

never ceased the struggle for better goods and service, and the profits of his experience he gave to the public, for whom he had already done so much. Only once during his lifetime has he attempted anything else, and that was when, for his country's sake, he accepted the office of Secretary of War in the cabinet of President Smith.

Aside from his honesty and education, Thornton's greatest asset is his sense of humor. The head of the credit department of Rockwell and Jones, the great wholesale house that sells The John Thornton Stores a million dollars' worth of merchandise a year, once said in speaking of the great merchant, "He is the funniest man we have ever done business with." The story is told that often in the spirit of mere playfulness he will force a creditor to allow him the regular thirty-day discount, ninety and one hundred days after the bill was due.

From the time of his first excursion into retailing John Thornton has appreciated the value of advertising, and his originality and persistence along this line have always distinguished his business. Nor is this characteristic without its ethical importance, for it was the amount of his newspaper advertising that enabled him to suppress, in 1911, the printing of the Vice Commission reports. These would have undoubtedly been injurious to the reputation of his beloved city. The investigation was instituted and carried on without his knowledge, but was brought to his attention just in time for him to forbid its publication. For this public service he was elected president of the Public Welfare League, whose purpose is not only to suppress such investigations but to pass laws forbidding their passage through the mails.

Considering the great load under which Mr. Thornton has been struggling and the fact that he has not followed the beaten paths of trade but has always been a great innovator, it is not surprising to learn that he has more than once been on the edge of failure. But, like all great generals, he has refused to recognize defeat and has risen supreme over what appeared to be insurmountable difficulties. Once, just after he had completed his largest building, his clerks demanded higher wages, and he was forced to discharge them all and secure an entirely new force.

But the greatest side of this truly great American is his struggle for the welfare of others. Just as the War of the Rebellion brought out his love for the Union, so has his work along Christian lines brought out his love for humanity as a whole. The great Jewish evangelist, Frank Friday—whom Thornton had been instrumental in getting to his home city and to whom he had given, during the revival, the services of his limousine and country home—once said, "If we had more God-fearing citizens like this man, who worships the God of battles and believes

in eternal damnation, we would not be forced to listen to the dogmatic theories of divinity-school professors." Surely we need go no farther to seek the perfect tribute to this wonderful man!

His life from the very start has been marked by Christian endeavor, and all through his business career he has urged his employees to join some Christian organization and spend their evenings either in self-improvement or listening to the lectures given in the Young Men's Christian Association or Young Women's Christian Association. To these organizations he has given, aside from his moral support, over a hundred thousand dollars. His greatest Christian work has been in his Sunday school, which he has worked for since he was a small boy. The writer saw the whole body of Sabbath-day scholars rise and greet him as one voice when he entered the auditorium, which he had given them some years before. The great man's eyes filled with tears as he answered, "Good afternoon, children." It was very touching. Later the author, from his seat in the back of the room, distinctly saw him place a ten dollar bill in the collection plate as it was passed to him on the platform.

Once when Prince William of Alluria was visiting this country he saw, during his inspection of the John Thornton Store in New York City, a certain unique tapestry that pleased him very much. The Prince, not being satisfied with the price, sent a representative to Mr. Thornton asking him to reduce the figure. The Master Merchant sent back word, "Tell your Prince of Alluria that in America—the land of democracy and equal rights—every article has the same price to all, whether prince or bondman." It is in these little personal touches that we see the man.

RICHARD DAVID BROOKE.

Negro Segregation in St. Louis

THOSE of us in St. Louis who like to believe that we stand for democracy, idealism and justice, who look back upon the history of the American people as one of noble achievement in pursuance of the ideal of liberty and freedom, are immeasurably shocked by the adoption of the segregation ordinance on February 29th. There are literally no redeeming features. The initiative, intended to protect the people against injustice and oppression, in almost its first use became the instrument of intolerance and prejudice. No other issues interfered with the judgment of the electorate. A special election removed all possibility that the result was in any way influenced by any consideration

indirectly associated with segregation. The overwhelming majority by which it won sufficiently proves the condition of public sentiment in the fourth city of the United States. Not through a thin pretense of our supposed democracy and idealism was thrust this hideous figure of avarice, ignorance and prejudice.

