



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

The Crisis, Vol. 6, No. 2

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¶ The Howard University catalog shows a total registration of 14,090 students, representing 37 States and 9 foreign countries. These students are distributed as follows:

Academy, 380; the college of arts and sciences, 303; school of medicine, 291; the teachers' college, 175; the commercial college, 110; school of theology, 108; conservatory of music, 88; library school, 2; correspondence students, 37.

¶ The summer school for teachers at Lane College, Jackson, Tenn., will be open until July 5.

¶ Meridian Academy, Meridian, Miss., has collected and contributed \$900 toward the jubilee educational fund of the Freedmen's Aid Society.

¶ Dr. Charles A. Lewis, of Philadelphia, advocates a course in the study of tuberculosis in all Negro schools.

¶ The school board of Richmond, Va., has asked of the common council an appropriation of \$100,000 for the erection of two new schools for colored children.

¶ The United German Societies of Washington, D. C. have, not without opposition, decided to exclude pupils of the colored high schools from competing for prizes which these societies offer to the best students of German. Dr. Voelckner, speaking in favor of including the colored students, said that early settlers of Germantown, Pa., were the first people in America to place themselves on record as being opposed to slavery. Speaking for exclusion, Herman Lechner said that the white workingman was in danger of being supplanted by the colored workingman and that he did not believe in too much education for colored people.

¶ The grand jury of Clarke County, Ga., in which is situated the Georgia State University, at Athens, in a report favoring compulsory education makes the following presentiment:

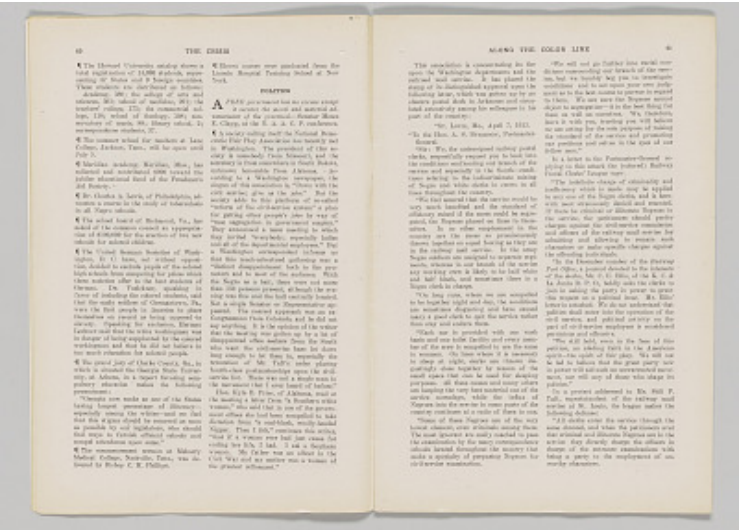
"Georgia now ranks as one of the States having the largest percentage of illiteracy - especially among the whites - and we feel that this stigma should be removed as soon as possible by our legislators, who should find ways to furnish efficient schools and compel attendance upon same."

¶ The commencement sermon at Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tenn., was delivered by Bishop C. H. Phillips.

¶ Eleven nurses were graduated from the Lincoln Hospital Training School at New York.

POLITICS

A FREE government has no excuse except it secures the moral and



material advancement of the governed.—Senator Moses E. Clapp, at the N.A.A.C.P. conference.

¶ A society calling itself the National Democratic Fair Play Association has recently met in Washington. The president of this society is somebody from Missouri, and the secretary is from somewhere in South Dakota, unknown honorable from Alabama. According to a Washington newspaper, the slogan of this association is, "Down with the civil service; give us the jobs." But the society adds to this platform of so-called "reform of the civil-service system" a plan for getting other people's jobs by way of "race segregation in government employ." They announced a mass meeting to which they invited "everybody; especially ladies and all of the departmental employees." But a Washington correspondent informs us that this much-advertised gathering was a "distinct disappointment both to the promoters and to most of the audience. With the Negro as a bait, there were not more than 150 persons present, although the evening was fine and the hall centrally located. Not a single Senator or Representative appeared. The nearest approach was an ex-Congressman from Colorado, and he did not say anything. It is the opinion of the writer that the meeting was gotten up by a lot of disappointed office seekers from the South who want the civil-service bars let down long enough to let them in, especially the revocation of Mr. Taft's order placing fourth-class postmasterships upon the civil-service list. There was not a single man in the movement that I ever heard of before."

