

two audiences, and are in many cases strained to know upon which to concentrate. As artists, it would be best for them to face America and humanity at large. Otherwise, two alternatives, each entailing heavy and general social loss, would confront the talented Negro: either to march off to foreign fields and repeat for the whole American situation what has already tragically happened in the South, where the best and sturdiest have moved off and left an inert and almost leaderless mass to constitute a still heavier social drag and danger; or else to turn in narrowed and vindictive vision to the only course that will give him a chance and swing the hammer of mass action behind the cutting edge of genius.



## II — THE IMPASSE AT THE COLOR-LINE

LOTHROP STODDARD

**N**OTHING is more dangerous than illusions. The Negro has been the unfortunate victim of illusions ever since the Civil War. After emancipation, Northern White zealots promised the Negro full political and social equality, and led him to hope for the abolition of the color-line and racial amalgamation with White America.

All this has proved a dream. More than half a century after emancipation, the color-line (that oldest of American social policies) remains in full force. The Negro continues to be a distinct racial element. In the South, where dwells the bulk of the race, a social system based upon the color-line is firmly established. In every phase of Southern life the races are clearly segregated.

And to this system the Negroes have, on the whole, adjusted themselves. A full-fledged Negro society has been evolved, with

its own middle and professional classes. This has afforded social satisfactions and has enabled gifted individuals to attain reward and leadership within their own racial group. Generally speaking, Southern Negrodom tacitly accepts this biracial arrangement as part of the natural order of things. Most Negroes seek to better their condition along existing lines, rather than to assail the biracial principle as intolerable and untenable.

Yet a minority remains actively dissatisfied. The strength of this minority is in the North. For this there are good reasons. The Northern Negroes have always been in an unfortunate situation. Until the recent mass migration from the South, the Northern Negroes were too few in numbers to evolve a real society like that of their Southern brethren and hence were unable to enjoy the social satisfactions and individual opportunities afforded by Southern conditions. The Northern Negroes, therefore, continued to pin their faith on the illusory hope of social equality and amalgamation.

Until recent years the Northern Negroes had little to encourage their aspirations. They remained a very small element scattered widely through our Northern cities and towns. But for more than a decade the mass influx from the South, together with a lesser immigrant influx from the West Indies, has vastly increased their numbers and has quickened them to a new ferment. Also, changed economic conditions have brought them a larger measure of material well-being. An educated class has arisen, some of whose members display literary and artistic talent. This Negro intelligentsia rejects the biracial system of the South, inveighs against the color-line, and threatens our social order with their embittered enmity unless White America admits them to full equality, with its logical implication, — racial amalgamation.

Of this insurgent Negro intelligentsia, Alain Locke, — the writer of the preceding paper, — is a good example. Mr. Locke's line of argument is not novel; it is the thesis to-day expounded by the entire group which he typifies. In many Negro minds a new hope is being born, — a hope more alluring than any which has arisen since the ill founded aspirations of half a century ago. Therefore, for the Negro's own sake, as well as in the interests of social peace, he ought to be told, — tolerantly yet unequivocally, — that this new hope is a delusion, which, if persisted in, will lead to unnecessary disappointments and misfortunes.

For let there be no mistake: White America will not abolish the

color-line, will not admit the Negro to social equality, will not open the door to racial amalgamation. That is the meat of the matter. If this spells trouble, then trouble there must be. But the best way to minimize the trouble is to speak frankly at the start, thus checking the spread of false hopes and limiting the resultant bitterness of disillusion.

How many Negroes are to-day deluding themselves becomes plain when we consider Mr. Locke's thesis. First and foremost, he bases his thesis upon the premise of "inferiority". The White man's attitude towards the Negro, says Mr. Locke, is fundamentally due to a belief that the Negro is inferior. If, now, the 10,500,000 Negroes in America can produce a few outstanding geniuses in the arts and sciences, this numerically minute élite can settle the question in advance of the patiently plodding millions. The Negro race, having demonstrated that it can produce some really gifted individuals, thereby conclusively disproves the charge of racial inferiority. The basic reason for our present attitude toward the Negro thus becomes nonsense, and the only thing left for open minded White Americans to do is, — "gracefully capitulate." Such, in a nutshell, is Mr. Locke's basic argument, the rest of his paper being chiefly a drawing of conclusions from the premise above laid down.

