

# Random Thoughts

By NAHUM DANIEL BRASCHER

## A PRAYER

O God, refresh and gladden my spirit. Purify my heart. Illumine my powers. I lay all my affairs in Thy hand. Thou art my Guide and my Refuge. I will not be sorrowful and grieved any more. I will be a happy and joyful being. O God, I will not let trouble harass me any longer. I will not dwell on the unpleasant things of life. O God, Thou art kinder to me than myself. I dedicate myself to Thee. O Lord!—Abdul-Baha.

If you will be kind enough to read further, you will learn why I quote the above in "God and Prayer."

Hope you read James O'Donnell Bennett on the World's Fair African exhibit in the Chicago Tribune of Monday, Sept. 18.

The Literary Digest, Sept. 16, page 29, under caption, "The Voice of the Negro," quotes P. B. Young Sr. from The Southern Workman on the growth of our publications. Read, be advised and grow wise.

"Surely, there can be no basic antagonism between man's highest mental and spiritual aspirations; between his fearless quest for objective truth and his yearning quest for contact with the ultimate."—Lothrop Stoddard, in "Scientific Humanism," author's autographed copy. Author of "The Rising Tide of Color." I met Mr. Stoddard, some years since, at Tuskegee Institute. I heard his bold, but kindly lectures; was present in the administration building conference room when the faculty, sponsored by Dr. Moton, plied Mr. Stoddard with questions, of which he might have said afterwards: "Was my face red?" An hour's personal interview with him on the bench in front of Dorothy Hall; telephoned me on his Chicago arrival when he debated with Dr. W. E. B. DuBois at the Coliseum. With all his ideas Mr. Stoddard is a gentleman.

"I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than dwell in the tents of the wicked." Irwin W. Hoover, 62, chief usher of the White House for more than 40 years, died suddenly last week. His passing was bemoaned by President Roosevelt, former President Hoover, only living ex-president, and the wives of several former presidents and hundreds of others who knew him in his faithful performance of duties. Whatever your occupation in life, dignify it by sincere performance of duty, in which personal joy always comes, and with it, esteem and respect.

C. C. Spaulding, chairman of the executive committee of the National Negro Business league and outstanding business man of Durham, N. C., in his solon unvelving address at the Century of Progress in the Indiana building of the Hall of States, urged the purchasing of the bust of Clarence Cameron White for some institution and stated that similar works of art of and by great painters and sculptors should be in all our institutions. It is indeed time that we ascend the cultural ladder higher, and yet higher. Have you a suggestion how we may procure the C. C. White bust at the close of the World's Fair? Remember, it is dedicated to "A century of progress of the American Negro in music and patriotic loyalty."

"Yours received and contents noted." Across the years of public life, I regret to advise that one of the sad sins of "commission and omission" of our public men—including business men—is their failure to properly, fittingly and courteously answer letters. Answering mail was one of the great qualities and secrets of success of Booker T. Washington. So many of our men will not write unless they wish a favor. Answering letters should be another step in the "new deal." Come now, take your pen in hand.

"Ladies and gentleman, the Fourth Estate, the press." Here's to the press of the land, faithful chronicler of news, events and opinions, wide of vision, sacrificing, trustworthy and loyal to a noble calling.

Doctors, lawyers, ministers, athletes, manufacturers, commercial heads, farmers and plain racketeers may have a grand time when they gather together in the inner circle, but I am persuaded to think and believe that none—no, not one—have the time equal to a bunch of newspaper fellows. By every force of his position, a newspaper man must constantly sit in a tower house. He must—and does—see the world as is. He always knows far more than he writes and talks. He is often disillusioned and sophisticated—sometimes arrogant and egotistic, not the true scribe, though—but he does his duty well on a lofty plane. He harbors a confidence as he does the love of a mother or child.

The press is given consideration in everything everywhere. It is "the eyes and ears of the world." In every city hall, state house; in the capitol of the nation, senate and house; in the White House, in every place of public gathering, special rooms and reservations are provided for the press. One of the largest occupational spaces at the World's Fair is provided for the press of the world. Most interesting to observe. The press can make you or break you. The true journalist is wedded to his career and his desire fundamentally is to help all worth-while causes everywhere; to make "little men big and big men bigger." Here's to the press!

Pin heads: The English government seeking to prevent African chieftains from protecting their native women from British seduction. How do white civilized countries get that way?

Southern employers and some northerners discharging our workers and replacing with whites. Remember, fellows: "We all go up or down together."

Former Senator Cole Blease addressed Greater Bethel A. M. E. church in Columbia, S. C. "The devil was sick, the devil a saint would be." (In close personal contact with Blease in Washington, he never snorted like a bull in private).

