick and thin patriotism? I admit it isn't exactly honest business; America isn't so wonderful as nations go, but must we not make Americans believe it wonderful? Can we emphasize the fact that Lincoln told smutty stories and Washington held slaves and Jefferson begat bastards, and Webster drank more than was good for him? Suppose we did not become powerful as well as big? What is going to happen to us? Well, there you are. We've got to be Americans even if we give up being Christians and Gentlemen."~~

Or again, and here my friend gets a bit embarrassed and red in the face: "You see," he says to me confidentially, "I've got a little daughter, young yet, but a nice little thing. Probably she is going to be pretty, certainly is going to have some money from her aunt as well as a bit from me. She is being educated, and I may say rather expensively educated, in a private school. She may go in for art or some high class profession, or she may not; but certainly, I hope she will marry and marry well. There will be children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren and so on ad infinitum. Now, I tell you frankly, I want them all white. Even if she were a son, while the case wouldn't be so bad, still I don't want to think of colored

folk sharing my blood. Can you for a moment conceive a world where brown men and dagoes were giving orders to white men and women? It would spell the end of civilization. Of course, there may be a few exceptions, but the mass of the colored world can't think, they can't rule, they can't direct, and we mustn't let them try. And to keep them from trying we've got to pound them back into their places every time they show their heads above the ramparts!"

Then my friend stopped. He turned red and grew apologetic. "Of course," he stammered, "I don't exactly mean you—you are an Exception, at least in some respects—"

"In some respects?" I rejoin helplessly. But my friend stiffened. Suddenly he ceased speaking and stared at the headlines in the evening paper. The world had gone to war again to defend Democracy!

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The democracy which the white world seeks to defend does not exist. It has been splendidly conceived and discussed, but not realized. If it ever is to grow strong enough for self-defense and for embracing the world and developing human culture to its highest, it must include not simply the lower classes among the whites now excluded from voice in the control of industry; but in addition to that it must include the colored peoples of Asia and Africa, now hopelessly imprisoned by poverty and ignorance. Unless these latter are included and in so far as they are not, democracy is a mockery and contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction.

Hitler is the late crude but logical exponent of white

world race philosophy since the Conference of Berlin in 1884. Europe had followed the high, ethical dream of a young Jew but twisted that ethic beyond recognition to any end that Europe wanted. If that end was murder, the "Son of God went forth to war!" If that end was slavery, God thundered, "Cursed be Canaan," and Paul echoed "Servants obey your masters!" If poverty was widespread and seemingly inevitable, Christ was poor and alms praise-worthy.

There persisted the mud-sill theory of society that civilization not only permitted but must have the poor, the diseased, the wretched, the criminal upon which to build its temples of light. Western Europe did not and does not want democracy, never believed in it, never practiced it and never without fundamental and basic revolution will accept it. Not the keen, the bold, the brave and the enlightened are the ones which modern individual struggle throws to the fore but rather the lucky and the strong.

How now, not so much in the judgment of the common man, but in the light of science, can the racial attitude of the white world be explained and rationalized and removed from the harsh judgment put upon it by the darker races today? Negroes in Africa, Indians in Asia, mulattoes and mestizoes in the West Indies, Central and South America, all explain the attitude of the white world as sheer malevolence; while the white people of the leading European countries honestly regard themselves as among the great benefactors of mankind and especially of colored mankind.

~~In this dilemma sociologists of earlier years took refuge in inventing a new entity, the group, which had action,~~

guilt, praise and blame quite apart from the persons composing the group. It was of course a metaphysical hypothesis which had its uses in reasoning, but could not be regarded as corresponding to exact truth. No such group over-soul has been proven to exist.

The facts of the situation however as science today conceives it, are clear. The individual may act consciously and rationally and be responsible for what he does; but on the other hand many of his actions, and indeed, as we are coming to believe, most of his actions, are not rational and many of them arise from subconscious urges. It is our duty to assess praise and blame for the rational and conscious acts of men, but to regard the vast area of the subconscious and the irrational and especially of habit and convention which also produce significant action, as an area where we must apply other remedies and judgments if we would get justice and right to prevail in the world. Above all we must survey these vague and uncharted lands and measure their limits.

