

KEEPING THE NEGRO IN HIS PLACE

BY GEORGE S. SCHUYLER

My country, 'tis of Thee
Sweet land of Liberty,
Of Thee I sing

FOR years we have been swamped with tales of the exploitation, disfranchisement and lynching of Aframericans. The record in this connection is rather depressing and arouses grave doubts concerning the nobility of man, but it is too often forgotten that the troubles of the Sons of Ham do not end there. After all, considering the size of the Negro population in the United States, there are very few illegal lynchings today, peonage is declining even in the barbarous reaches of the rural South, and while housing segregation is growing, there are fewer bombs planted under Aframerican residences than in days of yore. Elections come around but once a year, and while the Sambo *intelligentsia* rage against disfranchisement in Dixie, the black masses lose little sleep over it. Indeed, the ruck of them seem to accept it as just another evidence of cracker chivalry and fair play.

It is rather when they set out in pursuit of pleasure and recreation that the Ethiops are made to feel most keenly their lowly status. It is when work is finished and, arrayed in Sunday finery, they saunter forth to enjoy the fruits of their toil that they are most frequently wounded. Of course, if they stay in their ghettos and are content with the meagre and unsatisfactory recreational facilities provided therein, their feelings remain uninjured. But one likes to leave one's neighborhood occasionally and go to a beach, an amusement park, a theatre or restaurant, or take an automobile ride, stopping on the way

for cold drinks and sandwiches. It is on such occasions that the Negro's patriotism is sorely tried.

Booker T. Washington, the patron saint of black Babbitts, once said that while the Negro in the South can earn a dollar but not spend it, his brother in the North can spend a dollar but not earn it. The sage of Tuskegee meant that whereas the blacks in Dixie constituted the sole labor supply then willing to work, and had, as a consequence, fairly good economic opportunities, they were excluded from all public places of recreation; whereas the Senegambians living in the North, caught between waves of immigrant labor and the industrial color bars erected by their buckra liberators, could freely patronize all public places, but were hard put to get the money to do so. Of course Brother Booker exaggerated considerably, but basically his assertion was sound.

Recent reports gathered by questionnaire from correspondents in thirty-five of the principal Southern cities reveal that changes have taken place down there since the demise of Dr. Washington. Most of the cities actually report an increase in color discrimination. As one young man says:

Segregation and discrimination in public places of amusement and recreation have increased since 1919, for since that time public places of amusement and recreation have increased.

Unless I have been sadly misinformed and unobservant, there is not a single public amusement park in the late Confederacy today to which Negroes are admitted. Here and there can be found makeshift places operated at huge profit by money-hungry whites for Negroes, or by Negroes

themselves, but invariably they are dirty, ramshackle and inadequate. Meanwhile, in a number of the Dixie cities and towns, the ofays have of late years erected theatres wherein there are no provisions whatever for colored folk, even those who might be willing to slip up back alleys and crawl to the roost in order to see a performance. From Dallas, for example, an editor writes:

There is only one downtown theatre that Negroes can go to and then only through the week days. Sundays and holidays it is closed to Negroes.

From Jacksonville, the Florida metropolis, I have a letter saying:

Yes, practically all places . . . have usually the extreme type of segregation where the Negro is either completely barred or offered back-door accommodations. Even some filling-stations refuse to serve Negroes.

"Loew's, the talkie house, does not cater to colored at all," a dark resident of Norfolk declares, while a friend in Tampa writes:

There are ten modern theatres owned and operated by members of the other group. . . . Quite a number of them have installed the new Vitaphone. . . . At all of these establishments Negroes are discriminated against. The only way they are allowed to enter is in the capacity of servants.

As for stopping by an outdoor soda fountain for a cooling drink, the following incident reported from Norfolk is illuminating:

A Negro student attempted to purchase a drink from a white soda fountain here not long ago. He was given the drink but he was not allowed to stand up to the fountain and drink it. He was told to stand aside. When he finished the drink, the soda dispenser deliberately broke the glass in his presence.

