

Negroes in College

By W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS

THE trouble at Fisk University last year opened the eyes of many people. They realized that the problems of higher education were by no means confined to white students. Here was a Negro college where the students not only had no voice in their own government but could not edit a college paper, could not have an athletic association, and could not have any organization without faculty participation. And when the students openly rebelled, they were expelled and some of them put in jail. Since then Fisk University has cleaned house. The former president and most of the faculty have gone and the trustees are trying to rebuild the institution on broader and better lines.

But the sort of difficulty that culminated in the trouble at Fisk is found in many other institutions and this is true notwithstanding the fact that the American Negro is striving for higher education as never before. In the school year 1924-1925, 752 Negroes received their first degree in arts, 44 were made masters in arts, 4 received their doctorates in philosophy and science, and 6 were elected to the Phi Beta Kappa; while 395 received professional degrees. But this represents a minimum, accomplished through great difficulty and discouragement and is not half or perhaps a third of what the American Negro could and would do today if properly encouraged.

We may divide the institutions which educate Negroes into three classes: those which are taught mainly by whites but attended only by Negro students; those which are taught mainly by Negroes and are attended by Negroes; and the general educational institutions of the land. In all these there is today more or less ferment concerning policies and objects as far as Negroes are concerned.

The largest Negro university in the United States is Howard at Washington. The board of trustees of Howard held a special meeting December 10. Representatives of the General Alumni Association appeared before them and demanded the dismissal of J. Stanley Durkee, the white president of the institution. The trustees refused to dismiss him and bore testimony "to our confidence in President Durkee's character and purpose." The charges against Dr. Durkee as voiced by the General Alumni Association fall under the following heads: First, almost total lack of social contact between the white president on the one hand and colored professors and colored students on the other. Second, the attempted dismissal or forced resignation of the leading colored professors including Kelly Miller, the best-known Howard alumnus; George William Cook, who has been with the institution fifty years; C. G. Woodson, a Harvard doctor of philosophy; T. W. Turner, a Cornell doctor of philosophy, and many others. Third, personal disrespect toward colored professors; calling one "a contemptible puppy," kicking another out of his office. Fourth, as the Howard Welfare League has written: "The spirit of education has departed from Howard. Visiting the institution today, the investigator discovers a system of espionage. This is operated to defend an administrative corps which, having no fixed policy, is subject to frequent attacks by the instructors disposed to preserve the traditions of education. The system is financed by personal

preferment chiefly in the form of university patronage."

The board of trustees and the friends of the president declare that the alumni have not proved their allegations; of this the public is not in a position to judge. But certain it is that there is violent unrest at Howard and has been for the last five years. It culminated last year in a student strike and in a special meeting of the alumni during the summer at which the president was violently denounced.

Turning now from Howard, we find trouble at Lincoln in the southeastern part of Pennsylvania, an old Presbyterian school which has trained an unusually large number of colored men. Lincoln has never had a colored professor and never had a colored member on its board of trustees. For a long time it had no colored teachers. Then it began to appoint colored tutors and assistants and it even promised to allow representation of the alumni on the board of trustees. This has never taken place; and while the alumni from time to time have protested, they did not want to make trouble as long as the old regime of teachers stayed. When a new president was to be appointed the alumni insisted upon a voice. And then came the kind of thing which faces Negro education whenever it demands freedom. The white Presbyterians practically said: "We are furnishing the money for this school and we are going to run it as we see fit. It is none of your business whom we make president. If you don't like this kind of thing, support your own education." Not, of course, that they put the matter as bluntly as this but this is what they meant and it was this attitude which made the alumni hesitate. The trustees have nominated two successive candidates for the presidency. The first refused to accept when he heard of the opposition of the alumni. The second is considering the matter.

It is extraordinary that in schools like Howard and Lincoln it should be assumed that the parents of the students and the graduates of the school have no right to a voice in the policies of the school. Imagine such a stand at Harvard or at Yale! And does the fact that Harvard and Yale graduates are rich and able largely to support their colleges while Howard and Lincoln graduates are poor, create the wide difference in the attitude of the universities?

That the threat of withdrawal of support is no idle threat is shown by the situation at Atlanta University. Atlanta University has a distinguished past. It has had white teachers of eminence and learning. But because it was furthest down on the color-line frontier, it was compelled to take, from the beginning, a strong hand. It refused to close its doors to white students, it early gave the alumni representation on its board of trustees, it insisted upon social equality between the races within the walls of the institution. On the other hand, it held up high standards of scholarship, has always furnished a large proportion of the teachers in the higher public and private schools of the South, and was the first institution in this country to begin a scientific study of the Negro problem.

