

**CALEB, THE DEGENERATE: A
PLAY IN FOUR ACTS; A STUDY
OF THE TYPES, CUSTOMS, AND
NEEDS OF THE AMERICAN
NEGRO**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649326211

Caleb, the Degenerate: A Play in Four Acts; a Study of the Types, Customs, and needs of the American negro by Joseph S. Cotter

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOSEPH S. COTTER

**CALEB, THE DEGENERATE: A
PLAY IN FOUR ACTS; A STUDY
OF THE TYPES, CUSTOMS, AND
NEEDS OF THE
AMERICAN NEGRO**



Joseph S. Cotter

CALEB, THE DEGENERATE

A Play in Four Acts

A STUDY OF THE TYPES, CUSTOMS, AND NEEDS
OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO

BY
JOSEPH S. COTTER

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY
THE BRADLEY & GILBERT COMPANY
1903

ISS 1082.2.80

A

Gratis

COPYRIGHTED 1901
BY
JOSEPH S. COTTER.

THE AUTHOR

THE AUTHOR is one of a race that has given scarcely anything of literature to the world. His modest tender of some Christmas verses to me led to an inquiry which revealed his story of unpretentious but earnest and conscientious toil. He is wholly self-taught in English literature and composition. The obstacles which he has surmounted were undreamed of by Burns and other sons of song who struggled up from poverty, obscurity, and ignorance to glory.

JOSEPH SEAMON COTTER was born in Nelson County, Kentucky, in 1861, but has spent practically all his life in Louisville. He had the scantiest opportunity for schooling in childhood, though he could read before he was four years old. He was put to work early, and from his eighth to his twenty-fourth year earned his living by the roughest and hardest labor, first in a brick-yard, then in a distillery, and finally as a teamster. At twenty-two his scholarship was so limited that when he entered the first one of Louisville's night schools for colored pupils he had to begin in the primary department. His industry and capacity were so great that at the end of two sessions of five months each he began to teach. He has persevered in his calling, educating himself while at work, and is now Principal of the Colored Ward School at Eighth and Kentucky streets. The man whose advice and encouragement at the beginning chiefly enabled him to accomplish this was Prof. W. T. Peyton, a well-known colored educator of this city, whom he regards as his greatest benefactor.

THOMAS G. WATKINS,
Financial Editor Louisville Courier-Journal.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THIS play has been in course of construction for some years. Several of the speeches, slightly changed and with suitable headings, have been published in periodicals and in my "Links of Friendship," which will soon be out of print. I once published a short prose version of "CALEB" in a Louisville journal.

Negroes of to-day do not speak in blank verse. The peoples of the past did not. An author puts poetry into the mouths of his characters to show the possibility of individual human expression as illustrated by himself.

✓ The aim is to give a dramatic picture of the Negro as he is to-day. The brain and soul of the Negro are rising rapidly. On the other hand, there is more depravity among a certain class of Negroes than ever before. This is not due to anything innate. It is the result of unwise, depraved leadership and conditions growing out of it.

RAHAB represents this unwise, depraved leadership. CALEB is his pupil, and represents the depraved class of Negroes referred to. Some may claim that the picture is overdrawn, but both leader and led are with us to-day and speak for themselves.

The BISHOP and OLIVIA represent the highest types of cultivated Negro manhood and womanhood. The DUDE represents the so-called educated young Negro politician, of whom something may be made if the right steps are taken in time.

The Negro needs very little politics, much industrial training, and a dogged settledness as far as going to Africa is concerned. To this should be added clean, intelligent fireside leadership. Much of any other kind is dangerous for the present.

I am a Negro and speak from experience.

JOSEPH S. COTTER.

On My Friends

THOMAS J. BROWN
FRANK L. WILLIAMS
LELAND M. FISHER

CHARACTERS.

(All are American Negroes.)

THE BISHOP—Adopted father to Olivia.

NOAH—Father to Olivia.

CALEB—Son to Patsy and Grandison.

GRANDISON.

RAHAB—A minister, politician, and teacher to Caleb.

UNDERTAKER.

DOCTOR.

HIREN MAN.

DUDE.

OLIVIA.

FRONY—Friend to Olivia.

PATSY.

A WAIF.

A WOMAN.

Neighbors, Ministers, Officers, Candidates for Africa, Medical Students,
Boys and Girls of Industrial School.