



Part of the crowd which watched the funeral procession of Florence Mills

the purpose of getting at the truth that the investigation is ordered. Public opinion must await the finding of the facts. But there is no doubt that conditions which have been already revealed ought to be remediable by law.

There is nothing more important for the Government to do than to protect the protectors of life and property.

Towards Freer Trade

LOWER tariff barriers are the objective of the nations whose representatives have been in session at the International Conference in Geneva for the removal of trade restrictions.

The United States apparently may sign the convention they finally adopted. Our delegation was put in the embarrassing position of having to oppose one of the vital principles of the convention. This was a clause declaring that return to freedom of trade of any particular product entails on the producing and consuming countries correlative obligations. Hugh R. Wilson, Minister to Switzerland, heading the American delegation, argued that this seemed to call

upon the United States to grant reduction of import duties on manufactured goods to countries abolishing export prohibitions on shipments of raw materials to the United States. He contended that the American tariff system does not admit this principle of reciprocity.

The Conference voted against the American position and retained the clause. Reports from Washington now make it seem probable that the Administration may accept and sign the agreement.

After advising Europe to cut down tariffs, America would be in an odd position if she refused to consider practicing what she preaches.

Blue Grass Politics

THERE was a time when horse-races and hard liquor were not subjects on which Kentucky was likely to be divided politically. But in the recent election they nearly created a political revolution. Mr. Beckham, the regular Democratic candidate for Governor, was distinctly and positively dry; also he advocated doing away with the pari-

mutel system of betting; and as this is the only method legally allowable in the State, his stand repelled all race-track advocates. As a result of a bitter fight in which, it is stated, the Negro vote was surprisingly large, the Democratic candidate was beaten by a small majority for Judge Sampson, Republican, who was at least not ardently dry nor ardently in favor of race-track legislation. The tendency in the North has been to regard the victory jocosely. "The hoss is still king," says one editorial writer. In fact, there were several complications of a local political kind.

If this is political Kentucky in 1927, what may be its uncertainties in 1928?

A Dancer of Blues

A LITTLE colored girl, eight years old, came to the Harlem district of New York about twenty years ago. Even then she was on the stage singing and dancing in child rôles. When she was buried the other day, Florence Mills was mourned by all Harlem and by many thousands outside her own race and place of residence. Men and women on the stage and off the stage sent tributes and sympathy. Many thousands of people passed before her coffin. She was a favorite of the theater public, not because she was a Negress on the stage, but because she gave them pleasure and had in her nature spontaneous gayety.

There was nothing tremendous or distinguished about this little stage girl. She was not a great comedian; she did not stir the heart deeply; but in her own way she was inimitable—quaint, grotesque; just a singer and dancer in musical comedy, she was the center of attraction in an all-colored troupe of which she was the popular "Blackbird." Yet the papers say that there is a movement to build a memorial mausoleum and a life-size statue at a cost of \$20,000. There is something pathetic about Florence's short, vivid life, her early death, her unique appeal.

Perhaps the reason is expressed by a critic of her work who first praised her spontaneity and quality of seeming to enjoy making things up on the spot, but concluded by saying that she had what some call personality and the poet calls a soul.

To put all of one's self in work or in art makes for something more than success.

What Is the Best Defense of the Truth?

EXCEPTIONAL interest has been aroused by Edna St. Vincent Millay's article in *The Outlook* for November 9, entitled "Fear."

Evidently in the minds of many readers have arisen with regard to it two questions:

First, why did *The Outlook* print it? Briefly, because any such view held by many people of intelligence and expressed with such beauty and force should be made known to thoughtful and discerning people.

Second, does *The Outlook* agree with that view? Briefly: Yes, in so far as Miss Millay holds that no man should be convicted of crime because of prejudice as to his social theories; No, in so far as she takes for granted, assumes that it is a generally accepted fact calling for no proof, that in the case under discussion the men were convicted of crime because of prejudice as to their social theories.

Among the letters elicited by Miss Millay's article, some of which are printed elsewhere in this issue, was a personal letter addressed to the Editor-in-Chief of *The Outlook*. Though evidently not intended for publication, it expresses so well an impression which that article must have made upon many readers that we take the liberty of printing it without the writer's name and of printing with it Mr. Abbott's reply:

November 9, 1927.

