FOREWORD

The year 1926 has been, for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, a year of legal victories. More and more, in the natural course of events, has it been borne in upon the Association that for the present the avenue to affirmation and defense of the Negro's fundamental rights in America lies through the courts. Cases involving these rights can be, and where possible, invariably have been, carried to the highest tribunal of the land, the United States Supreme Court, and lesser cases to the federal courts, where the atmosphere of sectional prejudice is notably absent.

Victories so won are definite and clear-cut. They become matters of permanent record. They are bulwarks. They can be built upon. The Louisville Segregation Case, for example, won in 1917, has served as a basis for three victories against residential segregation ordinances during the past year, one of them in a northern, the other two in southern states. Still another such case, having the Louisville decision as its basis, will probably be heard before the United States Supreme Court during the coming year.

The present increasing attention to law and the Negro's status in law marks a new development of the Association's work. Legal victories, while they can be and are used for propaganda purposes to educate the public, are no longer mere sentiment or agitation. They represent advances as concrete as any that can possibly be made in this work. Their effect is definitely measurable in the field of social relations.

Moreover, from the point of view of the Negro in whose behalf the work is being done, he is receiving a definite and tangible benefit, at a clearly marked price. That price, thanks to the Association, is exceedingly low. For through its efforts and appeal, the foremost lawyers devote their services, either gratis, as in the case of the President of the Association and the chairman and members of its national Legal Committee, or, as in the case of other attorneys retained, at fees far below those that would be paid on a commercial basis. The legal work of the Association, therefore, constitutes a definite benefit at a cost almost negligible, whose value the Negro and the friends of justice may easily determine for themselves. It is with the fullest confidence in the verdict of all interested readers that this