Looking at this whole matter of the white race as it confronts the world today, what can be done to make its attitudes rational and consistent and calculated to advance the best interests of the whole world of men? The first point of attack is undoubtedly the economic. The progress of the white world must cease to rest upon the poverty and the ignorance of its own proletariat and of the colored world. Thus industrial imperialism must lose its reason for being and in that way alone can the great racial groups of the world come into normal and helpful relation to each other. The present attitude and action of the white world is not based solely upon rational, de-

large and powerful minorities. They can use police and the militia to enforce their will, but this is dangerous. In the long run force defeats itself. It is only the consensus of the intelligent men of good will in a community or in a state that really can carry out a great program with absolute and ultimate authority. And by that same token, without the authority of the state, without force of police and army, a group of people who can attain such consensus is able to do anything to which the group agrees.

It is too much to expect that any such guiding consensus will entirely eliminate dissent, but it will make agreement so overwhelming that eventual clear irrational dissent can safely be ignored. When real and open democratic control is intelligent enough to select of its own accord on the whole the best, most courageous, most expert and scholarly leadership, then the problem of democracy within the Negro group is solved and by that same token the possibility of American Negroes entering into world democracy and taking their rightful place according to their knowledge and power is also sure. Here then is the economic ladder by which the American Negro, achieving new social institutions, can move *pari passu* with the modern world into a new heaven and a new earth.

CHAPTER 8. PROPAGANDA

AND WORLD WAR

MY discussions of the concept of race, and of the white and colored worlds, are not to be regarded as digressions from the history of my life; rather my autobiography is a digressive illustration and exemplification of what race has meant in the world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is for this reason that I have named and tried to make this book an autobiography of race rather than merely a personal reminiscence, with the idea that peculiar racial situation and problems could best be explained in the life history of one who has lived them. My living gains its importance from the problems and not the problems from me.

Nothing illustrates this more than my experiences from the time I left Atlanta until the period of reconstruction after the first World War. These days were the climactic of my pilgrimage. I had come to the place where I was convinced that science, the careful social study of the Negro problems, was not sufficient to settle them; that they were not basically, as I had assumed, difficulties due to ignorance but rather difficulties due to the determination of certain people to suppress and mistreat the darker races. I believed that this evil group formed a minority and a small minority of the nation and of all civilized peoples,

and that once the majority of well-meaning folk realized their evil machinations, we would be able to secure justice.

A still further step I was not yet prepared to realize must be taken: not simply knowledge, not simply direct repression of evil, will reform the world. In long, indirect pressure and action of various and intricate sorts, the actions of men which are not due to lack of knowledge nor to evil intent, must be changed by influencing folkways, habits, customs and subconscious deeds. Here perhaps is a realm of physical and cosmic law which science does not yet control. But of all this in 1910 I had no clear concept. It took twenty more years of living and striving to bring this revolution to my thought. Stepping, therefore, in 1910, out of my ivory tower of statistics and investigation, I sought with bare hands to lift the earth and put it in the path in which I conceived it ought to go. Little did I realize in August, 1910, that the earth was about to be shaken with earthquake, deluged with blood, whipped and starved into disaster, and that race hate and wholesale color and group subordination, not only was a prime cause of this disaster, but emphasized and sharpened its course and hindered consequent recovery.

~~These were the years between the Roosevelts including the administration of Taft, the two reigns of Wilson, the interlude of Harding and Coolidge and the disaster of Hoover. The United States was living not to itself, but as part of the strain and stress of the world. I knew something of Europe in these days. I went to the Paris Exposition in 1900 with the stipend that I had received for an exhibit on Negro development prepared in my office. By grace of an English friend, Frances Hoggan, I roamed~~

~~through England, Scotland and a bit of France in 1906 on a bicycle and saw the Island of Skye and Edinburgh, the Lake and Shakespeare countries and London. I saw a Europe of past beauty and present culture, fit as I fondly dreamed to realize a democracy in which I and my people could find a welcome place.~~

~~I came home rested and ready to follow the steps that led from the Niagara Movement meeting of 1906 to the Negro conference of 1909. These steps were not only the indirect ones illustrated by the difficulty of raising money for the Atlanta work, but also the series of events which led to the New York conference. Lynching continued in the United States but raised curiously enough little protest. Three hundred twenty-seven victims were publicly murdered by the mob during the years 1910 to 1914, and in 1915 the number leaped incredibly to one hundred in one year. The pulpit, the social reformers, the statesmen continued in silence before the greatest affront to civilization which the modern world has known. In 1909 William English Walling and his wife Anna Strunsky went out to investigate a lynching and anti-Negro riot in Springfield, Illinois, the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln. The upheaval took place on the one hundredth anniversary of his birth. Eventually one hundred seventeen indictments were brought in against the rioters but there was almost no actual punishment.~~

