

# THE EMBRYO OF THE VOICE OF THE NEGRO

A MAGAZINE STRUGGLING TO BE BORN

Attended To By HUBERT H. HARRISON

513 Lenox Ave. New York

VOL. 1

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NO. 1

## What This Race Really Needs

IS

## A GOOD MAGAZINE

### Harlem's First And Foremost Forum

Is the one which meets every Saturday night at the Public Library. It was organized in 1916 by Hubert H. Harrison as the outcome of his street lectures of which James Weldon Johnson declared that they were "more than equivalent to a year at college." At that time Harlem Negroes gathered to discuss only two topics: Religion and politics. But this Forum not only discussed sociology, economics, the drama, literature, history and science—it preached the propaganda of RACE when no one else had courage or initiative enough to do so. It was the earliest promoter of the study of Negro history in Harlem and many hundreds and thousands of Harlemites drew their earliest inspiration from it.

In the eleven years since it started, it had many ups and downs; but, through it all, one man's Faith and Courage refused to be dimmed or daunted and that Persistence is now justified in THE PEOPLE'S FORUM which is bringing out this Embryo this month and a little 12 page magazine next month to take its place and grow into 32 pages in the next three months. Both the Forum and THE VOICE OF THE NEGRO are the Organs of A MOVEMENT about which you will hear more next month.

If you want to DO and DARE, to ASPIRE and ACHIEVE attend THE PEOPLE'S FORUM every Saturday night, build up the Sunday meetings so that we may have two every month. SUPPORT THE MAGAZINE in every possible way, and help us LAUNCH A MOVEMENT which will shake Jim-Crow, Lynching and Disfranchisement to their very foundations and rally the Hearts of Twelve Million Negroes, who are longing for Light and Leading.

1. That isn't the "exclusive" family organ of a bunch of back-scratching aristocrats.

2. That isn't a poorly-paid echo of white people of means.

3. That isn't a red-eyed radical pendant to the poor whites, labor-movement.

4. That isn't fourteen months late in finding out that a great Negro has passed away.

5. That will cheer us with some critical discovery of a budding Chas. Gilpin, Claude McKay or Florence Mills BEFORE white people pass the news to it.

6. That won't "kid" the Negro Race into believing that when the "Little Boys" (and girls) Brigade, shake their rattles, we are producing "Negro Literature."

7. That will give THE GREAT TOILING MASSES a chance to understand what LIFE means.

8. That will steer clear of Petty Spite and Narrow Prejudice and leave a thrill of Inspiration in the soul of every reader—every month.

9. That will speak with the authority of knowledge about what's going on in Africa, India, China, Mexico, Nicaragua, Hayti, the Virgin Islands, and wherever people of color are striving and doing things.

10. That will nail the flag of RACIAL SELF-ASSERTION RACE PRIDE and AMBITION to its mast head and sail under those colors during the entire voyage.

### On Reading Negro Books

The young Negro writer has a hard row to hoe. When he writes a book which tells the truth about Negroes he generally finds that white publishers want something else. And even after he has secured a publisher he finds that our people don't buy enough copies to afford him a living from the royalties. Part of this is due to the old notion which many of us have that Negro books are necessarily of inferior quality. This is not true. Negro writers like Alain Leroy Locke and Charles Johnson of Opportunity, J. A. Rogers, William A. Sinclair, W. E. B. Du Bois and Kelly Miller have written and do write quite as well as white people—some of them better. Yet Negroes bought more copies of the "Outline of History" (which attenuates their race's contributions to culture) than of "The Aftermath of Slavery."

It seems to me that only when "—Faith made whole with deed Breathes its awakening breath Into the lifeless creed" of Racial Self-Consciousness and Solidarity will the Negro author's really big chance come. The Negro author and the Negro artist must both await the Negro Renaissance when the soul of the race is on fire with the purpose of proving its mettle, achieving for itself the things by which it will be judged in the future, and eager to listen to.

"Bards who from thy roots shall spring  
And proudly tune their lyres to sing  
Of Ethiopia's glory."

In the meanwhile each of us might make it a point of pride to buy a Negro book—and read it. There is much of genuine inspiration in many of them and something of genuine greatness in some.

