



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

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OUR BABY PICTURES

WE have received from mothers and fathers throughout the nation, and even from beyond its boundaries, 350 pictures and every mail brings more. From these we have selected 89 for publication.

At first we tried to make our selections with some system and according to certain rules of human interest, beauty and physical type. All this, however, was quickly given up and we frankly confess that there is no reason in the world why most of the pictures which we have not used should not have been printed instead of these. Many, of course, came to us too late and many others were too imperfect for use. As it is we are holding a large number in the hope that we may be allowed to use them another year.

The pictures which we have published may be considered from many points of view.

[2 photographs of babies labelled by location]]

[image in upper right corner - "CUBA"]]

[image in bottom left corner - "MICHIGAN"]]

The students of a great social problem will look upon them first as physical types. No sooner has he looked with this in mind than certainly the fiction of the physical degeneracy of American Negroes must disappear. True, these are selected children, mostly from the well-to-do of a large group; but a careful consideration of the total pictures received by THE CRISIS in three years which will aggregate over a thousand makes it seem certain that there is growing up in the United States a large and larger class of well-nourished, healthy, beautiful children among the colored people. That this little army is flanked by the large numbers of the miserable and unhealthy is, of course, true; but the whole argument of Negro haters has long said that health and physique among colored people was not a matter of nourishment and surroundings but of inescapable hereditary ills. A glance at our pages this month will

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[2 photographs of babies labelled by location]]

[image in upper left corner "WISCONSIN"]]

[image in lower right corner "NEW JERSEY"]]

certainly help to show what arrant nonsense this thesis is.

As social problems these children are of greatest interest. They are beautiful, bright and wholesome. There is no reason in the world why in any civilized human society they should not easily, gracefully, and effectively take their place and do their work, receiving the respect due to decent human beings. With few exceptions they will be well educated and suitably trained. Few of them are born to wealth but they will be



well-fed and well-groomed. Most of them will receive higher training and are destined to become prime factors among the leading group of the race.

Notwithstanding all this, they will be looked upon as "problems." They will be critically considered and impudently measured and studied. They will be compelled to prove before a prejudiced jury that they have a right to be treated as normal American citizens. Of course, in their case, the assumptions and the inhuman prejudice will not be as great as in the case of their fathers but it will be appreciable and despicable.

This brings the human side of the whole great human question which THE CRISIS primarily discusses. Here are members of homes, loved by tender human hearts. Is it not the disgrace of the century, a disgrace even greater than the present European war that the foremost republic on earth should be directing its greatest battle not against war and poverty and prejudice, but against these dark little babies?

More than this it is dark children like these that in a sense are the cause of the present barbarous war in Europe. The rivalry of leading European countries in their lust for colonies is the underlying cause of this war. Most of these colonies are wanted because they are inhabited by dark people whom the moral sense of the modern world allows to be exploited and half enslaved. Such colonies are

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