

less work to be done here," he answered, as if he had me going.

"According to that, if we bought all our goods abroad, we wouldn't have to do any work here?"

"Oh, well, we would have to give gold for what we got."

"Just so. Now you figure out how we would get the gold, and you'll have a new idea."

The crowd again joined the big fellow in a hearty laugh, after which he said: "Well, anyway, you will have to admit that there are more men than jobs."

"Yes," I replied, "the way things are going that is the way it seems, at least."

"Well, I'll tell you what would fix it."

"What?"

"A war. I think we ought to have a war about once in ten years."

"What under the sun do you want a war for?"

"To kill off our surplus population," he replied, looking as if he was sorry he couldn't have the idea patented.

"Oh, I see. You think there are too many people?"

"Indeed I do, and I think an occasional war would be a God-send."

"So far as the object is concerned I am inclined to agree with you, but I think the end would be accomplished by more satisfactory means."

"What would you suggest?" he asked, as if puzzled by my remark.

"Before I answer that, permit me to state my objection to the method you have proposed. You see, a war would call out some of the most desirable men we have, the brainiest and strongest. Besides, the work would be awkwardly done—the killing I mean. Some men would only get their eyes shot out, or legs or arms taken off, with the result that we would have a lot of helpless cripples about for years afterwards. See? Now I propose that a public butcher be appointed in each town, with authority to chop the heads off such people as might be selected."

"That would be too cold blooded."

"Cold blooded? Why, man, that would be philanthropy itself compared with the plan you propose. Every one beheaded would cash in in a hurry. There would be no suffering in hospitals for months before the end came; and, besides, think of the advantage of choosing the victims!"

"I am willing to grant it does seem as if it would be more humane, but it don't sound so. How would you select your victims?"

"Oh, that would be easy enough," I went on. "We could take, first, the

people who are physically weak—the invalids and cripples, you know. Then we could kill the people who are deformed—those with curved spines. And after that we could take those with curved intellects. And say, my friend," I asked, looking him squarely in the eye, "where would you come in in a game like that?"

Perhaps he didn't answer the question—at least I didn't hear it; the engine whistled for the crossing at Buda, and I got off.

M. J. FOYER.

THE TIGER'S STRIPES.

By Ernest Crosby, in *Whim*, for August; reprinted from *Whim* by especial permission from the editors. *Whim* is "a periodical without a tendency," published at Newark, N. J.

When I was in the South last spring I put up one afternoon for a few hours in a tiny hotel in a remote village, and a room was assigned to me which had been vacated in haste for my benefit by some more permanent resident. It bore all the marks of a sitting room as well as a bed-room and on the table were lying, one on the other, a couple of books which had evidently been recently laid aside and each of them contained a book mark. The under volume was a large Bagster bible; the upper was a big book bearing on its upturned cover the exaggerated face of a negro in gilt, made to look as much like an ape as possible, with the title in gilt letters above and below it, "The Negro a Beast, or In the Image of God." Two negro servants were coming in and out of the room, making the fire and preparing for my comfort, and I could not but wonder at the strange lack of delicacy of the bible reader who had left this hideous volume to stare them in the face, and this too in the chivalrous South! I picked up the book in curiosity after the servants had left. The title page was adorned by a series of sub-titles, of which I copied one as a sample. It read as follows:

The Negro a Beast, but Created with Articulate Speech & Hands, that he may be of Service to his Master, the White Man.

Here was indeed a rich relic of the ancient South of slavery, a South that has passed away forever! I looked down at the date and rubbed my eyes in astonishment. There must be some mistake. The book was printed in the year of our Lord 1900! And in one of the greatest cities of the South, too! And what do you suppose is the name of the publishing company which issues this precious work? It is called the "American Book and Bible House!"

I turned over the pages of the book. It was an illiterate medley of folly and superstition—an attempt to prove by Scripture that the negro was not the descendant of Ham, and to show that the serpent in the garden of Eden was a black man! It was just such a book as, if it had been produced by a negro, would almost have justified despair for his race. It is not remarkable perhaps that a single lunatic should have written such a book—but that a publisher should have been found for it, that commercial success should have been expected from it, that people should buy it and lay it on their bibles and leave it on their tables to insult the black men who saw it and astound the white—all that was incredible.

It so happens that I was reading a book written by a negro at the same time and I took it from my portmanteau and laid it beside the other volume. My book was Booker Washington's "Up From Slavery"—a book which I had some difficulty in getting in a great southern city, and which proved conclusively that its author was one of the best and ablest men in this country, black or white, and it made me blush for my white race as I thought of these two authors together.

And now I have been reading a third negro book, which occupies the middle ground between these two, but which unfortunately resembles the white man's folly more than the black man's wisdom. It is "The Leopard's Spots," by Rev. Thomas Dixon, a shining light in the Southern Baptist Church, and it tempts me to retort, "Thou tiger, first wash the stripes out of thine own hide, and then shalt thou see clearly to wash out the spots out of thy brother's hide;" for it is in the spirit of the tiger rather than in that of the Christian minister that Mr. Dixon treats the delicate issues of the race question which is the subject of his novel. The point which he seeks to make is that the negro must be kept by force, if necessary, in the place of an inferior, and that he should not be educated above it. Again and again he reiterates the statement which I give in his own words, for it seems to me to be lacking in clearness, to say the least, that "in a democracy you cannot build a nation inside of a nation of two antagonistic races, and therefore the future American must be either an Anglo-Saxon or a mulatto." This mixing up of the marriage relation with other social relations runs through the whole book, and it seems