Despite this it has had a most difficult time in raising funds, and when recently Edward T. Ware, a young pro-

gressive Yale man, became president of the institution he was given to understand by philanthropic agencies in the North, such as the General Education Board, that if Atlanta University would surrender some of its radicalism and conform to their notions of what a Negro institution should be they would support it. But the institution has continued to have a free atmosphere and the voice of the alumni in its conduct has been influential. The result is today that Atlanta University is starving to death. Unless liberal Americans come to its rescue it cannot continue to do the work which it has done so well in the past. And it is this kind of fate that deters the insurgents at Howard and at Lincoln.

On the other hand, at Hampton the opposite policy has been pursued. Hampton has prided itself on its friendliness to the South. It has yielded in the past to practically every demand that the South has made, and while the demands of Virginia have not been as impossible to comply with as those of Georgia yet they have made Hampton decry the higher education of Negroes, admit colored men to the faculty with some reluctance, and carry out a system of racial segregation upon its own campus which brought annoying problems.

Despite all this and in curious contradiction Hampton has been compelled to establish a college department. The Hampton graduates, who have been in great demand in Southern public schools because the South has assumed they will be more tractable than others, were often unable under the old Hampton curriculum to pass the examinations. As a result Hampton has not only enriched her high school but established certain college courses and now offers a bachelor's degree. At the same time the demands upon her on the part of the Bourbon South have increased, and during the days when she and Tuskegee are trying to raise adequate endowment the "Anglo-Saxon" clubs of Virginia are demanding more complete racial segregation and separation on the Hampton campus. This cannot be granted without stirring up trouble with the students and alumni.

Most people hearing of these difficulties in colored institutions with white teachers immediately leap to the conclusion that the cure for all this is colored teachers and colored presidents. There are cases where the substitution of a colored president for a white president has brought happy results. But a colored president is no certain panacea. If we look at the matter carefully we will see that it is the character of the man and not the color of the skin that makes for success or lack of success. As a general thing, in colored colleges with colored presidents there is also unrest and protest because, for the most part, such presidents have not had the opportunity of broad education and contact and they are peculiarly cramped in their activities and growth either by the white philanthropists who are helping their institutions or the white churches that are supporting them or the white State officials under whom they work.

At Wilberforce, for instance, we have a church school dominated by the resident African Methodist bishop on the one hand and by State politics on the other. The bishop is a man of limited education and his idea of an institution of learning is quite as narrow as the idea of any bigoted white bishop. He has made his son president and the result is that through political manipulation and church domination Wilberforce has never become a real seat of liberal

education. It is provincial, narrow, and vindictive, without discipline or ideal; and no man of broad learning and forward-looking plans is able to stay there long.

Nor is this situation confined to Wilberforce. A young colored graduate of one of our great Northern institutions went to teach economics at a Southern Negro school with Negro teachers. He stayed a little over a year and resigned. He writes:

You know the superstitions and orthodoxies by which even the so-called higher institutions among us are bound; and how skeptical administrators—white and black—view liberal thought among the faculty. A liberal on the faculty of the average Negro college usually succumbs to his orthodox environment or leaves the class in disgust. Were the liberal individual the only victim, the situation would not be worth such serious attention as some of us think necessary. The fact of the matter is that the cultural development of the Negro people is bound up inextricably with the life or death of liberalism in the various universities and colleges.

In Missouri an attempt was made to reorganize on broader lines Lincoln University, an institution founded by colored soldiers after the Civil War. A graduate of Atlanta University was made president and began the rebuilding. He had hardly started, however, when the politicians, colored and white, camped on his trail and but for the vote of the white State superintendent of education he would have been summarily dismissed this year without a hearing. The action of the State superintendent delayed the matter and black Missouri protested so vehemently that Nathan Young is still working at his difficult job.

Let us turn now from the Negro colleges to the white colleges. Throughout the South and, with one or two exceptions, in the border States, no Negro can be admitted to a white college. This means not separation; it means depriving Negroes of the best advantages of higher training. The State of Georgia, for instance, spends \$655,135 for the higher training of its white youth and \$10,000 for the higher training of its colored youth.

In Northern institutions for the most part Negroes are not denied admission. Princeton, while it shuffles and refuses to make a clear statement, has never admitted a Negro to its college department although it has had Negroes in the theological school. Yale has never encouraged their attendance. Harvard used to encourage them until their number began to grow. Vassar has graduated but one Negro student and did not know it at the time. Bryn Mawr and Barnard have tried desperately to exclude them. Radcliffe, Wellesley, and Smith have treated them with tolerance and even cordiality. Many small institutions or institutions with one or two Negro students have been gracious and kindly toward them, particularly in the Middle West. But on the whole, the attitude of the Northern institution toward the Negro student is one which varies from tolerance to active hostility.

In later years the tendency toward hostility has increased. This is because of the overcrowding of colleges, which has made them seek for pretexts to exclude prospective students, and because of the increase in the number of Negro applicants. In cases where colored students are received, effort is often made to segregate and insult them in various ways. They have been forced to establish their own fraternities, and even when their fraternities are established, are of national scope and of good standing certain

universities, the University of Michigan for instance, refuse representation of colored fraternities on the Interfraternity Council.