A newspaper woman from Baltimore, metropolis of the Maryland Free State, reports:

A Negro is simply not admitted to a white picture house, cabaret, restaurant, soda fountain or amusement park. In the legitimate theatres one may buy a balcony seat in the last row or last two rows. . . . At the soda fountains in the five-and-ten-cent stores Negroes may buy soft drinks, but they are served either in paper containers—glasses for whites—or they are served in glasses marked with red or blue rings at the base. One may not sit down at the lunch counters to eat.

So much for the New South. All of this is what one expects to hear despite the laws specifying equal but separate accommodations for both races. The section swarms with Negroes disconcertingly ambitious, intelligent and thrifty. They must be kept in their place, else, as Senators Glass and George recently prophesied, the South will become an Ethiopian state and mayhap sink to the level of Roumania or Jugo-Slovakia. As William Benjamin Smith, a professional Southerner, told us in "The Color Line":

The South is entirely right in thus keeping open at all times, at all hazards, and at all sacrifices, an impassable social chasm between black and white. This she must do in behalf of her blood, her essence, of the stock of her Caucasian race. If we sit with Negroes at our tables, if we entertain them as our guests and social equals, if we disregard the color line in all other relations, is it possible to maintain it fixedly in the sexual relation, in the marriage of our sons and daughters, in the propagation of our species? Unquestionably, no! It is certain as the rising of tomorrow's sun that, once the middle wall of social partition is broken down, the mingling of the tides of life would begin instantly and proceed steadily.

So evidently the Negro must continue to be deprived of proper recreational facilities in order to forestall this catastrophe.

Needless to say, there is much resentment amongst Negroes against the growing Southern policy of excluding them entirely from public places of amusement and recreation. Nevertheless, since they can do nothing to alter it, their energies are now being largely devoted to furnishing these facilities for themselves. This is necessarily a slow and unsatisfactory solution, because Negroes, gossip to the contrary, have very little money for investment either in business or amusement enterprises, and what they have is largely squandered in churches and fraternal societies. Moreover, the defeatist psychology, which grows daily among them, is nurtured by their jim crow education, the continued growth and spread of segregation, and the constant advice of Uncle Tom leaders not to "rock the boat." Accordingly, few efforts are being made to even get equal jim crow accommodations.

II

And how fares the Ethiopian in the free North, whither he has fled in swarms since the war and restriction of immigration opened greater industrial opportunities? Surely things must be better up there in Yankeeland! There the Negroes must be welcomed in public places without question or insult! Well, hardly. The migrating blacks also believed that. When the grand rush started, most of the Negro weeklies in the North, and all of the labor agents who went South, painted attractive pictures of social freedom above the Ohio and the Potomac. Pulled by the lure of higher wages, plenty of work and the unobstructed pursuit of happiness, and pushed by cotton crop failures due to the boll weevil visitation, the Negroes moved above the Line. Then came the Great Disillusionment.

Today, over a decade after the first black wave reached the Land of Promise, reports from over forty centers of Negro population in the North, East and West inform me that segregation of Negro patrons and often complete refusal of service are general and on the increase. Here there are no laws providing that the two races must be given equal but separate accommodations in public places. Here the pretense is kept up that these places are open to all, but service is actually refused to Negroes or they are got rid of by transparent subterfuges. Here the managers of establishments apologize for their regulations barring blacks by saying, "I have no objection to Negro patronage but my white patrons have. I'll lose money and be put out of business if I disregard their objections." Or, "I would not object if certain types could be selected from among your masses." This frequently results in a Negro not being able to enter a theatre to see a performance that in his Southern home he could have at least enjoyed from the gallery.

There was once a popular song in Aframerica, one of whose verses ran:

If I should take a notion to jump into the ocean,
'Taint nobody's business if I do.