After all, neither in literature and history nor in the social sciences can we depend on writers of the white race to do justice to ours. I have always urged that we should raise up our own historians, scholars, sociologists, anthropologists—and even

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# THE VOICE OF THE NEGRO

## THE EMBRYO OF THE VOICE OF THE NEGRO

A Magazine Struggling To Be Born

Published Monthly By

HUBERT H. HARRISON

513 Lenox Avenue New York

FEBRUARY, 1927

### Lincoln and Douglass

During this month there come two anniversaries of men who were unique and outstanding in the life of the American people. One of these men was white, the other colored. The ancestor of the white man came to Massachusetts in 1637 and settled in New Hingham, became the first iron-master in America from whom there descended a stream of sturdy pioneers, landowners and adventurers who fared forth under favorable conditions to conquer the fading frontiers. From New England they took their way, through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Kentucky, where the line finally flowered in Abraham Lincoln the 16th President of the United States. The ancestor of the colored man was unknown—in fact, he came into the world not a man, but a thing, to whom wandering, adventure and ambition were alike forbidden.

The first, lifted himself from the level of a landowner's son, through law and politics to the presidency of a people made up of his equals only. The second lifted himself from the level of a piece of property, a "brother to the insensate ox and to the sluggish clod," through journalism and oratory to a position of conceded equality with the best men of a race which held itself superior to his. Now if the length of the journey is the measure of the traveling powers, then it must be allowed that the colored man travelled farther than the white. Add to this the fact that the black man had no ancestry, the further fact that no man's hand held the white man down while all men's hands held the other down and even we who "read history with our prejudices" must face the startling conclusion that Frederick Douglass, the Negro, was greater than Abraham Lincoln, the Caucasian.

Lincoln was great in every sense of the word, the greatest soul that ever occupied the presidential seat. It is natural, therefore, that every white church and household should celebrate his anniversary, Douglass was even greater. But how many Negro churches and households are celebrating his life and deeds in memorial services this month? To white Americans Lincoln looms like a god. To how many Negro Americans does Douglass loom like a god? Verily, we Negroes are a singular folk. The worship of its great men is one root of the self-respect of a group, a nation, a race; and it is high time that Negroes should become familiar with the heroic deeds and splendid achievements of their brothers in blood.

### The I. C. U.

A race problem is the sum of the differences between two or more races in a state of friction. It is not a puzzle game, therefore, to which solutions can be found by just sitting down to think. It must be worked out or fought out by forces more complex than those of mere logic and argument.

In the light of these conditions the Negro problem in America assumes a grim but hopeful aspect. It is not insoluble: no human social problem ever was. There is work to be done on it; and while it is primarily of the white man's making, the colored man must do most of that work. Not because that is fair, but because he is the one who is mainly concerned in it. It involves his health, education, morals, progress and, indeed, his very existence.

How shall he set about it? First, by organizing—and that involves cohesion solidarity of which binding force the great name is LOVE: love of race, love for one another, a blood-is-thicker-than-water policy, racial support and self-support, racial respect and self respect. Every lynching-bee and Jim Crow car is teaching us that we must stand by each other; one for all and all for one, in matters of money, mind politics and religion, if we wish to survive and succeed.

But since there is work to do, we must organize to do that work. And that work is always where we are. In Boston or Bridgetown, Jamaica or Georgia, the old advice is still valuable: "Cast down your buckets where you are!"

And that is why the new nationwide organization, The International Colored Unity League, has sprung up: to stop Negroes from hating one another and Negro leaders from attacking each other; to mobilize all that energy against lynching, disfranchisement and Jim Crow; to use the ballot of the Northern Negro to secure such enforcement of the Constitution as will put the ballot into the hands of the Southern Negro, by which means-to-power he will be able to safeguard his own life, property and the future of his children; to encourage our people to buy, to own and to use property in town and country, building up by cooperative action such economic structures as will enable them to stand on their own legs and keep the dollars of the race; to co-operate with the Negro church, lodge and other organizations that are already doing good work and to help them to do better.

Such is a part of the program of this New Negro organization of race-loving men and women.

### What It's All About

This Little Thing is an Embryo. You were one once—months before you were born. Yes, and so was your Old Man! An Embryo is something not yet big enough to be born. And some day soon THE VOICE OF THE NEGRO will be brought forth! This 4 Page midget is to tell you about it.