~~Walling protested in the press. He asked America if the time had not come when the work of the Great Emancipator must be finished and the Negro race not simply in law and theory, but in fact, set free. Working with Mary White Ovington, Charles Edward Russell and Oswald Gar-~~

~~conference and conciliation~~ the gradual breaking down of trade barriers, the spread of civilization to backward peoples, the emancipation of suppressed groups like the American Negro—seem to me the natural, the inevitable path of world progress. I did not assess at the right value the envy and jealousy of those imperial powers which did not share profit in colored labor, nor did I realize that the intertwining threads of culture bound colored folk in slavery to, and not in mutual co-operation with, the whites.

Indeed it was not easily possible for the student of international affairs trained in white institutions and by European ideology to follow the partially concealed and hidden action of international intrigue, which was turning colonial empire into the threat of armed competition for markets, cheap materials and cheap labor. Colonies still meant religious and social uplift in current propaganda. There were indications of strain in the determination of Germany to increase her sea power and to rival England in the technique of her manufactures. It was evident that the understanding between England and France both in Africa and in Asia was relegating Germany to a second place in colonial imperialism. It was evident too that the defeat of Russia by Japan had given rise to a fear of colored revolt against white exploitation.

The general outlines of this I had followed, but like most of the world I was thrown into consternation when later with sudden and unawaited violence, world war burst in 1914. ~~I had come to New York and the editorship of the Crisis during the administration of Taft. William Taft, fat, genial and mediocre, had no grasp of world affairs nor international trends. Despite his Philippine experience,~~

~~he began his reactionary administration by promising the South that he would appoint no Federal official to whom the Southern people were opposed; and thus blandly announced that eight million black Southerners were not people. Not only this but his handling of the revolt of irritated and goaded black soldiers at Brownsville, Texas, and his general cynical attitude toward the race problem led me to one of my first efforts to make political solution of the race problem.~~

~~Returning to New York after the Races Congress, I was faced by the political campaign of 1912. Disappointed at the attitude of Taft, I turned eagerly toward Roosevelt and the "Bull Moose" movement, thinking that I saw there a splendid chance for a third party movement, on a broad platform of votes for Negroes and the democratization of industry. Sitting in the office of the Crisis, I wrote out a proposed plank for the Progressives to adopt at their Chicago meeting in 1912: "The Progressive Party recognizes that distinctions of race or class in political life have no place in a democracy. Especially does the party realize that a group of 10,000,000 people who have in a generation changed from a slave to a free labor system, re-established family life, accumulated \$1,000,000,000 of real property, including 20,000,000 acres of land, and reduced their illiteracy from 80 to 30 per cent, deserves and must have justice, opportunity and a voice in their own government. The party, therefore, demands for the Americans of Negro descent the repeal of unfair discriminatory laws and the right to vote on the same terms on which other citizens vote."~~

~~This was taken to Chicago by my friend and fellow off-~~

United States by the meeting of the National Conference of Charities and Correction in Memphis in May, 1914. Not only were there no accommodations for colored delegates, but the conference refused even to put in the agenda anything touching the race problem. As a result, Joel Spingarn, William Pickens and myself went down to Memphis and advertised during the conference a public meeting "for all persons who love the truth and dare to hear it." A large crowd of persons black and white, including many delegates to the conference, were present.

For some time after the opening of the World War, its possible influence upon the Negro race in America was not clear. However, this world convulsion found America spiritually ill-prepared to cope with it, so far as race difficulties were concerned. In 1912 there arose the agitation for residential race segregation. It grew out of the fact that Negroes, as they increased in intelligence and property holding, were dissatisfied with the living quarters, where by long custom they had been confined in the chief cities of the land. In Baltimore came one of their first efforts to buy their way out of the back alleys and the slums into the better-paved, better-lighted main streets. This movement was encouraged by the wish of many of the owners of this property to move to newly developed suburban districts. A fierce conflict developed and Baltimore, by city ordinance, proceeded to segregate Negroes by law. This agitation throughout the North was increased by the emigration of Southern Negroes. Cheap foreign labor had been cut off by the war and Northern manufacturers began to encourage migration from the South. The stream began as soon as the European war opened. It caused not

only increasing congestion in the colored districts of the North; it also began to deplete the supply of agricultural labor and common city labor in the South, and to encourage racial friction according to current social patterns.

