

it affects the Negro. Here the harvest of prejudice is ripe for the sociologist's gleaning. The outstanding and all-inclusive effect of race prejudice on the Negro can be summed up in one word, *segregation*. This is but the outer embodiment of the inner feeling of the white race. Whatever the nature and origin of this attitude, it is well nigh universal in the scope of its operation. The watch word is "miscegenation"; the rallying cry is "social equality." The cunning propagandist knows how to play upon these alarms and to adjust their appeal to the varying moods of popular passion and prejudice as a skilled musician plays upon his favorite instrument. Until recently the Negro has been the victim, with little capacity to resist.

This attitude of the white race has decreed residential segregation. Several municipalities have sought to embody this feeling in restrictive ordinances. In their too hasty zeal they over-rode the reaches of the constitution and the law; Negroes, through the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, contested the constitutionality of these ordinances and won a unanimous decision from the Supreme Court. Yet the legal victory merely modified the details of procedure; it had little effect upon the actual fact of segregation, which operates as effectively without the law as within it, except as to the finality of its boundaries.

The most gigantic instance of racial segregation in the United States is seen in Harlem. There is no local law prescribing it. There does not have to be. And yet, under the normal operation of race prejudice, we find 200,000 Negroes shut in segregated areas as sharply marked as the aisles of a church. This is but an example of what is taking place in every city and center where the Negro resorts in great numbers. The recent tide of Northern migration has greatly emphasized this tendency. In Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Indianapolis and Chicago, the Negro contingent lives in wards and sections of wards which the politician and the real estate dealer know as well as the mariners know the depths and shallows of the seas.

We may then take Harlem as a fair specimen of the harvest of race prejudice throughout the United States. Here we have the largest Negro community in the world. It is a city within a city, a part of, and yet apart from the general life of greater New York. We need not stop here to dilate upon the inhumanity, the cruelty or the hardships of race prejudice. The outstanding fact and the consequences immediately flowing from it suffice for the present purpose.

These Negro communities are everywhere extending their boundaries without tending to any fixed limits we can now set. In Chicago the rapidly expanding boundary of the black belt precipitated the lamentable race riot. The issue is still the cause of race agitation in milder form in all parts

of the country. The whites are trying to keep back the rising tide of black invasion into residential areas previously regarded as exclusively theirs. The Negroes are pushing over the boundaries of racial restriction in quest of more room and better facilities. We may expect this minor border warfare to continue until the matter settles itself by custom, understanding and acceptance. Thus it is that the sharp accentuation of race consciousness on the part of the white race is developing a counter-tendency on the part of the Negro. This is the first fruit of segregation.

If Negroes were indiscriminately interspersed among the white population of New York, race consciousness would weaken to the point of disappearance. Three hundred thousand Negroes intermingled among six million whites would be unnoticeable. But when segregated in two or three centers the African contingent becomes not only apparent, but impressive. Whenever people are thrown together they begin to think of their common interests. A common consciousness emerges which shortly expresses itself in organized endeavor. The Negro race as a whole has hitherto had a somewhat vague and indefinite collective consciousness stimulated in large part by stress of outside compulsion. But the race is too numerous, too widespread in territory and too diverse in interests to give this con-

scious edge. Harlem furnishes the needed pressure. The Garvey movement furnishes the most extreme focussing of this feeling. Marcus Garvey found in Harlem not only a mass of Negroes surrounded and overshadowed by whites, but also a considerable group of West Indians, who, in many ways, felt themselves isolated and circumscribed by the native Afro-Americans. Shrewdly enough he seized upon this group as the basis of his focal operation. He preached the impossibility of racial entente on the same soil and under the same political and social régime, and urged a racial hegira. His philosophy does not in this connection interest us. But he has shown to the world the possibility of focussing the racial mind, and of mobilizing racial resources about a formulated ideal.

Another fruit of prejudice is the direction which race effort and organization has been impelled to take; until recently the Negro has been thrown quite too much on the defensive. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People arose to cope with this situation on the basis of fight and protest. Their fundamental philosophy is based upon the belief that race prejudice is medicable by legal and judicial process. Their method is militant; their mood is optimistic. Equality is their goal; the elimination of prejudice their objective. The Urban League, on the other hand, represents the ameliorative method which hopes that in the long run smooth working relations will be effected on the basis of mutual forbearance and good will. Its main attack is local, urban (Continued on page 711)

I, Too

By LANGSTON HUGHES

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes.
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow
I'll sit at the table
When company comes
Nobody 'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen"
Then.

Besides, they'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed,—

I, too, am America.