Behind this gesture there's a group of people who meet at the Public Library every Saturday night. They are just Ordinary People, the kind from whom came Dunbar, Douglass, Washington and Roland Hayes. They are working at the task of getting together A THOUSAND DOLLARS with which to push off THE VOICE OF THE NEGRO. While they are doing that, I am bringing out this Embryo to attract attention to what they are doing and the idea behind it. If you want to know more and would like to help along, attend the Saturday Night Meetings at the Library and the Sunday-A-Month Meetings at the Coachmen's Hall. 252 W. 138th St. They are emphatically not merely Lectures, but Meetings of the Group that means to get somewhere. The Magazine (when it is born) will be the Mouthpiece of a Movement—a Movement toward Race Pride, Aspiration, Achievement and Co-operation, in Harlem and elsewhere.

In the meanwhile, I beg you to note that small as this Embryo is, you will find in it at least two things that you will be unable to find in any Negro magazine now existing. Think then, what we will be able to do in a real magazine of, say, 32 pages. We want to shed light on many dark corners, but we can't in the Embryo. We are planning to conduct an independent inquiry into the Virgin Islands situation, to confer with the Congressional Council's officers and the leaders in the islands; to show up the rotten hypocrisy with which white politicians are fooling our people—but we must first get The Magazine, before we can do these things. If you want to help me get this Little Thing out again until the group gets out THE VOICE OF THE NEGRO send me a donation, or bring it yourself some Saturday night. The names of those who give will appear from month to month. Thank you!

HUBERT H. HARRISON

### Those Who Put Their Racial Faith Into Actual Deeds

Mr. Murray Tavernier .....	1.00
Mr. Verner Tavernier .....	5.00
Mr. H. Eustace Williams .....	2.00
The Unity League .....	5.00
Mrs. Mabel Keaton .....	1.00
Mr. Julius Thomas .....	1.00
A Roman Catholic Priest .....	5.00
Mr. Elijah Schmidt .....	10.00
Mr. Clarence Smith .....	1.00
Mr. John Neckles .....	1.00



**The World In Embryo**

THE CHINESE seem to have learned at last from the Christian Powers of Europe, that the only sure way to get a square deal from them is to act the very opposite of Christian. It is a most significant thing—for those who think.

\* \* \* \* \*

ABD-EL-KRIM is safely immured on the island of Reunion—BUT neither France nor Spain are having easy sledding in Morocco. The League of Nations from first to last, has never once opened its mouth in condemnation of this piece of public piracy that smells to all the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS of the United States are still under the heel of the Navy while the Virgin Islanders are victims of cheap politics and bunco-steering politicians in Congress. Poor Virgin Islanders!

\* \* \* \* \*

THE DUTCH are "in Dutch" with the natives of the Dutch East Indies who are "raising Cain". Dutch soldiers and marines are being rushed to that end of Asia while the perspiring publicists assure us that it is only our whiskered friend Bolshevism from Russia. Dark people couldn't of course, want to rule themselves and run out their foreign rulers.

**Facts and Comments**

What is this INTERNATIONAL COLORED UNITY LEAGUE? If you really want to know get the MARCH number of "The Voice of the Negro"—which will be 12 pages—and read the program and Principles of the I. C. U.

\* \* \* \* \*

Do you know that your COLORED INTELLIGENTSIA and GUARDIANS OF THE GATE have not been brainy enough to discover that TURBOTT WOLFE by William Plomer is as dead as a piece of propaganda against Negroes as is NIGGER HEAVEN? The only difference is that the Englishman's book is really good art at the same time.

\* \* \* \* \*

According to the caption of a picture in Du Bois's Magazine Nigeria is on the Gold Coast. It must have moved quite a few hundred miles to get there. But who ever looks at a map of Africa?

\* \* \* \* \*

By the way, Brother Van Vechten has turned down his little play-fellows of the "Crisis" and now declares that "Opportunity" is the one and only greatest Negro Magazine. And, by the way again, it was in Opportunity that Brother Johnson boosted the sales of Brother Van Vechten's dirty book.