Beginning in Baltimore this agitation with a series of ordinances and laws spread West, North and South. For a period of ten years it called for every resource and ingenuity on the part of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to fight the legislation in courts, to repel mob violence on home-buyers, and to seek a supporting white public opinion.

But all this was but a prelude to deeper and more serious race oppression. The United States seized Haiti in 1915. It was not alone the intrinsic importance of the country, but Haiti stood with Liberia as a continuing symbol of Negro revolt against slavery and oppression, and capacity for self-rule; and the sudden extinction of its independence by a President whom we had helped to elect, followed by exploitation at the hands of New York City banks and plundering speculators, and the killing of at least three thousand Haitians by American soldiers, was a bitter pre-war pill.

That same year occurred another, and in the end, much more insidious and hurtful attack: the new technique of the moving picture had come to America and the world. But this method of popular entertainment suddenly became great when David Griffith made the film "The Birth of a Nation." He set the pace for a new art and method: the thundering horses, the masked riders, the suspense of plot and the defense of innocent womanhood; all this was thrilling even if melodramatic and overdrawn. This would

have been a great step in the development of a motion-picture art, if it had not happened that the director deliberately used as the vehicle of his picture one of the least defensible attacks upon the Negro race, made by Thomas Dixon in his books beginning with the "Leopard's Spots," and in his play "The Clansman." There was fed to the youth of the nation and to the unthinking masses as well as to the world a story which twisted the emancipation and enfranchisement of the slave in a great effort toward universal democracy, into an orgy of theft and degradation and wide rape of white women.

In combating this film, our Association was placed in a miserable dilemma. We had to ask liberals to oppose freedom of art and expression, and it was senseless for them to reply: "Use this art in your own defense." The cost of picture making and the scarcity of appropriate artistic talent made any such immediate answer beyond question. Without doubt the increase of lynching in 1915 and later was directly encouraged by this film. We did what we could to stop its showing and thereby probably succeeded in advertising it even beyond its admittedly notable merits. The combined result of these various events caused a sudden increase of lynching. The number of mob murders so increased that nearly one hundred Negroes were lynched during 1915 and a score of whites, a larger number than had occurred for more than a decade.

The year 1916 brought one decided note of hope. The Supreme Court of the United States, after having dodged the plain issue for a decade, finally at our insistence and with the help of our corps of lawyers headed by Moorfield Storey, handed down a decision which outlawed the

infamous "Grandfather Clauses" of the disfranchising constitutions of the South. These clauses had given an hereditary right to vote to white illiterates while excluding colored illiterates. To overbalance this sign of hope there came, however, continued prevalence of lynching in unusually serious form. Five Negroes in Lee County, Georgia, were lynched en masse and there came the horrible public burning of Jesse Washington in Waco, Texas, before a mob of thousands of men, women and children. "While a fire was being prepared of boxes, the naked boy was stabbed and the chain put over the tree. He tried to get away, but could not. He reached up to grab the chain and they cut off his fingers. The big man struck the boy on the back of the neck with a knife just as they were pulling him up on the tree. Mr. ——— thought that was practically the death blow. He was lowered into the fire several times by means of the chain around his neck. Someone said they would estimate the boy had about twenty-five stab wounds, each one of them death-dealing."

In October, Anthony Crawford, well-to-do colored farmer of South Carolina, worth \$20,000, and the owner of four hundred acres of land, was set upon and whipped for "impudence" in refusing to agree to a price for his cotton seed; he was then jailed, mobbed, mutilated and killed, and his family driven out of the county.

~~The death of Booker Washington in 1915 coincided with a change in Negro attitudes. The political defeat of Roosevelt and Taft had deprived Mr. Washington of his political influence. The Tuskegee Machine gradually ceased to function, and Tuskegee came to realize its natural place as a center of education rather than of propa-~~

~~and not merely as laborer~~; and to assure, above all, that some Negroes should act as commissioned officers in the army.

