

**RACIAL INTEGRITY AND
OTHER FEATURES OF
THE NEGRO PROBLEM**

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Racial Integrity and Other Features of the Negro Problem by A. H. Shannon

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BY A. H. SHANNON, B.D., M.A.

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PREFACE.

THIS volume is in no sense the result of any recent agitation of the race question. Its inception dates from the year 1900, and the manuscript was practically completed before the Brownsville affair, the Atlanta riots, and other less serious race conflicts aroused the country to at least a temporary realization of the existence of latent racial antagonisms which, under sufficient provocation, may at any time cause serious trouble. Advantage was, however, taken of a final revision of the manuscript to refer briefly to two or three of the more recent outbreaks because of their value as illustrations of facts and conditions under discussion.

The purpose of this volume is primarily to bring before thoughtful people the moral and ethical principles involved in the amalgamation of the white and the black races. Busy men will find the gist of the volume in Chapter I.

A. H. SHANNON.

NASHVILLE, TENN., May 1, 1907.

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INTRODUCTION.

SOME six or seven years ago, I was a student attending the Theological Department of Vanderbilt University. On one occasion Dr. W. F. Tillett, Dean of the Department, while lecturing to his class in Systematic Theology, spoke of a visit made to the United States by the late Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, sometime city missionary of the Wesleyans in East London.¹

The reference made by Dean Tillett was brief, perhaps an illustration of some point under discussion, perhaps scarcely more than an allusion. For some reason, however, this reference caused the situation to flash upon me and to get such a hold upon my mind that I was unable to put the matter aside. My attention having been thus directed to the moral principles involved in the amalgamation of the races, I began to investigate the situation as carefully as press of studies and other duties would admit. From conditions obtaining in the schools, I turned to conditions obtaining in religious organizations, especially the practical attitude of the mission boards of the Northern Churches toward the moral and ethical features of the negro problem.

Several instances, in which the United States gov-

¹See "Racial Integrity," p. 59.

ernment had utterly disregarded moral considerations and social safeguards in the selection of mulattoes for Federal positions, having already come under my personal observation, I extended the scope of my investigation so as to include the influences emanating from the political situation.

It was not a part of my original plan to enter upon any discussion of either the economic or the political features of the negro problem, but rather to limit this study to those factors which have to do with its moral phases. It soon became evident, however, that other matters must be discussed in order that the moral and ethical features of the problem might be presented with any degree of clearness or fullness. In dealing with so complex a situation, the problem of what to omit has been a difficult one to solve.³

In undertaking to deal with any feature of the negro problem, I am aware of the danger, as a Southern man, of becoming a partisan rather than an impartial student of existing conditions. My sympathies are with the South, and naturally so. The temptation, therefore, to stress those facts which, as I see the situation, constitute the strongest defense of the course

³ . . . When a man attempts to discuss the negro problem at the South, he may begin with the negro; but he really touches, with however light a hand, the whole bewildering problem of a civilization. ("The Present South," Murphy, p. 158.)

pursued by the South between the years 1840 and 1865, and those elements entering into the negro problem since 1865, which bid fair ultimately to vindicate the contentions of the more conservative Southern leaders of that trying period when the lines were being drawn for the final struggle with slavery, has been present as every page was written. Perhaps the reader will regard many things as written with this ulterior purpose. I see clearly, however, that in so far as the sectional differences of the past and the bitternesses incident to these are drawn into any discussion of present conditions, the possibility of an impartial comprehension of the present situation will be removed. Looking backward, we may now recognize many things done in the days when passion ran high as stupendous blunders. Even so: yet it is not necessary to question the integrity of either section, nor should the former mistakes of either section of our country be regarded as precedents fettering us in our attempts to deal with the present.

It is not less difficult for a typical Northern man to make an impartial study of the negro problem than it is for a Southern man to do so. In the one case, as in the other, mistakes have been made, and affiliations and point of view are determined largely by surroundings. Instead, therefore, of indulging in bitter recriminations, it is well that both sections should remember that we inherit our present problems from an