**POEMS FOR THE PEOPLE**

**THE NEGRO**

My black face ever seems a living mask  
Misleading those who judge me: thus my task,

Is to convince a world that grins at me,  
That I am made for more than comedy.  
In spite of all I do, the minstrel role,  
Is forced upon me; so my sterner soul  
Stands unexpressed and inwardly, I laugh,  
They claim to know me—They know only half!

**A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER**

God give our land a cleaner, nobler Press,  
To mold a loftier, worthier public thought,  
To fight intolerance and lawlessness.  
A press that neither will be cowed nor bough;

Men who will wield their pens for Liberty,  
With clearer vision, who are not uncouth,  
Who realize our country is not free;  
That her great danger is the lack of truth.

ANDREA RAZAF

**Things Worth Remembering**

1. Edgar Grey's article on "Racial Traits: Negro Self Contempt" in the Amsterdam News for February 16th.
2. The spanking which William M. Kelly administered to Langston Hughes in the Amsterdam News for February 9th.
3. Hubert Harrison's historical lecture on "Lincoln and Liberty: Fact versus Fiction" at the Harlem Library.
4. Lucien White's remarkable editorial on "Thomas Paine for Abolition" in The New York Age for February, 5th.

**Books You Will Like To Know**

- BLACK HAITI—by Mrs. Blair Niles  
TOM TOM—by John Vandercook.  
THE NEGRO IN AMERICAN LIFE—by Wendell P. Dabney.  
DIGGING FOR LOST AFRICAN GODS—by Count de Prorok.

**On Reading Negro Books**

(Continued from First Page)

Egyptologists. But what is the use of their writing if we will not read? They also require appreciation and support; and we should give these to them. For by so doing we will keep alive the spark of genius and kindle them into a blaze which will light our footsteps up the heights.

What they can give us cannot be given by any other group of writers—to us. To get from them we must give to them. The more we can and will give them, the more they can and will give us. Suppose YOU begin!

**"Negro Saved Nation" In 1861**

**HUBERT HARRISON IN LECTURE CITES LETTER OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

**Martyred President Was Not An Abolitionist, As Is Popularly Held—Favored Amendment Making Slavery Permanent**

From The Amsterdam News

Addressing a large audience at the Saturday night forum at the West 135th Street Library Dr. Hubert Harrison declared that during the Civil War it was not the nation that saved the Negro, but the Negro that saved the nation. In proof, he quoted Lincoln's own words in a letter to Charles D. Robinson, August 17, 1864, as follows:

"Drive back to the support of the rebellion the physical force which the colored people now give and promise us, and neither the present nor any coming administration can save the Union. Take from us and give to the enemy the hundred and thirty, forty or fifty thousand colored persons now serving as soldiers, seamen, and laborers, and we cannot longer maintain the contest."

Lincoln For Slavery

The original Thirteenth Amendment Dr. Harrison also pointed out, was passed in 1860 by both Houses, having as its purpose the making of slavery perpetual in the United States, and forever forbidding the bringing up of the subject in Congress except by a member from a slave-holding State. Lincoln, he said, instead of being an abolitionist at heart as is popularly believed, was in favor of this amendment to the Constitution. In proof he quoted from Lincoln's first inaugural address, March 1861 as follows:

"I understand a proposed amendment to the constitution—which amendment, however, I have not seen—has passed Congress, to the effect that the Federal Government shall never interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, including that of persons held to service. To avoid misconception of what I have said, I depart from my purpose not to speak of particular amendments so far as to say that I have no objection to its being made express and irrevocable."

It was only a freak of fate, said the speaker, that the amendment originally intended to enslave the Negro forever became the instrument of his release.

The speaker quoted Lincoln again and again to prove that Lincoln, Southern-born, stood for the white people, North and South first, and for the upholding of the Constitution, which upheld slavery. Quoting again from Lincoln's first inaugural address he read:

"I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have



no inclination to do so."

Quoting from Lincoln's letter to Horace Greeley August 22, 1862, he read:

"If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would do it. Whatever I do about slavery and the colored race I do because I believe it helps to save the Union."

The Emancipation Proclamation, said Dr. Harrison only freed the slaves in those States in which the Union Army held no control while in those in which it did slavery remained. The Negro was not freed until after Lincoln's death.

"Few Negroes" he said, "ever took the trouble to read these documents, merely accepting what had been told them."