No really adequate motive for segregation has been alleged. The depreciation of real-estate values by the moving of Negroes into white districts has certainly not been the cause of the depreciation of property in St. Louis, nor are the districts where Negroes live those in which values have depreciated most rapidly or most frequently. Indeed, the fashionable districts, the great boulevards, are those in which the decrease in property values has been most considerable and most rapid. No one can demonstrate an extent of racial opposition dangerous to the peace or happiness of either race in any district in St. Louis. No open discontent, no manifest breaches of the peace due to racial differences have occurred or have been alleged as the cause of an ordinance whose title proclaims this motive to be the reason for its existence.

The evidence is overwhelming that the Negroes have not sought as a body to invade the white districts, to live with white people, or to claim social equality. They have not attempted in objectionable ways to secure admission to public places of amusement nor have they been present in any noticeable number at recent public gatherings of any description. They themselves, with one accord, declare their present intention to live mostly apart from the white race as a matter of preference. They object to losing in the future their freedom to acquire property and to live where necessity or desire might dictate. The sole question raised was apparently financial. It affected a few landlords, a more considerable number of real-estate dealers and a few speculators.

Against it were arrayed those great forces which we have proudly assured ourselves and the world at large were the strongest factors in American life. Segregation is beyond all question undemocratic. It denies openly the legal and civil equality which we have been taught the Civil War was fought to assure the black man. It denies to a man that equality which Abraham Lincoln declared that the Declaration of Independence beyond all question claimed for all men whatever their previous condition of servitude, whatever their race or color. It is furthermore contrary to all those great tenets of morality, freedom, and justice which Christian ethics has upheld for centuries, to which the United States pledged itself publicly and advisedly some half century ago. These principles have been written into our laws and are a part of the Constitution of the

United States and of the constitution of the state of Missouri, and upon them are based the majority of those precepts to which litigants in the courts commonly appeal.

Apparently there should have been no hesitation in the mind of the most depraved and un-American citizen, yet in twenty-six out of twenty-eight wards the majorities in favor of the ordinance were heavy, and the onus of shame must be borne by fashionable St. Louis as well as by the river wards, by the politicians of both parties, by native Americans, and by those of English, Irish, German, and Slavic blood. There is no evidence in the returns that native-born Americans were any more conscious of that heritage supposed to be American than were the most recent accessions to our population from Europe. Out of an electorate of one hundred and seventy thousand, less than twenty thousand were sufficiently interested to vote at the polls against the ordinance, and of these it is perhaps fair to assume that at least one-third came from the ten thousand Negro voters in the city.

Not the ordinance itself, but the state of public opinion which it unquestionably reveals, is the most discouraging result of the incident. It uncovers an extent, a depth, and a strength of race prejudice, of intolerance and base self-interest, such as we have preened ourselves could never exist in the land of the free and the home of the brave. Unquestionably the people of St. Louis are not what they have been taught to think they were. When the test has come between public and private interest, the latter won. When the *Lusitania* sank, an outburst of indignation apparently expressive of a love of humanity and justice was visible in the city of St. Louis. Beyond all question, those same individuals who on the one hand condemned and on the other justified that act went to the polls and sanctioned an act which is certainly inhuman, unjust, and unethical according to any standards which can be conceived.

The problems of democracy have given those most optimistic about its possibilities serious concern. The problem of the Negro is unquestionably one of the most serious that this country has to solve. One-half century ago the decision was made with the approval of the world, that the status of the Negro must be changed and his civil and legal equality assured him if his presence was ever to cease to be a menace to democracy itself. Only the Negro can save himself. Only an entire alteration in his condition can effect the desired change, but only with legal and civil freedom can the Negro hope to achieve anything, can this running sore in the American body be drained. The movement for segregation is gaining strength in the South and it has now won in a city where the Negro himself is scarcely more than an incident, and in no sense of the word

a menace to the peace, happiness, or prosperity of the white man. If segregation is justified in St. Louis by conditions it is justified in nearly every part of the union, and if it is expedient in St. Louis it is a necessity in the South.