In answer to which I, to use a legal phrase, demur. Now a demurrer means, in every-day language: *What of it?* And I, being a New England Yankee, exercise my ancestral prerogative by answering with a question, and say: "What of it?" And I do so because Mr. Locke has not gone deep enough. He has not delved to the root of the matter. He has based his argument on something which is not fundamental, but which is of secondary importance.

The *basic* reason for White America's attitude and policy toward the Negro is, — not a belief in the Negro's inferiority, — but the *fact* of his *difference*. True, most Whites to-day believe the Negro to be their inferior. Yet this belief is, in itself, no mere arbitrary prejudice. On the contrary, it springs largely from realization of racial difference and all that that connotes. White Americans feel that to incorporate the many millions of this widely differing stock into our racial life would profoundly change our national character, temperament, and ideals. And since these matters are supremely cherished, we do not propose to jeopardize them, either for ourselves or for unborn generations who have an indefeasible right to their racial heritage.

Here, at last, we are getting down to bed-rock realities. For, surely, no sane person can deny that the Negro *does* differ from the White man. Furthermore, our knowledge of these differences, whose existence is self-evident from ordinary observation and common sense, is being steadily deepened by the discoveries of modern science, especially in the fields of biology, psychology, and sociology. To-day, as never before, we possess a clear appreciation of racial realities. We are, therefore, in a much better position to deal wisely and constructively with the problem of racial relations.

Even a general knowledge of historical and scientific facts suffices to show the need for a racial basis to our national life, — as it has been, and as we intend that it shall be. We know that *our* America is a *White* America. "America," in the traditional sense of the word, was founded by White men, who evolved institutions, ideals, and cultural manifestations which were spontaneous expressions of their racial temperament and tendencies. And the overwhelming weight of both historical and scientific evidence shows that only so long as the American people remains White will its institutions, ideals, and culture continue to fit the temperament of its inhabitants, — and hence continue to endure.

Therefore, if we desire to perpetuate *our* America, we White Americans must absolutely refuse to countenance the spread through our stock of racial strains so different and so numerous that they would undermine our ethnic foundations. In other words, we are dealing, not with opinions concerning relative racial merits or demerits, but with an imperative urge of self-preservation. And self-preservation is the first law of nature.

Let us probe yet more deeply into the matter. Even if we entirely disregard the weight of scientific evidence which clearly tends to show that crosses between White and Negro are biologically undesirable, we must be guided by one fact which has been scientifically determined beyond all doubt, — the fact that such crosses produce highly disruptive effects. And similar disruptive effects are produced by crosses between Whites and members of non-White races other than Negroes.

A moment's reflection will reveal why this is so. The great racial divisions of mankind are very old and well established. Each race, despite wide internal variation, forms a generalized type possessing a complex pattern of closely linked physical, mental, and temperamental characteristics, which have evolved through

long ages of natural selection that have eliminated disharmonic variations and have produced a relatively smooth working psychophysical whole.

Now the interbreeding of such widely differentiated racial types disrupts both patterns and produces hybrid offspring who are more or less disharmonic. Again, the subsequent interbreeding of these first hybrids disrupts still further, breaks apart more and more of the linked characteristics, and ends in a population which displays an almost infinite range of variation instead of the relatively restricted, harmonious range which occurred in the original racial types. To be sure, some of these new variants may theoretically be desirable, as others are undesirable. But one thing is certain: stability and harmony are hopelessly gone, and in their place reign bewildering variety and uncertainty.