Hon. Kyle B. Price, of Alabama, read at the meeting a letter from "a Southern white woman," who said that in one of the government offices she had been compelled to take dictation from "a coal-black, woolly-headed Nigger. Then I felt," continues this writer "that if a woman ever had just cause for ending her life, I had. I am a Southern woman. My father was an officer in the Civil War and my mother was a woman of the greatest refinement."

ALONG THE COLOR LINE 61

This association is concentrating its fire upon the Washington departments and the railroad mail service. It has placed the stamp of its distinguished approval upon the following letter, which was gotten up by an obscure postal clerk in Arkansas and circulated extensively among his colleagues in his part of the country:

"ST. LOUIS, Mo., April 7, 1913.

"To the Hon. A. S. BURLESON, Postmaster-General.

"Sir: We, the undersigned railway postal clerks, respectfully request you to look into the conditions confronting our branch of the service and especially in the South—conditions relating to the indiscriminate mixing of Negro and white clerks in crews in all lines throughout the country.

"We feel assured that the service would be very much benefited and the standard of efficiency raised if the races could be segregated, the Negroes placed on lines to themselves. In no other employment in the

country are the races so promiscuously thrown together on equal footing as they are in the railway mail service. In the army Negro soldiers are assigned to separate regiments, whereas in our branch of the service any working crew is likely to be half white and half black, and sometimes there is a Negro clerk in charge.

"On long runs, where we are compelled to be together night and day, the conditions are sometimes disgusting and have caused many a good clerk to quit the service rather than stay and endure them.

"Each car is provided with one wash basin and one toilet facility and every member of the crew is compelled to use the same in common. On lines where it is necessary to sleep at night, clerks are thrown disgustingly close together by reason of the small space that can be used for sleeping purposes. All these causes and many other are keeping the very best material out of the service nowadays, while the influx of Negroes into the service in some parts of the country continues at a ratio of three to one.

"Some of these Negroes are of the very lowest element, even criminals among them. The most ignorant are easily coached to pass the examination by the many correspondence schools located throughout the country that make a specialty of preparing Negroes for civil-service examination.

"We will not go further into racial conditions surrounding our branch of the service, but we humbly beg you to investigate conditions and to act upon your own judgment as to the best course to pursue in regard to them. We are sure the Negroes cannot object to segregation – it is the best thing for them as well as ourselves. We, therefore, leave it with you, trusting you will believe we are acting for the sole purpose of raising the standard of the service and promoting our positions and selves in the eyes of our fellow men."

In a letter to the Postmaster-General replying to this attack the (colored) Railway Postal Clerks' League says:

"The indefinite charge of criminality and inefficiency which is made may be applied to any one of the Negro clerks, and is herewith most strenuously denied and resented. If there by criminal or illiterate Negroes in the service, the petitioners should prefer charges against the civil-service commission and officers of the railway mail service for admitting and allowing to remain such characters or make specific charges against the offending individuals.

"In the December number of the Railway Post Office, a journal devoted to the interests of the clerks, Mr. C. E. Ellis, of the K.C. & La Junta R. P. O., boldly asks the clerks to join in asking the party in power to grant this request as a political issue. Mr. Ellis' letter is attached. We do not understand that politics shall enter into the operation of the civil service, and political activity on the part of civil-service employees is considered pernicious and offensive.

"We still hold, even in the face of this petition, an abiding faith in the American spirit—the spirit of fair play. We will not be led to believe that the great party now in power will aid such an unwarranted movement, nor will any of those who shape its policies."

In a protest addressed to Mr. Still P. Taft, superintendent of the railway mail service at St. Louis, the league makes the following defense:

"All clerks enter the service through the same channel, and when the petitioners aver that criminal and illiterate Negroes are in the service they directly charge the officers in charge of the entrance examinations with being a part to the employment of unworthy characters.

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