The opposition to Negro officers was intense and bitter; but on the other hand, the administration was alarmed. After all, this nation, with its diverse ethnic elements, with a large number of Germans and Slavs who at best could not be enthusiastic supporters of the Allies, did not dare further to complicate the situation by driving ten million Negroes into justifiable protest and opposition.

In May a conference of Negro organizations called in Washington adopted resolutions which I wrote: "We trace the real cause of this World War to the despising of the darker races by the dominant groups of men, and the consequent fierce rivalry among European nations in their effort to use darker and backward people for purposes of selfish gain regardless of the ultimate good of the oppressed. We see permanent peace only in the extension of the principle of government by the consent of the governed, not simply among the smaller nations of Europe, but among the natives of Asia and Africa, the Western Indies and the Negroes of the United States."

Efforts at last were made to placate the Negroes. First they were given a representative in Washington in the person of Emmett Scott, formerly private secretary to Booker T. Washington; Mr. Scott was without actual power, but he had access to the Secretary of War so as to be able to lay before him directly complaints voiced by the Negroes. Negroes were promised enrollment not merely as stevedores, but as actual soldiers, and also two full divisions of Negro soldiers, the Ninety-second and

Ninety-third, were planned. Immediately this brought up the question of Negro officers.

In the so-called Ninety-third Division, a number of Negro units from the organized state militia who had been drafted into the war, already had Negro officers. Two regiments of draftees with white officers were added, and these units were early hurried to France and incorporated with French troops. The complete organization of this Ninety-third Division was never actually accomplished and most of the higher Negro officers were gradually dismissed on various excuses.

On the other hand, the Ninety-second Division of Negro draftees was actually organized and immediately a demand arose for Negro officers over these troops. The official answer was a decided negative: there were no trained Negro officers—or at most, only two or three; there were no camps where new Negro officers could be trained and it was illegal under the draft law to train them in camps with white officers.

~~Our Association itself here hesitated. It had fought segregation and discrimination in the army valiantly, but lost. Then when, as the only alternative, we must accept a separate officers' training camp or no Negro officers, many members demurred at openly advocating segregation. Had it not been for Joel Spingarn, chairman of our Board, no Negro officers would have been trained or appointed. But Spingarn started a country-wide crusade, aided wholeheartedly by the *Crisis*. First of all, he got the Negro students interested. He spoke at Howard and corresponded with students at Fisk, Atlanta, and elsewhere. They arose~~

en masse to demand a Negro officers' camp and the campus of Howard was even offered as a place for it.

The War Department squirmed. We had to fight even to be segregated. We fell out among ourselves. A large and important section of the Negro press led by the *Afro-American* and the *Chicago Defender* firmly opposed a Negro officers' camp on any terms. We struggled from March until May, and then suddenly a camp was opened for the training of Negro officers at Des Moines, Iowa.

The man eminently fitted and almost selected by fate for the heading of this camp was a black man, Charles Young, then lieutenant-colonel in the regular United States Army. He had an unblemished army record and a splendid character. He had recently accompanied Pershing in the Mexican foray and received distinguished commendation from the future commander-in-chief of the American Expeditionary Force. He was strong, fit, and only 49 years of age, and in the accelerated promotion of war-time would have been a general in the army by 1918. This, of course, the army did not propose to have, and although the Des Moines camp was established in May, the medical board of the army in June, when Young came up for examination for his colonelcy, hastened to retire him for "high blood pressure." It was a miserable ruse. An entire corps of white officers was appointed to train the colored cadets. Only colored captains and lieutenants were to be trained; the high officers were to be white.

Even then our difficulties were not finished; there was segregation against the cadets within and without their camp. General Ballou tried to lay down certain general rules as to what Negroes should strive for. A three-month

period of training ensued. At the end of that time, after hesitation, it was decided to add another month. There was widespread suspicion that the War Department did not intend actually to commission these officers. I went down to Washington and talked with the Secretary of War, Newton Baker. He said coldly, "We are not trying by this war to settle the Negro problem." "True," I retorted, "but you are trying to settle as much of it as interferes with winning the war."

Finally, October 14, 1917, six hundred thirty-nine Negro officers were commissioned: 106 captains, 329 first lieutenants and 204 second lieutenants. It was as Champ Clark, Speaker of the House, said, a "new day" for the Negro and despite all we had been through, we felt tremendously uplifted.