The Ethiop has learned, however, and especially since migrating to God's Country, that his jumping in the ocean *is* part of the white folks' business. Poets may sing of the sea being blue, but to the Aframerican pining for a dip it looks mighty white. Freedom of the Seas is just another joke to the descendants of Crispus Attucks. This is true of most American bathing places, whether on the seashore or inland. At almost all such places the blackamoor is *persona non grata* and the peckerwoods make no bones about "getting him told." At most of the beaches in the vicinity of New York City, Negroes are barred from going in bathing, not by ordinance but because no one will rent them bathing-suits or a bathhouse locker in which to put them on if they happen to own any. At many such places it is against the law to appear off the beach proper in a bathing-suit, hence the Negro who arrives in his automobile ready for a plunge is likely to land in the hoosegow. The beach police are unusually vigilant in enforcing the letter of the law when an Aframerican heaves into sight.

At Atlantic City, the World's Playground, the doors of every bathhouse are closed to colored folk. If they wish to dive into the Atlantic, they must come to the beach in an automobile, put on their bathing-suits behind the car's curtains, and drive back to the Negro ghetto for a shower afterwards. If a Negro has no automobile—and most of them haven't—then he is out of luck.

At Asbury Park, another Jersey resort town, the ofays have very thoughtfully allotted a small slice of the beach, accommodating not more than a hundred bathers, to their black brethren. Otherwise the beach there is only for Americans without noticeable Negro ancestry. Of course, few Negroes would want to go in swimming at Coney Island, even if they were permitted to hire bathing-suits and rent lockers in bathhouses, because of the swarms of white riff-raff that bask everywhere on the beach amidst cans, newspapers and pop bottles.

Nevertheless, if a Negro goes there without a bathing-suit he must stay on the sand. There are not more than a half dozen good beaches from New York to Mexico where Negroes can go without being thrown off, refused service or otherwise insulted. Says a friend from Tampa, where there are supposed to be equal accommodations for both races:

Although Tampa's water front is almost unmeasured, neither a public swimming pool nor a beach is provided for the amusement and recreation of the general Negro public.

And how about such cities as Washington, D. C.? Or Los Angeles? Or Wichita? Or Denver? Alas, 'tis much the same. In Washington, run by a Congress which is predominantly Republican and thus supposedly friendly to the Negroes, the city fathers have very thoughtfully built a new jim crow bathing pool, so there'll be less excuse for complaint from the dark third of the population, barred from all the other bathing places!

One of the tearful complaints of the Ethiopians in Los Angeles and environs is that they cannot get access to the Pacific Ocean. None of the beaches there admits or welcomes Negroes, no provision is made for them and no one would sell beach property to Negroes, even if they possessed the money to buy it.

A social worker in Denver explains the bathing policy there:

Public parks, including the mountain parks in the nearby hills, are open to Negroes with a subterfuge to prevent the use of swimming beaches, of which there are two, and the public golf links. Negroes for this reason do not use the golf links nor the public swimming beaches.

While a correspondent in Wichita, Kansas, breaks the happy news that

the authorities of the municipal bathing beach owned by the city and for which Negroes are taxed, refuse to allow Negroes to bathe in it.

The above reports are typical of a situation existing throughout the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave.

But a colored gentleman may desire to go in swimming only a few times a year.

Far more frequently he likes to take his wife or sweetheart to an amusement park and have a big time on the contraptions offered for the entertainment, supposedly, of the general public. Once or twice a week, perhaps, he craves to see a motion picture or to attend a performance at a legitimate theatre. When the weather is not inclement, he likes to go motoring and stop by some roadhouse to dance and dine. But what is his reception? Almost everywhere he is openly refused service or prevented from getting it by some subterfuge. For instance, a young school teacher writes in from Cincinnati:

Cincinnati is very Southern in its attitude toward racial relations. There are things that we might term unwritten laws. . . . For instance, there are certain places that Negroes just do not go because they know they are not permitted. In one of the amusement parks here (namely, Chester), Negroes only go one day a year. The whites enforce the portion of the law that says "Undesirable persons may be barred" by prohibiting Negro patronage.

