

# The Outer Pocket

Oakland, Cal.

MONDAY, March 12th, will remain a red letter day in the annals of Oakland, California: We were highly honored on that occasion in having with us the beloved Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, whose reputation had already preceded him; but even so, we were not prepared for the fine and deep impression which he left in our midst. On that historic day, Dr. DuBois delivered an address in the morning before the student body of Mills College. This is the only college for women west of the Mississippi River, and girls from all over the country, particularly from the western states, heard his words. In the afternoon he was taken to the University of California where he addressed the economics class of Professor Solomon Blum in the large assembly hall which was thrown open to the entire university. His subject was "The Economic Status of the Negro in the United States". In the audience were white and black and yellow students, gathered from every corner of the world, and they listened to a message which was strangely new to most of them.

We have all been taught about the supremacy of the white race, yet Dr. DuBois, scholarly, dignified and apparently a college professor addressing his students, drove home fact after fact, emphasizing the world contributions of the colored man. He emphasized the history of Haiti, where slavery was abolished long before similar action was taken in the United States, and without a terrible, costly war. He showed the improving status of the Negro in the United States, chiefly through his own unaided efforts, leaving us to infer the logical conclusion that increasing numbers, with wider opportunities and greater wealth, plus political strength, would continue to uplift the American Negro.

The same evening Dr. DuBois delivered the third of his great talks, this time in the Congregational church, in the downtown section of Oakland. John D. Drake, chairman of the local branch of the N. A. A. C. P. presided. The large auditorium was crowded, and so was the gallery, with eager friends who heard a wonderful message. He appeared as a statesman recounting to

his people just what the Negro had done in the World War, and we were thrilled by his simple, yet graphic description of the Negro soldier, without whose aid the Allies never could have won. He clearly pointed out that Africa was the cause of the war, and because the Negroes of Africa have not yet received their due, the cause of another war has not been removed. The American Negro rendered the most valiant service, and so did those from Africa, although history accords them scant notice. However, they have a tremendous potential power, and this will increase as they realize their strength.

It is a pity that so able a man, with so genuine a message, spends but one day in our community. May he return to us in the near future. Our prayer is that the N. A. A. C. P., realizing the tremendous good such a speaker accomplishes, will send other lecturers to us in the course of the year.

RUDOLPH I. COFFEE,  
Rabbi, Temple Sinai.

Boston, Mass.

In view of the defeat of the Dyer Bill, or the failure of the Republican Party in power to enact this particular piece of legislation, according to its solemn promise, made in its platform, the colored voters through the country should hold the Republican Party to a "strict accountability" in its next election, if the administration does not take up the Dyer Bill and "put it over."

I have long since come to the conclusion that colored citizens in this country should take a leaf, or a chapter, out of the history of the Irish in American politics. Be "agin" the party in power, whether Republican, or Democrat, which does not accord to us representation in the official establishment of the government, and refuses to enact legislation necessary to our "pursuit of happiness," or enjoyment of all the rights of American citizenship.

There is nothing sacred about party designation. Our debt of gratitude to the Republican Party has long since been paid with compound interest. I should advise the colored voters in the pivotal states to

vote men and parties in and out of office, until some man or some party, is found to do justice to the colored people.

WILLIAM H. LEWIS,  
Former Assistant Att'y Gen. U. S. A.

"A Cry From The Wilderness" was prompted by an unpleasant experience I had in Virginia last August when the mayor of the town in which I was living temporarily and teaching, came to my home on the pretext of seeing me on business but really to make a very indecent proposal.

When I reported it in the town, the white men said something to this effect:

"That's too bad; I'm sorry. During the six years you've been teaching here we've never heard anything of you but that you are a mighty nice woman. You've certainly done a lot for the colored people here and the school. It's too bad that some men can't control themselves better than that. Well, I hope the matter can be adjusted in some way; we certainly don't want you to leave us."

The white women's attitude surprised me. The leading women of the town were furious. Two of them urged me to force the white men to bring him to trial. Another advised me to get a gun and riddle him with bullets if he continued to annoy me. One of the most prominent women of the town looked me in the face and frankly declared that the men of her race were far more immoral than the colored men and that they had no conscience at all about insulting colored women, yet they were always ready to lynch the colored men for the least offense towards them. "I glory in your spunk," she continued, "and if we had more colored women in this town like you, we would be better off." Even when I was leaving the house, she called after me to assure me again that she was with me.

But I did not force the man's arrest.

Had I done it, he might have been fined a few dollars and that's all. The actual law regarding such an offense would have been ignored as it always is when it happens to be a white man offending a Negro woman.

Had my husband been living, I am sure he would have had him arrested, however.

About three weeks later, the offender came to my home and acknowledged his guilt. I asked him if he knew what would have been his punishment had he been a Negro and I a white woman. He hesitated in answering and I answered for him. I told him he would have been lynched in a most horrible manner. He seemed thoughtful for a moment, then he said: "That's so; and for that reason, people ought to be very careful."

When he had gone, I wondered to whom he referred when he said: "People ought to be very careful."

The incident so unnerved me that I could not make myself satisfied there again. I opened the school of which I was principal, but taught just one month. The thought of living in a town with such a man serving as mayor was not pleasant at all.

But I was sorry to leave the three-room graded school I had built. When I went there six years ago, I found the colored children housed in a most wretchedly constructed hut which had served as a schoolhouse for more than a quarter of a century. I closed my first term in the new building and each following term made improvements until it was generally declared to be the most sanitary and attractive school in the county.

Because of my rating as a teacher and citizen, I felt I was immune to such advances as the one described herein. When I had partially recovered from the shock of the disillusionment, I wrote, as I have already intimated, "A Cry From the Wilderness."

MONOTONY

LANGSTON HUGHES

TODAY like yesterday  
Tomorrow like today:  
The drip, drip, drip,  
Of monotony

Is wearing my life away;  
Today like yesterday,  
Tomorrow like today.