In the very hour of our exaltation, the whirlwind struck us again; or perhaps I might better say, throughout this period the succession of uplift and downfall was continuous and bewildering. The very month that the Des Moines camp was authorized, a Negro was publicly burned alive in Tennessee under circumstances unusually atrocious. The mobbing and burning were publicly advertised in the press beforehand. Three thousand automobiles brought the audience, including mothers carrying children. Ten gallons of gasoline were poured over the wretch and he was burned alive, while hundreds fought for bits of his body, clothing, and the rope.

The migration of Negro workers out of the South had increased steadily. It was opposed by illegal and legal methods throughout the South, but by 1917 it had expanded to a stream and from my own travel and observation, I

~~South to keep myself closely acquainted with its problems.~~

The South of 1933 was not the South of 1897. In many respects it had improved and the relations between the races were better. Nevertheless the South is not a place where a man of Negro descent would voluntarily and without good reason choose to live. Its civilization is decidedly lower than that of the North. Its state and local governments are poor and full of incompetency and graft, and its whole polity is menaced by mass hysteria and mob-law. Its police system is wretched and the low grade white policeman full of crude race hate is the ruler who comes closest and in most immediate contact with black folk of all classes. There is a caste system based on color, fortified in law and even more deeply entrenched in custom, which meets and coerces the dark man at nearly every step: in trains, in street cars, in elevators, in offices, in education, in recreation, in religion and in graveyards. The economic organization is still in the nineteenth century with ruthless exploitation, low wages, child labor, debt peonage, and profit in crime. The better classes, with gracious manners and liberal outlook, exist and slowly grow; but with these I would have little contact and fear of the mob would restrain their meeting me or listening to me.

~~All this I faced, but I saw too the compensations. After all, the place to study a social problem is where it centers and not elsewhere. The Negro problem in the United States centers in the southern South. There in the place of its greatest concentration, forces are working for its solution and the greatest of these forces are institutions like Atlanta University. The university throws around its professors and students a certain protective coloration.~~

It is an inner community surrounded by beauty with unusual chances for intellectual and social contact. To a degree it furnishes recreation and avenues to culture. Our library without doubt is the best in Atlanta; our music is unsurpassed and the chances here for quiet contemplation and the intellectual life are considerable.

Then too, I could not forget that even in New York, with all its opportunity for human contact, with its unrivaled facilities for a center of world thought and culture, it was nevertheless no heaven for black folk. Negroes were not welcome to its hotels and restaurants nor to most of its clubs and organizations. Contact with human beings despite color is far wider than in Georgia; but yet, it is not wide. Theaters and great music center in New York as nowhere else in America. But they are very costly; a theater once a month and opera once a year was as much as I could afford. By careful choice and delicate prevision I may in New York foot a path of broad cultural contact and wide physical freedom; it would be difficult to find a quiet, clean place to live; but if I can earn a living, I can be fairly content. I should certainly have there no such dread of the white mob and the police as Negroes must have in the southern South. Weighing and balancing all these considerations, I came back to Atlanta. In a sense I returned to my ivory tower, not so much for new scientific research, as for interpretation and reflection; and for making a record of what I had seen and experienced.

The situation to which I returned was new. Back as early as 1905, I had proposed to the seven colored colleges of Atlanta the beginning of efforts toward uniting these various institutions into one university. We actually once

inherited illiterates; in higher education, we are the parasites of reluctant and hesitant philanthropy.

3. In the current reorganization of industry, there is no adequate effort to secure us a place in industry, to open opportunity for Negro ability, or to give us security in age or unemployment.

4. Not by the development of upper classes anxious to exploit the workers, nor by the escape of individual genius into the white world, can we effect the salvation of our group in America. And the salvation of this group carries with it the emancipation not only of the darker races of men who make the vast majority of mankind, but of all men of all races. We, therefore, propose this:

BASIC AMERICAN NEGRO CREED

A. As American Negroes, we believe in unity of racial effort, so far as this is necessary for self-defense and self-expression, leading ultimately to the goal of a united humanity and the abolition of all racial distinctions.

B. We repudiate all artificial and hate-engendering deification of race separation as such; but just as sternly, we repudiate an enervating philosophy of Negro escape into an artificially privileged white race which has long sought to enslave, exploit and tyrannize over all mankind.