Pin points: There are no greater opportunities in professional advancement than are coming to us in the field of radio. Efficiency, more efficiency, most efficiency! You cannot wish yourself before a "Mike."

Depression must be over. The number of marriages is increasing, and hundreds who have been huddled, two and three families in a small apartment, are spreading out and re-establishing homes. "Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home." (More fire in the furnace of Hades which holds the guy who invented the kitchenette.)

There is a sincere determination on the part of the national government, we are told by Harry H. Pace who just arrived from Washington, to give the well-known "square deal" in the "new deal" to all without regard to racial distinctions. (That kind of business will make Herbert Hoover, Everett Sanders and other trick card sharks in the political game of human progress look like the proverbial 30 cents.)

God and prayer. The other day, here in Chicago, I had a long and earnest chat with a prominent Loop

lawyer. The subject of prayer came up, incidentally, and he informed me unhesitatingly and voluntarily that he, and his forebearers, is an Atheist. This man has splendid qualities in character and patriotism. He is a white man, and said: "I cannot see a God that permits Colored people to suffer the indignities they do by the hands of so-called 'Christians.'" In talking much farther, I left him feeling that as an Atheist, he is one of the best Christians I know.

It has never been my habit to argue, or even discuss out of turn, religion, or religions. Personally, with all my frailties—and they are many—I accept the "Apostles Creed." I am not dogmatic. I seek to find God and the beautiful in everything. Why not? My Atheist friend gets his greatest joy out of denying God; I get mine out of believing in a supreme being—God. I would not deny him, and he assured me he would not "seek to sell" me. In fact, in the the last analysis, he acknowledges belief in a supreme force. Well, as I see it, that is all there is to it, after all. I am not a theologian—merely a humble scribe.

The other day Charles Fillmore, 56 years old, founder of the Society of Unity, was in Chicago and spoke to more than 3,000 people. The society, more than 50 years established, has some 2,500,000 followers. I have read, and been helped, personally, by Unity for years. I have had personal conference in the silence with Mr. Fillmore in the famous Unity building on Tracy St. in Kansas City. I had the nerve to inquire of him about color discriminations in his society. "I have no personal prejudices," he answered, "but racial justice is a matter of evolution and I cannot stop it overnight." My Atheistic friend would snort disgustedly at that—and so he should. Nevertheless, that's Brother Fillmore's idea—and he's "gonna" stick to it. Regardless of his individual idea, I profoundly believe in the power of silence and concentration. What, or whoever you are, silence and concentration will make you grow.

## What Is Prayer?

Some one has said: "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire." That is not a bad definition. Any sincere desire you have may well be recorded as prayer. Yet, in my humble opinion, that desire should be for good and not evil. Regardless of cause, evil and unkind thinking is evil and unkind making of results. Such thinking makes ugliness of countenance and repels the forces of good will and friendship.

Have you ever been to the great Bahai temple in Wilmette, near Chicago?

It is indeed a worth-while place of peace, good will and fellowship. Tune yourself to the beauty of their fine thinking and you cannot help growing finer on every visit. Attend their Chicago sessions and learn something of the true meaning of "the fatherhood of God and the fellowship of man."

An eminent minister once said to me in conversation, "A white man's religion always falls down at the color line." I reckon he stumbles over the invisible "irresistible force that hits an immovable body." I am certain that I know some people in this dear old world—and in this glorious old U. S. A.—who have either climbed over or crawled under the "color line." I condemn no man for his prejudices; I am sad, or amused, according to circumstances, for the pathetic stillness of it all; the folly and hypocrisy of it.

Try to live in Emerson's "Seventh Heaven" on human relationships. Then all the silly attitudes of Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Catholics, Christian Scientists, Unitaries and Unitarians, along with any and all others who circulate, circumvent and circumscribe color situations will give you the greatest laugh in "A Century of Progress."

In the last analysis, it is always the other fellow who is the loser, not you.

"Lift up your heads O ye gates; and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the kind of glory shall come in. Who is the king of glory?"

My answer satisfies me; now, what is yours?

## LYRIC

In my love, dear, always resting,

At the closing of the day,

I would have you feel me near you—

May I love you in this way?

Just to know your love is leaning,

Tenderly for strength on mine,

Seems to make it far more sacred,

And your own sweet self divine.

So at night when fall the shadows,

And your eyelids softly close,

Let the thought of my devotion

Bring to you a deep repose.

If new strength my ways may bring you,

If sweet dreams my thoughts impart,

I shall know the love I bring you

Rests forever in your heart.

—CHARLES BANCROFT.

(Sent in by a loyal and devoted friend. Thank you and bless you, good friend.)