No less cheerful is the situation in Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love, as described by a school principal:

The dear old City of Brotherly Love simply observes an unwritten law that Negroes shall not be with whites in dance-halls and cabarets; the hotels invariably shut their doors (they will admit Negroes to special functions arranged by whites); as for theatres, motion picture houses, etc., Negroes usually have difficulty in obtaining orchestra seats; in many cases they simply cannot and in some places there is a genteel effort to seat them in a special restricted section. Most of the restaurants are hopeless. Some theatres (motion picture) are said to bar Negroes absolutely. . . . Whenever a black-and-tan place opens up, the virtuous city discovers that a new bootlegging joint has opened which needs to be padlocked. And I'll say it's padlocked. . . . Entering a United Cigar luncheonette, he [the Negro] may be told that he cannot be served because he must have lunch checks which are not procurable at the place in question. "Any old thing" goes, from the ignoring of patrons and gentle suggestions to go elsewhere, to "We don't serve colored" and signs saying, "Colored patronage not desired." . . . The whole scene is too depressing to add any details.

The reference to black-and-tan cabarets reminds me that mostly Negroes are jim crowed by the management unaided. Seldom do the police aid in putting them in their place, unless they become too vociferous.

ous in demanding their rights—which is very rare. The only time the guardians of the law themselves take a hand in maintaining white supremacy in places of recreation is when a cabaret or dance-hall in the Black Belt is reported to be black-and-tan: *i.e.*, frequented by both blacks and whites. This must never be, of course, if the purity of the polyglot Anglo-Saxons is to be preserved. Hence on some pretext or other such a place is always raided sooner or later, while joints nearby, busily engaged in vending liquor, are unmolested. As a consequence, proprietors of Black Belt dance-halls and cabarets grow perturbed when dusky boys begin to stroll in with their ofay girls. Of course, if a white man enters with a colored girl, as not infrequently happens, there is no reason for worry because the police never do anything about *that*.

III

One of the most widely circulated charges made against Al Smith during the last campaign and circulated freely by the opposition in the Bible Belt, was that he permitted the races to mingle in the cabarets and dance halls of Harlem's Black Belt. The Governor had nothing whatever to do with it, but the charge was none the less convincing to the Nordic voters of Dixie and points North and West. In connection with this canard, it is interesting to note that several cabarets in Van Vechten Land are averse to catering to Negroes and invariably seat them far from the center of things. One Harlem cabaret, run by a white gangster and frequented largely by Southern whites (who seemingly love the proximity of Negroes), will not permit mixed couples to enter its doors, in accordance with an agreement made with a former police commissioner much lauded for his efficiency. Most of the girls employed in this place as performers are as white as the patrons (sociological Negroes) and thus offer striking evidence of the natural aversion between the races.

Not long ago a white-Negro girl and her coal-scuttle blond escort were refused admittance to this cabaret because they were thought to be a mixed couple, which, anthropologically, they were. And this in their own ghetto!

But returning to our moving picture of the emancipated Negro in search of recreation, let us turn to Kansas City, from which community a young Negro journalist writes:

All moving picture houses downtown and in districts catering to white people bar Negroes, that is, will not sell them tickets. The one legitimate theatre sells half of the back two rows in the top-most balcony to Negroes. The burlesque house sells seats in the roost without discrimination, but seats Negroes on the right and to the rear, although not in the extreme rear, of the whites in the first balcony. What used to be the standard Orpheum vaudeville house, before it changed to stock company productions, sold Negroes seats in the upper balcony and the upper balcony loges. To reach the box-office for these seats, however, Negroes had to step around to the side and up an alley. The vaudeville has since been moved to another Orpheum-owned house here, which does not sell tickets to Negroes at all. The stock company pursues the old policy of the house.

