

THE ONLOOKER By A. L. Jackson

RELIGIOUS WORSHIP

JUST when we seem to be having some ground for believing our friends who insist that things are improving in the South, along comes some narrow-minded Southerner and throws a bomb in the works. Bing!



A. L. Jackson

There goes our new-found hope that it pays to be an optimist. May be so, but it takes some optimist to keep his head up where this type of Southerner is concerned. In Atlanta, where we are given to understand that the work of the new inter-racial movement has been most successful, some benighted soul in-

roduced an ordinance in the council prohibiting the worship together of our folk with white people. As if the Southern white church had not attended to that little detail thoroughly enough with its Jim Crow galleries and urgent invitations to support your own church. Why the author of this ordinance should have thought that any member of our group with two grains of sense would want to run the risk of exposure to the kind of religion they practice so universally in the South is more than we can understand. In fact, we have a suspicion that this politician knew that no law was necessary to save the average Southerner from embarrassment at his religious worship. He undoubtedly was aiming at those very devout souls who are sent from the North to the South to help educate our people and who try to practice the teachings of Christ by worshipping their Savior in the company of those whom they would help save. Some think that the mayor of Atlanta showed courage in vetoing this foolish and wholly unnecessary ordinance which was actually passed by the city fathers of Atlanta. We are not so sure about the courage, but we are inclined to believe that the mayor had some common sense which his brothers did not possess in perceiving that such an act by law would make Atlanta and the South ridiculous before the world and believe that oft-repeated canard that the white South means to be fair and knows how to handle this Race business better than anybody else. We would like to believe that Egan, Plato Durham and some of the other religious leaders in Atlanta were able to stand up and talk sense to their mayor, since they seemed to carry so little weight with the members of the council. For our part we pray that the good Lord will deliver us from being caught by the kind of religion which seems to prevail in the affairs of Georgia.

BLACK AND YELLOW

WE wonder if the Chinese and Japanese delegates to the conference at Washington saw the dispatch from Johannesburg telling of the threatened strike by white workers in the Rand gold mines because the authorities had taken steps to increase the efficiency of the native workers, a procedure which would reduce the number of white

workers by a very small number. Yet these white folks sit back and talk about the inefficiency of the backward races. Here they are in the native country of the African exploiting the wealth which has been stolen from him and threatening to strike because his masters want to train him to be a better workman in his own country. We wonder if the "from Missouri" attitude shown by the yellow delegates is not accounted for in part by the knowledge that this Anglo-Saxon brother around a council table, where he is after the consent of others to do something he has already made up his mind to do, is an altogether different person to deal with in countries away from home when wealth is the stake and the possessor a trifle weak in arms. How would such a dispatch look with a Tokio or Pekin date line? It is not impossible as long as men will cheat and kill to satisfy avarice and greed. Black or yellow, yellow or black. It is all the same as long as they can get away with it.

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ABDUL BAHÁ ABBÁS

THE news of the death of the magnetic leader of the Bahai movement will come as a great shock, not only to the followers who knew and loved this prophet and his teachings but to admirers everywhere.

Abdul Baha, "servant of God," was in Chicago in 1912, the guest of the large congregation of Bahai-ists here. On May 1 he dedicated the site at the Sheridan road bridge in Wilmette where the Bahai-ists now are building a temple costing several millions, to be the world center of Bahaiism.

Abdul Baha was born in Teheran, Persia. He was the successor of the Bah, "gateway of knowledge," who began about 1844 proclaiming throughout Islam the coming of a messenger of God and made much headway until executed at the age of 31. The noble father of Abdul Baha was Mirza Hossein Ali of Nour, a disciple of the Bah.

Father and son were banished in 1868 to Akka, a prison city in Syria. Forty years later the Young Turks overthrew the despotic regime in Constantinople, and Abdul Baha was freed.

The philosophy of the Bahai movement has always appealed to us, for there is little question but that if we could look forward with any confidence to a really universal religion which would transcend race and creeds, especially creeds, we would be freed from most of the ills from which we suffer at present. This movement is the only one to our knowledge which has among its followers those who actually practice what they preach when it comes to this question of race and class. We have never been able to discover a trace of race or class prejudice among the followers of Abdul Baha. We have joined them at worship and visited with them in their homes. From the point of view of tolerance, religious or otherwise, and for sweetness of character, we commend you to the true Bahai. May they prosper and increase in strength and numbers! We shall mourn the departure of their prophet and look forward to the rise of his successor to show this old world what man can do, if he will, to free himself of those trappings of the devil—hate and prejudice, and their twins—bigotry and intolerance.