My dear Mr. Abbott:

The Outlook has always stood for the highest ideals, and I have often turned to its pages to get the correct point of view on difficult questions. I fail, however, to get any enlightenment from the article entitled "Fear" or your editorial comment as contained in the November 9 issue.

The article itself is fit only for a most rabid Socialistic magazine. It states that "Christianity is already so spotted and defaced by the crimes of the Church that this stain does not show very dark." It ridicules duty, honor, courage, purity, sacrifice, as "pretty concepts" and "fragile dolls." It questions our motives for entering the war. It takes for granted that Sacco and Vanzetti were sentenced solely because they were Anarchists and that "Justice is a woman of stone above a court-house door." It finally accuses man as acting solely through fear and that "not one out of ten thousand has a spark of true courage in his heart."

May I ask what good object is to be gained by advertising and publishing in headlines all these falsehoods? If it is that both sides of the question should be heard, then you should come out with a strong editorial to set the reader straight. I fail, however, to find any criticism of the author's statements in your editorial. You simply leave it open to the public to decide if she is right or wrong in her views.

The inclosed pamphlet entitled "The Red Peril," by Frank A. Goodwin, contains facts which are worth reading, and the wide publication of which would do far more good, in my opinion, than the author's article "Fear."

I am very sure what I have written is the view-point of

those who wish to see religion and the laws of our land upheld, and to encourage an ever increasing love and confidence in each other.

Yours very truly,

November 11, 1927.

Dear Mr. —:

You read in Edna St. Vincent Millay's article a meaning that I do not find there. You think she ridicules duty, honor, purity, courage. I think she is holding up to scorn what she regards as false concepts of them. You think she makes game of justice as a graven idol. I think she is pleading for a justice that she regards as real instead of a mere formal image of it. You think that she regards all mankind as actuated solely by fear. I think she is addressing those groups, often dominant in industry and politics, who, though not aware of it themselves, are controlled, not by their faith in their fellow-men, but by their fears. What I think she was trying to do, and believed she succeeded in doing, was to show the evil and danger of allowing ourselves to be ruled by fear rather than by, as you express it, "love and confidence in each other." And when she sees evidence, as she thinks she sees it, of fear enthroned, of people being punished for the doctrines they hold and teach, however false, in short, for being Reds, she denounces the sham and cries aloud for real duty, honor, purity, and courage.

Please read the article again and see if I am right or not.

The Outlook, which is as far from being either Anarchist or Socialist as you are, printed this article because it believes that this point of view, which is that of many intelligent, thoughtful, honest, and patriotic people, ought to be known to its readers.

Where I differ from Miss Millay is not in the principle which I think she was upholding but in the application of it. She takes for granted as a fact that Sacco and Vanzetti were tried and condemned because those in authority were afraid of their doctrines. I think that that is entirely too much to be taken for granted. I believe that the only thing that can be justly assumed is that they were tried because those in authority believed there was credible evidence that those men were guilty of murder. The pamphlet on the "Red Peril" which you send me tends, I am sorry to admit, to support Miss Millay's assumption. In that pamphlet Mr. Goodwin attacks the condemned men, not because they are murderers primarily, but because they are Reds. He, it seems to me, does not give any evidence of being actuated by "love and confidence," but does give evidence, in what he says, of being actuated by fear—fear of the Red peril—and lumps with these two men all Socialists and pacifists, and even such people as Felix Frankfurter and Miss Whitney. In spite of that pamphlet and in spite of Miss Millay, who thinks that such people as Mr. Goodwin are in control of our courts, I believe that the majority of our citizens are brave and fair and can draw a distinction between murderers and Socialists and do not wish to see people put to death because they are Anarchists. If I thought that the majority of Americans were controlled by fear of what even Anarchists teach I would despair of the country. There are those who, however, so believe that the majority are ruled by fear, and I think that they have the right to express their opinion and to warn their fellow-citizens of the consequences.

The Outlook has always exercised the liberty of printing articles with which it disagreed in part or even wholly. It exercises that liberty when it has the chance to publish an