Almost all Catholic institutions refuse to accept Negro students. There is not, I am told, a single colored candidate for the priesthood in a regular Catholic theological seminary and of the Catholic colleges only Fordham and Detroit admit Negroes.

In social affairs within white colleges discrimination has naturally been rife; for, first of all, what is a social affair? And what is social equality? Is it social equality for Negro and white students to sit in the same classrooms; or to eat in the college commons; or to room in the same dormitories; or to join the same clubs or fraternities; or to attend the class and college dances? Different institutions have drawn the line at different places. Williams has recently tried to force a colored boy out of its college dining-room. Harvard tried to keep colored boys out of its fresh-

man dormitories. Michigan asked colored students to leave a university dance.

But it was left for Johns Hopkins to carry segregation to its furthest extent. Johns Hopkins gives extension courses and one of the courses was chosen by the teachers of Wilmington, Delaware. Among these teachers were twenty-four colored teachers. Immediately they were notified by the authorities of Johns Hopkins that these colored teachers could not be admitted to the extension courses. All of the teachers, both colored and white, thereupon refused to take the course!

The whole problem resolves itself to this fundamental question: Do we want Negroes educated according to their ability and with the aim of making them independent, self-directing, modern men or are we determined still to educate them as a subordinate caste? Upon the way in which we answer this question depends our interpretation of the problems presented above.

The Menace of Mussolini and Horthy

By ROBERT DELL

Paris, February 9

WE have just had Mussolini's violent attack on Germany, unprecedented in its insolence and vulgarity in the speeches of men occupying such a position as his. It has been received with enthusiastic approval by the *Temps* and the French Nationalist press generally, although France has been just as violently attacked in Italy by the Fascist press and Italian ambitions are a much greater menace to France than any alleged German designs. Were the military situation of Germany still the same as in 1914 I think that Mussolini would have chosen his language more carefully, but it is easy to threaten an unarmed country. The bombast of the speech and its preposterous misrepresentation of the history of German South Tyrol and of the present Italian policy in that unhappy territory should not make us forget the open menace of war with which it ended. This man is bound to make war sooner or later, just as surely as Napoleon III was. War is the logical outcome of such a regime as that at present existing in Italy. Of the many existing dangers to peace in Europe Fascism is the greatest. One would conclude from the articles in the Italian papers that Italy contemplates war on France with the object of territorial expansion. That seems hardly probable, but one never knows into what act of madness men may be led when they are suffering from swelled head as badly as the Italian Fascists. It was an act of madness on the part of Napoleon III to declare war on Prussia, but he did it.

It is, however, more likely that Mussolini will prefer to attack a less formidable enemy. It is plain from his speech and from other Fascist utterances that the Italian Fascists have further designs on Austrian territory. Logically they are almost bound sooner or later to demand North Tyrol, for North and South Tyrol have been one for nearly fourteen centuries and the Brenner frontier is an ethnological absurdity as well as a crime. They have long had designs on Dalmatia, and documents which came into the hands of the Yugoslavian Government two or three months ago showed that those designs have taken

very definite shape. The Italian Fascists have also colonial ambitions and aggressive aims in the Near East. They would like nothing better than a war between England and Turkey, in which they could intervene on the side of England—for a consideration. Perhaps part of the consideration has already been paid by England in the shape of the extraordinarily lenient terms of the Italian debt settlement. Mr. Churchill, however, who dreams of becoming the English Mussolini, would naturally be inclined to give specially favorable terms to a Fascist government. The present British Government is a bad one from the international point of view. It hardly makes for peace to make concessions to the most aggressive and bellicose Government in Europe which, on the eve of a disarmament conference (which can be nothing but a ghastly joke), is spending every penny that it can afford or cannot afford on increasing the strength of its army and navy. By the way, the American loan to Italy has come in handy for that purpose.

The British Government is also doing its best to save the Horthy-Bethlen gang in Hungary from an international inquiry into their misdeeds. But for English opposition, France would already have broken off diplomatic relations with Hungary in order to bring the scandal of the forged French bank-notes before the League of Nations. And France is quite right in this case. There is no longer the slightest doubt that the Hungarian Government has, if not connived at, at least tolerated, with full knowledge of the facts, the forgeries of foreign bank-notes that have been going on in Hungary for the last five or six years. And what we should know is the political plot that lies behind the forgeries, for undoubtedly there is one.

It may not be amiss to summarize the main facts about the Hungarian forgeries, as the inquiry has revealed them. They seem to have begun about 1920, for the first forged Czecho-Slovakian notes were discovered in that year. From the first Nadossy, the Chief of the Hungarian Police, has been one of the ringleaders of the gang of aristocratic forgers. It was he who protected Joseph Pazurik and Meszaros when they were arrested in con-

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