

EDITORIAL

THE CRISIS.

THE object of this publication is to set forth those facts and arguments which show the danger of race prejudice, particularly as manifested to-day toward colored people. It takes its name from the fact that the editors believe that this is a critical time in the history of the advancement of men. Catholicity and tolerance, reason and forbearance can to-day make the world-old dream of human brotherhood approach realization; while bigotry and prejudice, emphasized race consciousness and force can repeat the awful history of the contact of nations and groups in the past. We strive for this higher and broader vision of Peace and Good Will.

The policy of THE CRISIS will be simple and well defined:

It will first and foremost be a newspaper: it will record important happenings and movements in the world which bear on the great problem of inter-racial relations, and especially those which affect the Negro-American.

Secondly, it will be a review of opinion and literature, recording briefly books, articles, and important expressions of opinion in the white and colored press on the race problem.

Thirdly, it will publish a few short articles.

Finally, its editorial page will stand for the rights of men, irrespective of color or race, for the highest ideals of American democracy, and for reasonable but earnest and persistent attempt to gain these rights and realize these ideals. The magazine will be the organ of no clique or party and will avoid personal rancor of all sorts. In the absence of proof to the contrary it will assume honesty of purpose on the part of all men, North and South, white and black.

SEGREGATION.

Some people in Chicago, Philadelphia, Atlantic City, Columbus, O., and other Northern cities are quietly trying to establish separate colored schools. This is

wrong, and should be resisted by black men and white. Human contact, human acquaintanceship, human sympathy is the great solvent of human problems. Separate school children by wealth and the result is class misunderstanding and hatred. Separate them by race and the result is war. Separate them by color and they grow up without learning the tremendous truth that it is impossible to judge the mind of a man by the color of his face. Is there any truth that America needs to learn more? Back of this demand for the segregation of black folk in public institutions, or the segregation of Italians, or the segregation of any class, is almost always a shirking of responsibility on the part of the public—a desire to put off on somebody else the work of social uplift, while they themselves enjoy its results. Nobody pretends to deny that probably three-fourths of the colored children in the public schools of a great Northern city are below the average of their fellow students in some respects. They are, however, capable of improvement, and of rapid improvement. This improvement can be carried on by the community. The community can, however, if it is cowardly and selfish, shirk this responsibility and pile it on the shoulders of the Negroes represented by the one-fourth of Negro children who are above the average, or equal to it; and they can, if they are persistent, succeed in pushing back and possibly overwhelming a deserving and rising class of colored people.

This is the history of color discrimination in general in Philadelphia, New York and Chicago. When the discrimination comes in various lines of life, it does not bear simply on those who are not hurt by it—who do not feel it, and who by their position naturally fall outside the lines of discrimination, but it comes with crushing weight upon those other Negroes to whom the reasons for discrimination do not apply in the slightest respect, and they are thus made to bear a double burden. Further than this, when the discrimination is once

established, immediately the public provisions for the segregated portion become worse. If it is discrimination against poor people, then the schools for the poor people become worse than those for the rich—less well equipped and less well supervised. If it is discrimination against colored people, the colored school becomes poor, with less money and less means of efficiency.

The argument, then, for color discrimination in schools and in public institutions is an argument against democracy and an attempt to shift public responsibility from the shoulders of the public to the shoulders of some class who are unable to defend themselves.

BALTIMORE.

An inevitable step forward in anti-Negro prejudice is being taken in Baltimore, and threatened elsewhere. The colored folk of that city long ago became dissatisfied with a particularly bad system of alley homes. They saved their money and purchased nearly the whole length of Druid Hill avenue—one of the best colored streets in the world. Then they began to expand into parallel streets, one of which was McCulloh. They had been told that "money talks," and that the surest road to respect in America was financial success. The result was inevitable. The white people of McCulloh street rose in indignation and are importuning the City Council to pass an ordinance prohibiting colored people from "invading" white residential districts, and vice versa. Their argument sounds strong: colored residents bring down the price of property, therefore get rid of colored residents.

Is this the real logic of the situation? Why do colored people depress property values? Because of an exaggerated and persistently encouraged racial prejudice. In the encouragement of such prejudice, Baltimore and Maryland have particularly sinned. Would not an attempt to allay prejudice be wiser than laws against thrift?

VOTING.

If there is one thing that should be urged upon colored voters throughout the United States this fall it is independence. No intelligent man should vote one way simply from habit. Only through care-

ful scrutiny of candidates and policies can a man put himself in position to help rule one hundred million people. It is because of the suspicion that colored men are not capable of doing this, or are unwilling to do it, that so many American citizens acquiesce in the nullification of democracy known as disfranchisement. Let every colored man who can, vote; and whether he vote the Republican or Democratic or Socialist ticket, let him vote it, not because his father did or because he is afraid, but because after intelligent consideration he thinks the success of that ticket best for his people and his country.

AGITATION.

Some good friends of the cause we represent fear agitation. They say: "Do not agitate—do not make a noise; work." They add, "Agitation is destructive or at best negative—what is wanted is positive constructive work."

Such honest critics mistake the function of agitation. A toothache is agitation. Is a toothache a good thing? No. Is it therefore useless? No. It is supremely useful, for it tells the body of decay, dyspepsia and death. Without it the body would suffer unknowingly. It would think: All is well, when lo! danger lurks.

The same is true of the Social Body. Agitation is a necessary evil to tell of the ills of the Suffering. Without it many a nation has been lulled to false security and preened itself with virtues it did not possess.

The function of this Association is to tell this nation the crying evil of race prejudice. It is a hard duty but a necessary one—a divine one. It is Pain; Pain is not good but Pain is necessary. Pain does not aggravate disease—Disease causes Pain. Agitation does not mean Aggravation—Aggravation calls for Agitation in order that Remedy may be found.

Two Italians were lynched in Florida. The Italian Government protested, but it was found that they were naturalized Americans. The inalienable right of every free American citizen to be lynched without tiresome investigation and penalties is one which the families of the lately deceased doubtless deeply appreciate.