At the same time it means the perpetuation of the color line; the denial to the Negro of the most fundamental and important privileges which the war amendments were to guarantee him, the right to acquire and own property without restrictions and on the same terms as the white man. The specious flummery and idle technicality of this ordinance cannot conceal the fact that the privileges ostensibly denied the white man are not those he values. So far as the Negro has made progress in civilization he has made it uniformly as a result of contact with the white race. He came from Africa a mere savage and in the course of a century has made undeniable strides toward civilization, which have been far more considerable, by the testimony of all observers, since the acquisition of privilege than in the previous decades of slavery.

Segregation erects once more a slight, possibly a technical, barrier between the white and the black man. It is the principle rather than its practical application which is significant. The principle itself logically extends to the entire segregation of the black man from the white man, and would justify by the same arguments of expediency his relegation to a position of entire dependency and subordination. It is a step backward and not a step forward; it means retardation of the development of the Negro race, the perpetuation of the serious problem which it creates here.

At the same time, it should be said that the practical effects of the ordinance at present, should its constitutionality be upheld, are not likely to be as serious as its moral influence upon the white man and upon the Negro. It does not delimit a particular territory from which the Negroes may not move; it does not change their present residence; it does not propose to alter the complexion of mixed blocks in which the proportion of whites and colored is less than seventy-five per cent. Still less does it prevent expansion of the Negro territory. In effect, it will merely legalize and require the continuance of the existing segregation of the Negroes in three fairly considerable districts in the center of the city, and will practically insist that for some time to come the normal accretion of the Negro population should be taken care of by making the present blocks in that district, not already colored, black blocks. It is the educated and cultivated Negroes, those who will feel most keenly the stigma, those least deserving it, upon whom the ordinance will press most heavily.

Undoubtedly it will give real-estate owners of the

present Negro districts some considerable hold upon them. It may enable them to raise rents and possibly certain speculation will follow in land values. But no careful framing of the practical provisions can disguise the undemocratic and unconstitutional character of the measure itself.

ROLAND G. USHER.

Miss Lowell and Things

EVER since Miss Amy Lowell explained the "new manner" in poetry I have been trying to imagine life lived as she describes it. For she says that there has been a changed attitude towards life which compels a poet to paint landscapes because they are beautiful and not because they suit his mood, to tell stories because they are interesting and not because they prove a thesis. I don't understand this "externality"; I don't know what it means to be interested in "things for themselves."

Let Miss Lowell try it some morning and see what happens. I pass over all the things that might catch her poetic attention between the first sound of the alarm clock and her appearance at the breakfast table. I assume that her human interest in breakfast carries her past them, and prevents her from lingering immeasurably over their color and form and polyphony. So she arrives at breakfast, and beholds a sliced orange. It fascinates her. She "never tires of finding colors in it," and sometimes the colors so occupy her that she takes them separately, unrelated to the sliced orange, as it were. She goes on gazing at "colors, and light and shade, in planes and cubes with practically no insistence on the substance which produces them." Says someone at the table, disconcerted: "Eat your orange, Miss Lowell." "Impossible," is the unhesitating reply. "I am interested in things for themselves. It is an inevitable change, my dear, reflecting the evolution of life."

My guess is that Miss Lowell does not live at this pitch of externality. I imagine that among the thousand objects which might attract her attention—oranges, eggs, umbrellas, dustheaps—she chooses some one about which to write a poem. And I imagine that she chooses it because it interests her for the particular mood she happens to be in. And I imagine that she feels she has written a good poem when her mood has got itself expressed about the object. I imagine she is external when it interests her to be external. To be sure, if she doesn't choose to be interested in her own feelings about the objects she selects, that is her affair. But she shouldn't ask us to believe that she has transcended them, and is now contemplating the world with the detachment of Aristotle's God. Nobody has ever yet succeeded