Frederick Douglass

The speaker paid a glowing tribute to Frederick Douglass, and told of the great part he played in bringing about emancipation. He scored those Negroes who blamed him for marrying a white woman.

"Douglass," he said, "married first a colored woman, then a white one, thus marrying into both sides of his ancestry."

Douglass, he said really meant more to Negroes than Lincoln and the future generations would so regard him.

## Population, Immigration And The Negro

When the Negroes were declared free in 1863 there were four million of them. The white race numbered at that time twenty-seven million and a half. Today an imperfect census concedes the known existence of twelve million Negroes. They have trebled their numbers in sixty years—and this without the aid of immigration, the foreign-born Negroes numbering less than sixty thousand.

From 1790 to 1890 there were, all told, 17,363,977 immigrants into the United States. But in that year the 11th census showed that the foreign-born and those of foreign parentage amounted to thirty million, approximately forty-eight per cent of the total population which was then fifty three million and a quarter. Between 1907 and 1914 the tide of white immigration flowed in an annual wave of more than a million and a quarter.

Statistics are often dry; but these are of outstanding significance. What do they mean? They mean that if it had not been for the white immigration during the last hundred years the Negroes in America would today outnumber the whites! Wouldn't that have made a tremendous difference in the present status of the American Negro? Of course, it would. And it suggests more than this. It suggests, despite all the racial pessimists on our side and the dogmatists of doom on the other, that the black race under similar and equal

conditions can out-breed and out-live the white. And yet—clear as this fact is—I have yet to learn that any of our intellectuals have discovered it.

But of course the conditions are not equal. In 1910 there was one Negro physician for every 3320 Negroes while every 517 whites had a physician. The ratio had not much improved at the last census. Of course it may be argued that many white physicians also serve Negro patients. They do; but think a little more deeply—at your leisure.

Then again, whether in the North or South, if you turn to the most unhealthy portions of the cities you will find the bulk of the Negroes there. Their rent is always higher and their wages lower. When any must go without parks, schools, play grounds, and libraries, they are the ones to go without.

HOPELESS? I Should Say Not! If we could come along so well with such handicaps, Heavens above! What won't we do when some of them are removed? "Inferior", are we? Well the facts say "Yes" and "No"—inferior status, but superior stamina. That is how I read them.

### Africans!

Kroomen, Fulanis, Nigerians, Abyssinians, Senegalese

### West Indians!

From Barbados, Jamaica, Cuba, Hayti, Porto Rico, St. Kitts, Trinidad, Demerara and the Virgin Islands

### Americans!

From New York and North Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia, Georgia and New Jersey, North, South, East and West

### All Negroes

Who Want To Know Each Other—MEET EVERY SATURDAY, 8:15 p. m. In THE AUDITORIUM OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, 103 West 135th St.

## THE EDUCATIONAL FORUM OF THE INTERNATIONAL COLORED UNITY LEAGUE

Dr. HUBERT H. HARRISON, Director

### Forthcoming Lectures, Lay Sermons and Addresses

SATURDAY, FEB. 26th:

"Garveyism versus Americanism: 'Has The Negro Any Future In America?'"

SATURDAY, MARCH 5th:

"Are White Radicals Sincere?"

SATURDAY, MARCH 12th:

"A Night With Paul Laurence Dunbar."

SATURDAY, MARCH 19th:

"It The Negro The 'Superior Race?'—The testimony of Science and History.

SPECIAL LECTURE

At Coachmen's Union Hall, 252 West 138th Street

### "WHAT GOOD IS THE WEST INDIAN?"

SUNDAY, MARCH 13th—2:45 p. m.

## North Carolina Man Says He Is Father of 42

(Preston News Service)

Burlington N. C., Feb. 14—Tom Moore of Orange County, father of forty-two children, paid Burlington a visit Monday, shopping for some time in the business district.

Moore, who is 70 years old, but could pass for 45, said he was not considering entering his claim for champion sire because the system to handle vital statistics was not so highly perfected when his family was coming along.

## Harlem's Liberal Church

All our readers who have intellectually and ethically outgrown the fundamental doctrines of orthodox churches but who still believe in the religious value of a modern liberal church are invited to attend The Harlem Community Church, 149 West 136 street, of which the Rev. Ethehed Brown is the pastor.