The effect of such biological changes on every phase of national life is surely obvious. The results are clearly shown in the chronic political and social instability of Mexico and the Caribbean republics, whose populations are largely hybrid mixtures of Whites, Negroes, and Indians in varying proportions. And the example of our neighbors to the southward has been enough to convince most Americans that such hybridization in the United States must be prevented; since none of the difficulties involved in maintaining White race integrity can outweigh the disruption which hybridization would certainly entail.

Thus, national self-preservation, rather than considerations of relative race values, underlies our traditional policy of White integrity, usually known as the color-line. A good proof of this is the way persons with a clear perception of race values indorse the marriage ban against all non-White races. Well-informed Americans do not usually consider the Chinese or Japanese as "inferiors". Yet these same persons are almost as unitedly opposed to intermarriage between Whites and Mongolians as they are to intermarriage between Whites and Negroes. The basic reason for this general marriage tabu is that most Americans realize that, in either case, such racial chances would ensue that *our* America would be foredoomed to pass away.

Every sensible Negro ought to realize that White America, — North as well as South, — is unalterably opposed to race amalgamation. And the reason why this opposition is unalterable is that it is based, not upon the doctrine of White race superiority, but upon the unchangeable fact of race difference. Furthermore, as

above stated, what applies to the Negro applies to other non-White racial stocks. Therefore, even if the Negro race does produce a number of distinctly talented individuals, and even if the Negro group in America should make such economic and cultural progress that present ideas about its relative inferiority should be definitely disproved, the situation would be basically unchanged. The Negro would still be racially so different that White America would continue to feel that it must preserve its racial identity, which it regards as an infinitely precious heritage.

I have stressed the underlying racial factor precisely because Mr. Locke makes it a capital issue. To him, "cultural equality" means a complete reversal of our traditional attitude and policy toward the Negro, the abolition of the color-line, "the conscious scrapping of the mood and creed of 'White Supremacy'." To be sure, Mr. Locke tries to sugar the pill. For the present, he demands that we receive only such Negroes as measure up to a certain level of culture and good manners, in other words, those who are *Salonfähig*, to use an expressive German term. Again, he rather cleverly juggles his words in different parts of his paper, sometimes restricting himself to a plea for "cultural recognition", — obviously something very different from his larger demands. Lastly, Mr. Locke puts forward the singular argument that if the Negro élite be granted social equality, this will hinder racial mixture on the lower levels. As if, forsooth, concessions on the principle of White race integrity by the White race leaders would not be tantamount to a surrender of the racial citadel itself!

Such dialectics should deceive no one. Here are the plain facts of the case: Since the Negroes form nearly one-tenth of the population of the United States, we are *statistically* light mulattos. In the last analysis, the only thing which keeps us from being *biologically* mulattos is the color-line. Therefore, once the principle of the color-line is abandoned, White America is doomed, and a mulatto America stands on the threshold. Under Mr. Locke's formula it might take several generations. Yet it would be inevitable in the long run.

Such is the road which Mr. Locke would have us travel. But it can not be too promptly or emphatically stated that athwart that road we plant the sign: *No Thoroughfare!* White America intends at all costs to remain White, and every attack on the color-line will merely cause it to be applied more strictly and will hinder any



feasible adjustment of race relations based upon a recognition of existing realities.

Another point should be clearly understood. If Mr. Locke's arguments do not convince us, still less do his threats intimidate us. For Mr. Locke does threaten in no uncertain voice. He tells us that unless we accede to his demands, the insurgent Negro intelligentsia which he represents will either quit the country or will remain here as apostles of race war and social revolution. That is not a pleasant prospect, but it will not make us "capitulate", — gracefully or otherwise. For we White Americans are quite ready to risk possible ills from racial strife or revolutionary agitation, rather than endure the certain ills that would ensue from the loss of our race identity.

