

black race has taken place in the past and is taking place now. We maintain that the reason for this is your attempted caste system. If you will say to the white man: you can only live with black women on condition that you marry them publicly and openly, and then enforce such laws you would stop the intermarriage of all persons except those who wanted to intermarry, and that you cannot and ought not to stop.

The white race is not superior to the black race. There are some white men who are superior in some things to some black men, and there are some black men who are superior in some things to some white men, and if you think that you are going to stop the advance of the black race by burning and mobbing, you have only to remember that you have done a good deal of that in the past and you haven't stopped us yet.

Very sincerely yours,
W. E. B. DUBOIS.

P. S.—The Dallas, Tex., *Texas* 100 per cent American of January 5th, 1923, publishes a whole front page editorial on this answer, saying among other things: "When the time comes that a black Negro, or maybe he is a mixture of low white trash blood and a black, can, with unpugnity [*sic*], write a letter as the above and send it through the mails, there is not a white man with the right kind of blood in his veins, but who knows that it is time to call a halt . . . Du Bois, the arrogant ebony-head, thick-lipped, kinky-haired Negro 'educator', must be put in his place and made to stay there."

THE COTERIE

I WENT to the Coterie last night. I did not intend to go. After fifty, one has so many perfectly good reasons for staying at home and going to bed. But—I went.

There are numbers of good and wise folk in the United States and elsewhere whose conception of the Negro problem is the vision of wet-eyed brown folk looking through bars of race exclusion at the expensively dressed ladies and gentlemen of "society" and wailing "O my God, if I just could get in". Their conception of the "labor" problem is quite similar in terms.

What complacent impudence! I have met in my life many charming white folk in America, in England, in France, in Germany and elsewhere. And will you believe my utter honesty, dear paler friends of mine, when I say with all sincerity that if it were simply a matter of my own enjoyment and happiness I could not find in all the world a group of human beings more utterly beautiful, more filled with the joy of living and sweetness of spirit than the group at the Coterie last night? They were black, brown, yellow, orange, mauve, pink and white; their hair wavered from gold to midnight in waves and curls and masses of every conceivable intricacy. Their limbs curved and moved with a grace well nigh inimitable and their soft and laughing eyes and voices held a fineness of love and beauty that I doubt if any group of white folk ever surpasses. I sat and feasted my eyes; I danced and let my thoughts wander and I knew that not only here but in a hundred—a thousand other cities in every state and division of this mighty and far thrown land I had seen and known groups like this.

As I have said:—if I consulted simply my own wish and joy I would not care if I never saw and knew other people. But I know that this attitude would be both selfish and dangerous; and only in human contact comes understanding and peace, and the wider, fuller life.

But the thing that pricks me is the spectacle of blithering idiots who

stand and pity and gravely consider just how and where and to what minimum extent they can allow me and these to enjoy the sacred boon of their drab and artificial company.

No, no, no. Of course I want social equality. Of course I want to go to the theatre, dine and, if I will, dance. But Name of a Name, it's not with them I want to go but with my friends. Some of my friends, a fine few, are white. It is a privilege to be with them. Most of my friends are black and "colored." I love to be with them; and whomever I am with is my business and no one's else so long as we behave tolerably.

I know that there are great and unwashed, uncombed, and unlettered masses among mine with whom close contact has its difficulties; but does any pale face presume to tell me—me who have seen the slums of Glasgow and East London and the lower New York, that black folk have here any monopoly? Worshippers of the great God Percentage may indeed take refuge in the fact that we as a mass are poorer and more ignorant—what of all that?

The point is that we are in our higher realization beautiful and fine and splendid. We love each other and we pray that God may damn a world which systematically insults us. In the past we used to be ashamed of ourselves and we had to be, thanks to slavery. But suppose to-day that they who have gone, could awake. Suppose they are looking in from some great cloud swept throne—my mother and yours, my old grandfather! Perhaps this our joy is not ours but theirs, sweeping in like some great silent song of praise to make this perfection of content.

The exasperating thought is how beautiful and interesting most human beings could be if some fools like Stoddard and Madison Grant did not spend their lives hindering and hating them, and other selfish scoundrels did

not steal more food and clothes than they can use, and so upturn the balance of human satisfaction.

N. A. A. C. P. DRIVE

THE Annual Membership Drive of the N. A. A. C. P. begins April 1st.

The object of the drive is:

1. To increase our branches to 500.
2. To revive a majority of dormant branches which now number nearly 100.
3. To increase the number of branches with over 500 members so that they may include each city of considerable size, especially in the North. These dropped deplorably last year.
4. To increase our branches of over 1000 members, until they shall include every major city in the North and a number of points in the South. These dropped to four last year.
5. To obtain a general increase of at least fifty per cent. in the membership of the Association.

The N. A. A. C. P. proposes:

1. To show that colored people are not *quitters*,—that we have just begun to fight.
2. To gain *power* to use in 1924 for fuller freedom.
3. To aid in continued fight on lynching, segregation, Jim-Crowism, disfranchisement and peonage.
4. To stand always and forever at the Gate of Freedom—on guard, full-panoplied, uncompromising, unafraid.

We ask the help of all Americans, and especially those of Negro blood:

1. Because this is their organization, the most democratic in America, knowing no color line, no class line, no race line, and no sex line.
2. Because they must realize that hostile forces now being closely organized have got to be met by better, bigger, and more powerful organization on our part.