C. We believe that the Talented Tenth among American Negroes, fitted by education and character to think and do, should find primary employment in determining by study and measurement the present field and demand for racial action and the method by which the masses may be guided along this path.

D. We believe that the problems which now call for such racial planning are Employment, Education and Health; these three: but the greatest of these is Employment.

E. We believe that the labor force and intelligence of twelve million people is more than sufficient to supply their own wants and make their advancement secure. Therefore, we believe that, if carefully and intelligently planned, a co-operative Negro industrial system in America can be established in the midst of and in conjunction with the surrounding national industrial organization and in intelligent accord with that reconstruction of the economic basis of the nation which must sooner or later be accomplished.

F. We believe that Negro workers should join the labor movement and affiliate with such trade unions as welcome them and treat them fairly. We believe that Workers' Councils organized by Negroes for interracial understanding should strive to fight race prejudice in the working class.

G. We believe in the ultimate triumph of some form of Socialism the world over; that is, common ownership and control of the means of production and equality of income.

H. We do not believe in lynching as a cure for crime; nor in war as a necessary defense of culture; nor in violence as the only path to economic revolution. Whatever may have been true in other times and places, we believe that today in America we can abolish poverty by reason and the intelligent use of the ballot, and above all by that dynamic discipline of soul and sacrifice of comfort which, revolution or no revolution, must ever be the only real path to economic justice and world peace.

I. We conceive this matter of work and equality of adequate income as not the end of our effort, but the beginning of the rise of the Negro race in this land and the world over, in power, learning and accomplishment.

J. We believe in the use of our vote for equalizing wealth through taxation, for vesting the ultimate power of the state in the hands of the workers, and as an integral part of the work-

ing class, we demand our proportionate share in administration and public expenditure.

K. This is and is designed to be a program of racial effort and this narrowed goal is forced upon us today by the unyielding determination of the mass of the white race to enslave, exploit and insult Negroes; but to this vision of work, organization and service, we welcome all men of all colors so long as their subscription to this basic creed is sincere and is proven by their deeds.

This creed proved unacceptable both to the Adult Education Association and to its colored affiliates. Consequently when I returned from abroad the manuscript, although ordered and already paid for, was returned to me as rejected for publication. Just who pronounced the veto I do not know.

I had next two other projects: first, that large mass of material relating to the Negro in the World War, which the NAACP had never made an effort to use or publish. I had been working at that off and on since 1919, and one year had a grant from the Social Science Council. But I had not yet got it in shape for publication. Another project in which I had long been interested was an Encyclopaedia of the Negro. As early as 1909, I had planned an Encyclopaedia Africana and secured on my board of advisers Sir Flinders Petrie, Sir Harry Johnston, Giuseppe Sergi, Dr. J. Deniker, William James, and Franz Boas; and on my proposed board of editors I had practically all the leading Negroes of the United States who were then inclined toward research. My change to New York and the work of starting the *Crisis*, and finally the World War, put this quite out of my mind.

In 1931, the Phelps-Stokes Fund called together a committee to consider a plan of arranging for the preparation and publication of an Encyclopaedia of the Negro. To this first meeting I was not invited as my relations to some of the executives of the Fund during the past had not been cordial. But those who met insisted upon myself and others being invited to the second meeting. Overcoming a natural hesitation I went. Eventually and to me quite unexpectedly I was designated as future chairman of the editorial board, in case the funds for the enterprise should ever be found.

Since the incorporation of the Encyclopaedia in 1932, by the help of a small appropriation from the Phelps-Stokes Fund, I have been planning and working on preliminary arrangements for such an undertaking. We found the great Funds, from bitter experience, encyclopaedia-shy. But, in addition to that, I fear that no money sufficient for the publication of such an encyclopaedia under the leadership of colored scholars and the collaboration of white men can be soon found. I doubt if men would formulate their objection to such a procedure, but after all it would seem to them natural that any such work should be under the domination of white men. At any rate, we have gotten together a definite and completely worked-out plan, even to the subjects and many of the proposed writers, which can in the future be used for an Encyclopaedia of the Negro, a publication sure to come in time.

In 1936, my application to the Oberlaender Trust for a chance to restudy Germany was granted. I spent five months in Germany, and some time in England, France, and Austria, interviewing scholars on the encyclopaedia