Soda fountains: Not served except in districts heavily populated by Negroes. But Negro auto parties are served in their cars by soda fountains and barbecue stands in public parks and along roadsides. . . . Impossible to go in any and be served. I have been here only since the Fall of 1923, but in that time I have noticed no decrease [in color discrimination]. Boy, this is a town—neither North nor South, but full of the mean-nesses of both sections. One has to live here three months in order to get the full force.

Negroes are segregated at the American Association baseball games here, that is, when white teams are playing. But when the Kansas City Monarchs and the Chicago American Giants of the Negro League use the same park, whites come and sit placidly and contentedly among the Negro rooters! There's one for you.

A writer from Columbus, Ohio, supplies a touch of ironic humor:

Negroes cannot go to any of the amusement parks in season except on a day set aside, usually Emancipation Day.

Trenton seems to have unique methods of discouraging Negro attendance at theatres, or at least to make it uncomfortable. A lawyer there writes:

Places with no balcony seat Negroes so far front that the pictures dazzle and hurt their eyes. . . . In some theatres the ticket-seller seems to keep

tickets for Negroes in a particular group. Sometimes one is placed behind a pillar or column and forced to stay there or get out.

In Atlantic City it seems that the superior race spurns all subterfuge and subtlety, if we are to believe one of my friends, who writes:

If you sit on the wrong side in a theatre, an usher asks you to move or returns your ticket price. If you insist on sitting, you are arrested, charged with disorderly conduct. In the restaurants you sit and wait for service which you never get until you get disgusted and leave, much to your embarrassment.

From Indianapolis, Northern capital of the Ku Klux Klan, comes this:

Theatres, downtown and community, do not cater to Negro people. Exceptions are movie houses in Negro districts. Two or three downtown cinema houses of the ten-cent class admit Negroes to reserved sections. The same applies to the largest downtown legitimate house. The city's largest legitimate house just outside the downtown district admits Negroes generally without reservation.

The amusement companies or concessions in the largest municipal park do not cater to Negro people. Negroes have been refused permits by municipal authorities to hold outings in public parks in the last few years, particularly since the advent of the jim-crow field, Douglass Park.

Theatres, soda fountains, dance-halls, moving picture houses, cabarets, road-houses, hotels, etc., except such as are owned by Negro people and operated in Negro communities, simply do not cater to or serve them.

Aframericans, being less than 20% full-blooded, range in color from the darkest brown (commonly called black) to pale pink (commonly called white), with hair and features running the whole gamut from Congo to Caucasian. It is only natural, therefore, that some "Negroes" should be inadvertently admitted to certain public places otherwise closed to descendants of the much-maligned Ham. How do the Einsteins of color relativity get around that? Well, they were puzzled at first. They knew certain white-Negroes were getting in and sitting in choice seats undiscovered by them or the patrons, but they didn't know how to cope with the situation. Finally, in desperation, Negro spotters were hired in Washington and St. Louis. Negro spotters are Ethiops supposedly qualified in the anthropological pastime of

detecting who may have had grandparents possessing a trace of the tar brush. That Negroes are found who will engage in such work is merely corroboration of Mark Twain's opinion of mankind.

Unfortunately for the proprietors of most public places of amusement and recreation, to say nothing of fashionable shops, the current and growing popularity for dark complexions among the Nordic aristocracy is proving very embarrassing. In a recent issue of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, a leading Negro newspaper, there appeared a long news item from the nation's capital gloating over the fact that a party of prominent Washington whites, returning from the races at Pimlico and all heavily tanned, either artificially or by the sun, were refused entrance to the dining-room of a hotel. The headwaiter rushed up to them with hands waving in the air and brusquely declared that in spite of the numerous vacant tables, the dining-room was full, with all places reserved for the evening. An altercation followed between the Congressman host and the headwaiter. The manager interfered and was punched in the nose for his trouble. When the party was finally recognized as Nordic, profuse apologies were offered.

