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# *WORLDS OF COLOR*

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America (*Harvard Historical Studies, No. 1, 1896*)

The Philadelphia Negro (*Publication of the University of Pennsylvania Series on Political Economy and Public Law, No. 14, 1899*)

The Souls of Black Folk (*1903*)

John Brown (*1909*)

Quest of the Silver Fleece ( *a novel, 1911*)

The Negro (*Home University Library, 1915*)

Darkwater: Voices From Within the Vail (*1920*)

The Gift of Black Folk: The Negro in the Making of America (*1924*)

Dark Princess (*a novel, 1928*)

Black Reconstruction in America: 1860-1880 (*1935*)

Black Folk: Then and Now (*1939*)

Dusk and Dawn: An Autobiography (*1940*)

Color and Democracy: Colonies and Peace (*1945*)

The World and Africa (*1947*)

In Battle for Peace (*1952*)

The Ordeal of Mansart. *First Volume of trilogy,* The Black Flame (*1957*)

Mansart Builds a School. *Volume Two of trilogy,* The Black Flame (*1959*)

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*The Black Flame*

A Trilogy

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BOOK THREE

# WORLDS OF COLOR

*By W.E.B. DU BOIS*

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MAINSTREAM PUBLISHERS: *New York*

*1961*

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TO ARTHUR EDWARD McFARLANE II

*My Great Grandson*

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# CHAPTER I

## THE AMERICAN NEGRO'S WORLD

The Black Mansarts were descended from that Tom Mansart who in 1876 was lynched in Charleston, S. C., for a crime he did not commit. His son Manuel, born the night of his father's death, was educated at Atlanta University, a colored college in Georgia, and became a teacher. He had four children—three boys and a girl. All but one had done fairly well: his eldest boy was a rich Chicago politician; his second son was a judge in New York City. His daughter was married to an ambitious young preacher. One son, literally almost beaten into crime, had been hanged.

Manuel Mansart, after teaching in the public schools of Georgia, had become president of the Colored College and developed it slowly into a good and growing institution of learning. His chief helper in this work was his assistant, Jean Du Bignon, a "white Black Girl" from New Orleans; that is, a well educated young white woman who was classed as "Colored," because she had a Negro great-grandfather.

Manuel Mansart was sixty years of age in 1936. He was beginning to feel the pall of age. Perhaps this was more mental than physical. Had he not long regarded sixty as "old" he might not have noticed the slightly retarded reflexes and the easier fatigue; but as it was, Life seemed suddenly to raise warning of its inevitable end and of things which must be done and plans which shrieked for final laying.

The First World War, the Depression and the New Deal had shaken Mansart to the depths of his being. All the old certainties were gone—all that neat little world with its good God, bad men and hovering angels. Even work and wage, wealth and poverty, money and debt became wavering concepts. What now was this thing called the "Negro Problem" at which all his life he had been working? He knew the details of a social "problem"; now he wanted to see it entire and try better to grasp it. These colored col-



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leges, for instance, of one of which he was president; there were a score in all, one or more in each Southern state. They were called "Land Grant," because they were born of the idea of land granted by the federal government to the states for encouraging popular education. As in all efforts in the South, from the beginning they faced the Negro. First, they became a simple problem of graft—how to divert these federal funds mainly to the whites. But the silly Negroes protested, as if they had any real right to federal income!

There followed a phase of deliberate cheating: founding cheap colored schools, flimsy and scantily built, half-manned and run by black stoolpigeons owned by white grafters. Protests came from honest Southern white educators and from federal officials, and of course from Negroes. Rivalry rose with the better known private colored colleges like Fisk, Atlanta, and Talladega. Desperate effort in Washington kept inspectors or even cabinet officials from having any real power to compel the white South to treat Negro state education fairly. Under the sacred aegis of "States Rights," the cheating of Negroes flourished in education as in so many other facets of life.

At the same time a nation-wide crusade had long been growing to limit, reduce and in part eliminate the standard type of Southern Negro college, built on New England models. They began to droop, curtail and disappear. In their place the South tried to foist on the Negro, state and federally supported "Land Grant" colleges. But this program compelled the state gradually to let these institutions develop into real centers of learning.

So the "separate but equal" policy reigned, which first insured that black state colleges exist but be poorer than white state schools. Then, when states, pushed by white voters, began to make white public schools better and Land Grant colleges large and elaborate, Negro colleges necessarily became larger and better equipped. Such colleges could not be run by ignorant stoolpigeons and grafters.

