

Negro's Achievements Made As Americans, Says Dr. Locke

By MARJORIE PETERS

More than 1,000 persons packed the gallery at the Chicago Historical Society Sunday afternoon and heard Dr. Alain Locke declare that the stream of Negro attainment is broadening and running toward the main stream in American culture.

The occasion was the final day of the Harmon Foundation exhibit of portraits of distinguished American citizens. Sunday's program was arranged by Mrs. Pauline High Reed, Mrs. Hazel Anthony and Mrs. Ethel Smith, and was the last of seven events held during the exhibit which was sponsored by a group of six sororities.

Dr. Locke is teaching as full professor of philosophy at the University of Wisconsin after 30 years at Howard University where he was dean of the philosophy department.

Lauds Pioneers

"The enthusiasm over talent in persons of Negro heritage a quarter of a century ago, was not on accomplishment but on potentiality," Dr. Locke pointed out. "After the first world war there were signs of public support for the achievement of an individual in poetry, in fiction, in painting, and in music, but this came invariably after a lifetime of toll.

"Now, as typified by the 27 persons portrayed in the exhibit, among the veterans in race accomplishment, we see pioneers in research, in women's activities, the first woman judge, for instance, now young people who, for their intelligence and their talent, are having success at the right time, while they are young.

"This marks tremendously important progress," Dr. Locke continued, pointing out the developing collaboration between Negroes and whites in various fields including that between playwrights and actors, actors and theatrical management.

Avoids Nationalism

"When we look at all this, and at the enlightened public opinion allowing this, as well as at the increasing pre-occupation of the white artist with Negro subject matter and the quiet way Negro men and women in art are taking their places in the general scheme of art development, we are aware that it is impossible for a truly American art or progress to develop on race pride alone. It must develop in American pride and in our own conviction that all groups have the same potential we see in our own Negro youth."

As in this, Dr. Locke's whole discourse was away from advocating any sort of nationalism, away from labelling anything of accomplishment as definitely Negroid, and showed him deeply concerned with the entire stream of accomplishment in which Negro accomplishment belongs.

He spoke, at one point, approving of the new plan at Atlanta University, whereby, no longer, are special days set aside for special peoples, adding:

"In such trends, and in the fanning out of the attainments of Negro youth not only in all forms of art but in research, in technology, and in aeronautics, and in other fields, we can visualize now that the full gamut of accomplishments is opened up, that the whole psychological pressure of prejudice is lifting, and that there is no longer a completely blocked path for us in any line on accomplishment."

Sororities Sponsor Exhibit

Peter Pollack, former director of the South Side Community Art Center, now public relations director of Chicago Art Institute, spoke on the same program, pointing out that the name Negro is a mis-

nomer in consideration of the position artists like Jacob Lawrence have won for themselves in the general field of art.

Others on Sunday's program were Paul Angle, director of Chicago Historical Society; Miss Elizabeth Wells Robertson, head of the art department of Chicago Public Schools; Mrs. Jeanette Tripplet Jones, dean of girls at Du Sable High School; William Eduard Scott, artist.

Miss Louise Gaines, who with Mrs. Bertha Graham, has been co-chairman of the general committee of sorority women sponsoring the exhibit, paid tribute to the Harmon Foundation for pointing up, through such an exhibit, notables of Negro heritage, and read a statement from Claude A. Barnett, who stood as adviser to the women's project, who left for New York before the program was over.

Mrs. Henrietta S. Pelkey was general program chairman under whom events such as Sunday's program were arranged for the length of the exhibit. The sponsoring sororities were: Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Iota Phi Lambda, Phi Delta Kappa, Sigma Gamma Rho, and Zeta Phi Beta.