The smart shops in Washington that have rudely refused Negroes service or treated them scurvily are likewise flabbergasted. At least one big store has recently hung up a sign notifying its employes that

Some of our most valued customers are returning from the Southland deeply tanned. Watch your manners.

If this tanned vogue becomes as prevalent as did the bobbed-hair mania a few years back, there is no telling what strange things may happen.

Even abroad, the Aframerican on pleasure bent is sometimes shown his place by fellow American tourists zealously spreading the idea of democracy. Several years ago the Americans become so bold in France in their efforts to establish a color line there that Premier Poincaré had to issue the following warning:

Foreign guests, forgetting that they are our guests, and bound to respect our laws and customs, recently on several occasions have forcibly manifested their aversion to seeing colored men born in French colonies sit by their side in public places. They have even gone to the length of demanding their expulsion in insulting terms. If such incidents are repeated the offenders will be punished.

Some day, probably when crocodiles grow wings, the American government will attempt to protect its own colored citizens in some such manner. Despite this French order, however, Claude McKay, the Negro poet and novelist, was recently refused service in La Coupole, a Montparnasse café, at the instance of white American tourists. Many Negro visitors to London of late, including Marcus Garvey and the cast of "Porgy," have found difficulty in getting proper service and accommodations.

IV

So long as the Negroes were satisfied with the amusement afforded by shouting the spirituals and by the Bible-beating, bench-jumping, pulpit-prancing calisthenics of the sable ministry, or had desire for no higher form of recreation than tossing the galloping dominoes, parking in the back room of a honky-tonk or perforating each other with blades and bullets, only a handful minded the fact that they were barred from other entertainment. It is different nowadays. Illiteracy has been reduced to a point where less than 20% are unable to read headlines, the Negro press has grown by leaps and bounds, and three-fifths of the Africans, tired of praying to the white God without relief, have deserted the churches. Add to this the aforementioned migration from rural to urban centers, North and South, and it is not difficult to understand how standards, tastes and desires have been lifted to a higher plane.

One would suppose that where equal rights laws existed the Negroes would be utilizing them to beat down the rising wave of segregation and color discrimination. Such, however, is far from being the

case. On the contrary there seems to be a general feeling in Aframerica that nothing can be done about it. They have grown apathetic, indifferent, calloused, with the exception of a bitter minority. Equal rights organizations get scanty support from the masses and local branches languish for lack of funds, members and interest. It would be a monumental task to collect \$5,000 to fight segregation and discrimination because of color in any State in the Union, though sufficient money can always be found to erect new churches and lodge buildings.

The bulk of Senegambians just muddle along, apparently resigned to their fate, and avoid as much as possible the places where they are grossly insulted or absolutely refused service. Often they swallow their pride and accept jim crow accommodations: if they want to see a good show that is what they have to do in most places, whether they like it or not. Their dilemma is well described by a young man in the Middle-West:

Well, what to do? To sit by on the high stool of principle while scraps of the decade's culture go by? To look blank when Katherine Cornell, the Marx Brothers, Pauline Lord, Ethel Barrymore, Richard Bennett, William Courtenay, Beatrice Lillie, Marjorie Rambeau, Ed Wynn, Eddie Cantor, Charlotte Greenwood, Walter Hampden . . . and a dozen others are mentioned? Not only to look blank, but actually to *be* blank? To say to yourself: "I do not know them, I do not know about them, never heard of Eva Le Gallienne . . . or 'The Cradle Song,' but I'm at least a man . . ." At first I could not stomach it—this trek to the upper balcony. The curious glances of whites toward the upper rows went straight through me. But my thirst for the good things of the theatre changed this disgust and rebellion into a sort of amused tolerance . . . tolerance of these effervescent-brained whites who fancied their seats a few rows nearer the stage made them any better than I. One always rationalizes a situation sooner or later.