The intransigent demands of Mr. Locke and his fellows might at first sight seem to leave us in hopeless dilemma. However, the problem does not seem so insoluble when we consider separately the terms "cultural recognition" and "social equality". Each of these terms means something definite, clearly recognizable as such. But Mr. Locke has arbitrarily coupled them together in the term "cultural equality", — one of those high sounding phrases which needs a deal of defining, since it is susceptible of diverse interpretations. Set off by itself, "cultural equality" means about as much as "the blessed word Mesopotamia". To Mr. Locke it obviously connotes social equality and racial amalgamation. To other persons, however, it might signify a fair reception and cordial appreciation by the White public of the works and performances of Negro talent, — with no logical implication of a marriage license, a dancing partner, or a family invitation to Sunday dinner.

Every cultured Negro should ask himself one searching question: *What does he really want?* And if he thus ponders the matter, can he fail to realize that to demand social equality is about the worst way to attain cultural recognition from the American public? As already stated, White America simply will not jeopardize its race integrity. That possibility being ruled out, can not intelligent Negroes see that in so far as their race puts forth cultural fruits, these will receive recognition much more quickly and sympathetically from a friendly White America than from a White America angered by threats and alarmed by attacks upon its cherished ideals? Can sincere Negro poets, litterateurs, painters, and singers really believe that their art will be fairly appreciated

in an atmosphere chilled by aversion and poisoned by hatred? Let them remember the reception of German art during the passions of war time!

No, if it be cultural recognition and appreciation that they really want, let talented Negroes get after the insurgent intelligentsia which seeks to use art as a battering-ram to smash the color-line. Art was intended for no such purpose, and if it is used that way, Negro talent will be blighted and perverted in the vain attempt.

Fortunately, many intelligent Negroes realize all this. The attitude of the insurgent intelligentsia voiced by Mr. Locke, — however eloquent and militant, — does not represent the whole of American Negrodom. Another school of thought exists, typified by the late Booker Washington and to-day represented by Dr. Moton and other influential leaders, who frankly recognize the White attitude and who believe that the American Negro's hope for the future lies in an amicable understanding between the moderate, sensible minds of both races, who should gradually evolve a workable system of racial adjustment. Men like Dr. Moton neither threaten nor cajole. They believe in their race and they are satisfied to develop their special attributes within the medium of their own group life. Finally, they realize that cultural recognition for Negro talent will grow spontaneously in the genial atmosphere of friendly understanding, but will merely be retarded by imperious demands and bitter hostility.

The polemics of the militant Negro intelligentsia of our Northern cities should not blind us to the genuine progress toward racial adjustment which has already been made, especially in the South, and which promises even better for the future. Over thirty years ago, Booker Washington blazed the trail for the forward looking members of his race when he uttered the memorable phrase: "In all things purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."

Thanks largely to Booker Washington's frank facing of realities and insistence upon good interracial relations, Southern Negrodom has evolved a group life of its own, with the encouragement and support of the best elements of the White South. Perhaps the most hopeful aspect of the present situation is the well known Commission on Interracial Cooperation, composed of representative Whites and Negroes. This organization functions throughout the South in a constant endeavor to remedy abuses, allay friction, and promote good relations between the races. The solid results



attained by the Commission are due to its practical, level headed spirit. The system of racial segregation is tacitly accepted by both sides as axiomatic, their joint efforts being directed to a bettering of conditions within the bounds of the existing social order.

The basis of interracial cooperation has been so soundly laid that it seems as though the time were ripe for a further step. Why should not the best minds of both races attempt to arrive at a frank understanding about the fundamentals of racial relations and try to formulate a definite policy which will have their mutual assent and support?

To the writer, such an attempt seems highly desirable, — even urgently necessary. Furthermore, it seems to me that the only policy which will have a real chance of success is that which may best be termed biracialism, — a parallel evolution of White and Negro race lives, biologically distinct, yet linked by mutual interests and cooperating for common ends. To enlist the support of the best elements of both races for an equitable biracial system, mutual concessions will be needed. Yet, provided the two groups agree on the basic principle of racial separation, such a system can be worked out with substantial fairness to both.

The specific details of the biracial program and the wider implications of the biracial principle so far transcend the scope and space limits of this paper that I will refer the reader to my recent book, *Re-Forging America*, wherein I have analyzed the racial situation at length. Here let me present a short survey of the general thesis involved.