to me to be illogical. I have dined on social equality with thousands of white women whom it would have been repugnant to me to marry. I fail to see that the one idea involves the other. I believe it is natural and best that people should intermarry within their own race. We received Li Hung Chang with complete social equality, and yet most of us would not be willing to marry his daughter, and probably he fully reciprocated the feeling. In the absence of all inherited artificial feeling and tradition, I should think that a negro would prefer to marry one of his own color. The wrens and orioles are now singing out of my window. They do not intermarry, but I do not see why that should prevent them from treating each other with entire courtesy up to the point of social equality. The danger of a nation of mulattos, if it is a danger, does not lie in the direction of intermarriage, as we all know, but of the illicit intercourse which has already produced millions of them and which shows how far the white man can overcome his distaste for the negro. Flout the fact as we may, a large part of the colored population of the south are our own cousins.

The matter of the "unusual crime" committed by negroes is a frightful one and it will have to be faced, but it is very clear that it has not been faced in the right way. Lynchings, burnings at the stake—and Mr. Dixon depicts one for us—have failed to decrease the number of them. And let us remember that every civilized nation contains solitary brutes who assault and murder women but that only white Americans still burn at the stake—and that, too, in multitudes. Savagery will not cure savagery and the tiger cannot tame the leopard. Mr. Dixon seems to see this when he speaks of the mob as a thousand-legged beast and anticipates with dread the time when there will be a black beast of the kind to set off against the white beast. He thinks that the permanent display of force by the whites is the best remedy, and forgets, Christian minister though he be, that the efficacy of sympathy and brotherly interest has scarcely been tried. The race question is no simple matter to be settled at a thousand miles' distance by academic theories, but it is safe to say that it will only be solved by the spirit of love, and that Booker Washington shows far more of this than the author of "The Leopard's Spots." Mr. Dixon may not know it, but he seems to believe in a gospel of hate.

One of the heroes of the book, an ex-confederate common soldier, admits that he hates the very sight of a negro, and this before the period of reconstruction had set in and when the negro had done nothing but work and suffer. There is a total lack of measure, too, in the punishments meted to the black man in this novel. One of them asks a white woman to kiss him. He makes no effort to force her to comply, but he is speedily hanged. "His thick lips had been split with a sharp knife and from his teeth hung this placard: 'The answer of the Anglo-Saxon race to negro lips that dare pollute with words the womanhood of the south.'"

There is no hint in the story that this penalty was slightly excessive, nor that a gentleman need hesitate in taking part in such an execution. In another place a negro trooper refuses to make room on a sidewalk for a lady and her male escort. He is at once beaten to death. Surely this is the spirit of the tiger.

Mr. Dixon's ideal negro is the old plantation servant who despises his own race. He draws the picture of one of them and then holds him up to admiration. When the whites overthrow the negro government, old Nelse cries, "Dar now! Ain't I done told you no kinky-headed niggers gwine ter run dis gov'ment!" I humbly submit that such a man is really a disgrace to any race. It is on the lines of self-respect that the negro must do his part in solving the race question. He must learn his own worth, not in the spirit of boastfulness nor of imitation, but in the spirit of self-improvement and honor. He must put down himself the crimes against women which are his shame, and I have faith that men like Booker Washington can set such a movement on foot. The white clergy of the South have a tremendous responsibility. They have an influence far transcending that of their colleagues in the North. Will they use it like Mr. Dixon and the ministers he creates in his book, to foment misunderstandings and distrust, or to infuse the spirit of Christ into the problem? We all admit now that the policy of "reconstruction" was a sad mistake and that northern interference can do little, but it is still possible to begin a new work of reconstruction based upon human sympathy. If the South will undertake this task, it will escape the battle of the "beasts" which is otherwise inevitable.

It is to be hoped that there is some truth in the theory of reincarnation,

for it affords such grand opportunities for poetic justice. If there is anything in it, the author of "The Negro Beast" should make his next appearance as a full-blooded Congo black; the author of "Leopard's Spots" would figure among the mulattos from whom he wishes to save us; and the author of "Up From Slavery,"—well—if any man has earned a right to the whitest of skins (if he would like to have one) it is Booker Washington. And if these three gentlemen came on the stage again together, I am confident that we should find the last of the three exerting his powers for the benefit of the other two in a spirit of love to which they are total strangers.

Mr. Dixon's book teaches one good lesson which he did not have in mind, and that is the folly of sowing seeds of other race questions. Is not one enough on our hands? Why should we be preparing the way for other hatreds and other lynchings for centuries to come in the East and West Indies?

"SEARCH ME."

The people by thousands were crowded about

And the president spoke, with intent to give out

His position on trusts—and the things that he said

Caused every old codger to doddle his head

And remark:

"Well, whar does he stand? D'ye see?"

And I said:

"Search me!"

The newspaper fellows were writing like smoke,

Shorthand'ing every darn'd word that he spoke,

But when all the pothooks and curves were unspun

I heard each a-asking the next other one

This remark:

"Where did he land? Could you see?"

And he said:

"Search me!"

The folks read the papers, all anxious to see

How dead right on trusts our Teddy must be,

But when they had scanned all thorough and clean

Each turned to his neighbor with questioning mien

And remarked:

"Well, whar in this d--d trust business is he?"

But t'other un said:

"Search me!"

—Atlanta Constitution.

Indifferent correspondents will sympathize with the lad who, after he had been at a boarding-school for a week without writing to his parents, penned the following letter: "Dear people—I am afraid I shall not be able to write often to you, because, you see, when any-