Countless other Negroes are also rationalizing the situation. In a tone of bravado some of them will even say that they do not mind, but the denial isn't convincing. Every day thousands of them have their pleasure spoiled by a curt "We don't serve colored people," or "Are you looking for someone who works here?" or, "Well,

what do you want?" The average Negro just turns away when refused, curses the entire white race under his breath, and steers his wife or sweetheart to some other place where there are better prospects. After several such experiences he becomes conditioned and stays away from places where he knows he isn't wanted, or keeps within the narrow confines of his ghetto, that lone haven where he can retain his dignity. It takes time and trouble to fight a case of discrimination and then one is liable to lose, so why bother?

Staying in the Black Belt is one solution, but unfortunately the amusement and recreational facilities available there are, with very few exceptions, mediocre when not poor. Most of them are owned by whites and operated by them or by Negro help. They are poorly policed because the forces of law and order are not interested in

the morals of the Negro community. With no competition compelling them to give proper service or to keep their places attractive, they offer Negroes whatever they please, corral a big profit and seldom make improvements.

Of late years Negroes themselves, sometimes with white financial support, have tried to cope with this problem by building or buying amusement and recreational facilities exclusively for colored people. Considering their poverty, lack of credit and inexperience, they have not done so badly; but they haven't begun to keep up with the recreational needs of the Negro populace. This, in a way, leaves the Negro all dressed up with nowhere to go. The more intelligent and refined he is the more bitter he grows about staying in his place. And the schools graduate thousands every year.

SALVATION AT THE BRINK

BY DEAN CLUTE

SOON after I became a guest of the people of New York as a patient in the City Hospital on Welfare Island, I learned that though the care and treatment which I received at the hands of the medical staff might cause my pathological difficulties to flourish rather than languish, there would never be any reasons for apprehension concerning my spiritual welfare so long as I remained in the institution. Indeed, from the moment of my arrival in the reception room, it seemed that the principal curiosities itching the minds of the clerks who gathered about my stretcher were not so much of a physiological as of a theological nature.

"Are you a Catholic?" one of them asked, as she bent over my litter.

"No," I replied.

"A Protestant, then, of course?"

"No."

I became aware that the inquisitive lady was scrutinizing my face very carefully. The tap of her pen indicated that she was just a bit nervous and impatient.

"Well," she said, finally, "you're not a Jew. What *is* your religion?"

"I don't happen to have any," I had to admit.

"You must be *something*," she insisted. "I'll put you down as a Protestant."

Thus, my soul was classified before my body was examined.

Moved into the ward, a red card was placed in a conspicuous spot at the foot of my bed, indicating, as I later learned, that I was a Protestant. The color, I suppose, signified that I had, at some time or another, been cleansed by the blood of the Lamb.

The beds of my Catholic neighbors were adorned with white cards, while those of my Jewish friends were decorated with tags of blue. The purpose and convenience of these colors became obvious in due time. By means of them the chaplains, Jewish, Catholic and Protestant, are able to tell at a glance as they enter the ward just where the harvest lies and how the spoils are to be divided. They save the poor pastors the embarrassment of finding themselves innocently engaged in lavishing their sorceries upon some dogged disciple of a hostile creed.

The morning after my arrival a low, necromantic voice boomed at the side of my bed. "Good morning," it said, "I am the Protestant chaplain. Is there anything I can do for you?" Such a generous inquiry comes too rarely, I thought, to afford being ignored. Besides, I wanted very much to acquaint a friend of mine in the city of my sudden change of address. I suggested that the chaplain might telephone him. "Well," he replied with his death-like voice, "I'm afraid I can't do that. You see, that's the function of the Social Service." Then, with some embarrassment, he announced that there were meetings in the chapel every Wednesday night in addition to the regular Sunday services. With a "hope I'll see you there" he went on to the next red card.

But it was easy to understand, after I had been in hospital a little longer, the chaplain's reluctance to devote himself unstintingly to the service of the patients, for I learned that his life was a hard one. He can take up no collections at his meetings, and his salary is pathetically small.