First of all, let us see what biracialism is *not*. Biracialism is not discrimination; it is separation. Biracialism does not imply relative "superiority" or "inferiority"; it is based on the self-evident fact of difference. Those Negroes who believe in their race should not object on principle to an arrangement which would permit the American Negro to remain himself and develop his special aptitudes. The formula of difference surely offers a common ground on which Negroes and Whites can meet without loss of self-respect and without raising controversial issues of merit or demerit in regard to which individuals of either race may entertain varying opinions.

Furthermore, biracialism is not caste. The two systems should be sharply distinguished from one another. Caste stratifies the population in horizontal layers, thereby preventing individuals from rising in the social and economic scale. Under slavery, the

Negroes were a lower caste. On the other hand, Southern Negrodom to-day enjoys a rudimentary form of biracialism, under which individuals can rise to high economic and social levels. Unlike caste, therefore, biracialism draws one vertical line through society, from top to bottom, and then allows individuals to rise as high as their talents will take them, on their side of the line.

To attain a stable adjustment of race relations based on the biracial principle will admittedly be a long and arduous task. Yet this need not discourage our best endeavors. Racial adjustment should be visualized, not as a program but as a process, evolving normally as the joint product of the wisdom, foresight, and common sense of the best elements on both sides.

Viewed from the standpoint of abstract theory, biracialism is not a perfect "solution". Even at best, it will not entirely eliminate race-friction, and a dissatisfied Negro minority will probably persist. Yet, fairly applied, biracialism should reduce race-friction to a minimum, and thus exorcise the dread spectre of race war which to-day looms, a sinister possibility, upon the horizon of the future.

Surely, intelligent Negroes should come more and more to realize that an adjustment of race relations along the lines above indicated offers them far greater hope than desperate plottings of race war or social catastrophe. The "cultural equality" urged by Alain Locke is a vain dream. But cultural recognition of Negro talent and achievement is not a dream. It already exists. And it will be extended more fully and more spontaneously precisely in the measure that a sane and stable policy of race relations based on existing realities not on theories, however pleasant, is evolved.



# MY GOLFING LUCK

A. A. MILNE

*Forum Table Talk*



**I** AM the world's unluckiest golfer. Yes, I know what you are going to say, but I don't mean what you mean. Of the ordinary bad luck which comes to us all at times, I do not complain. It is the "rub of the green". When my best drive is caught by cover, or fielded smartly by mid-on with his foot; when I elect to run a bunker ten yards away and am most unfortunately held up by blown sand (or, as I generally call it, dashed sand); when I arrive at last on the green, and my only hope of winning the hole is that my opponent shall pick up a worm which he ought to have brushed away, or brush away one which he ought to have picked up, — and there are no worms out this morning; on all these occasions I take my ill luck with a shrug of the shoulders and something as nearly like a smile as I can manage. After all, golf would be a very dull game if it were entirely a matter of skill.

It is in another way altogether that I am singled out by Fate. Once I have driven off the first tee, she is no more unkind to me than to the others. By that time she had done her worst. But sometimes it is as much as I can do to get on the first tee at all, so relentless is her persecution of me. Surely no other golfer is so obstructed.

For instance. On a certain Wednesday I was to play a couple of rounds with a friend called X. Perhaps I had better say at once that this is not his real name. His real name, which is slightly longer, is in the possession of my solicitor. On Tuesday afternoon I rang him up on the telephone to remind him of our engagement and, in the course of a little chat before we hung our receivers up, I said that I had just been lunching with Y, and he said that he had just been bitten by a mosquito. Not that it mattered to the other in the least, but one must have one's two pennyworth.

Wednesday dawned, as it has a habit of doing, but never did it dawn so beautifully as now: the beginning of one of those lovely days of early autumn than which nothing is more lovely. That I was to spend the whole of this beautiful day playing golf, not working, was almost too good to be believed. I sang as I climbed into my knickerbockers. I was still singing as I arranged the