A fight ensued which evolved a new type of race politician—a colored man, fairly well educated, honest in handling funds, and efficient; ambitious for the rise of his people to equal status with the whites; and yet schooled or schooling himself to ask less than he wanted; or even vehemently to deny many natural aims. Booker

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Washington was his prototype, but he went far beyond this beginning of manipulation of whites by blacks in the South. Often this made die-hard Southerners furious, but what could they do? A newly elected governor of Florida faced the old Tuskegee-trained head of the sick Colored State College with a blunt ukase: "No 'nigger' president is worth $5,000 a year!" The colored man said nothing but politely presented his excellent budget to the State Board appointed by the governor. Eventually the Board approved it, including the $5,000 salary!

So in North Carolina, the little brown president of the colored Agricultural and Mechanical College asked the governor for a herd of cattle. The governor exploded:

"'Niggers can't take care of cattle. They're too careless and dumb. I won't waste the state's money on such a project."

The solemn little brown man agreed. "Governor, you're absolutely right! My people know nothing about raising cattle. Of course, if they could get some training it would be a great thing for North Carolina."

They got "a little training" and before the governor left office a herd of cattle from the Colored State College won first prize at the State Fair.

It was an extraordinary game and the presidents of the colored state schools when they met each other, laughed themselves to tears at their experiences in making white morons do what they were determined not to do. But the game also had its risks and tragedies; sometimes a Negro president found himself replaced by a less scrupulous rival who bid lower for power. Sometimes an honest man inadvertently lost his own soul like one of the black presidents of a large school whose reach had extended his grasp and who explained to a critic of his servility: "You know, Sir, that is part of my 'stragedy.'"

In the background ever loomed black public opinion which flared unexpectedly in the path of many a black educational politician who proved too yielding in letting down the standards of the colored school. Then, too, among the whites was rising a type of white educator and administrator who hated lying and cheating to keep Negroes "in their places." Like old Dr. Baldwin of the white University of Georgia, they believed the Negro, let alone, would sink naturally to his inferior level. They were ashamed to

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join in forcing him down, especially in cases where they had to admit undeniable Negro superiority. Continually, such idealists sought to yield to Negro pressure and even offer them educational progress which they had not yet dared to demand. Sometimes such innovators succeeded. Often, they were discarded and went North in search of civilization.

It was a great game and Mansart enjoyed it. He knew many of the colored presidents. He wanted to know more. He had visited some of their schools. He wanted to visit all. So he took a trip after sixteen years' work, and visited colored schools, ending with a biennial meeting of the Colored Land Grant College presidents, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, at Southern University in the spring of 1936.

As he sat in the beautiful and well-planned auditorium of this school whose budget for buildings this year amounted to more than a million dollars, he looked around with mounting astonishment. Huey Long, governor of Louisiana, and that fine-featured brown man yonder, had planned this thing. The brown president was northern-trained with an excellent brain. In fact, as Mansart looked he saw other types of the new Negro educator in the South who were not so much teachers as social statesmen, building a new culture on a singular bi-racial basis.

As he sat, Jean Du Bignon coached him. Jean was his private secretary and assistant. She was white but black, a woman of 36, with that slight touch of Negro blood which classed her as "colored." She was well-educated and had worked for Mansart since he became president in 1920. She had wide acquaintance with the college presidents. She said: "The small, well-dressed yellow man moving quickly and continuously among all is from West Virginia Institute and is the brains of this group. In his state he ranks among the best administrators, black or white. He thinks and knows. He has all the various intricate problems of all at his fingers' ends. He knows political Washington, too, and pulls the strings.

"His college is not conspicuously built but it has a well-trained faculty.

"He is talking now to another type of man, Gandy of Virginia. Gandy is solidly built in mind and body. He moves and speaks slowly and with dignity. The officials of his state deeply respect

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him and treat him with careful courtesy. On him they try no 'nigger' jokes and when he asks for some action or policy they know it is so carefully thought out and buttressed, that yielding for the most part is only a matter of time. Thence came the finely constructed, carefully located and functionally excellent buildings on his Petersburg campus, and above all a faculty of highly paid and well-educated men and women.

"The black man from North Carolina is not so well-trained as many of his colleagues and complacently admits it. But he has just won a singular battle, like many other similar bouts in the past twenty years which were slowly culminating in a major campaign of victory. Just as Negro public schools were at first invariably situated in slums and back alleys, so the great Colored Land Grant colleges were seldom located on main thoroughfares but usually hidden in woods or near swamps, on land which netted former white owners a pretty penny. But the college at Greensboro had just last year emerged on the main northern and southern highway, where the wayfaring man though a fool had to notice it. Here, too, was planted that chemical laboratory long demanded—how it happened none seemed to know—and the black president said nothing but smiled blandly."

Jean reminded Mansart at lunch that there was no representative of the poor and confused Colored Land Grant College of South Carolina. This was a Negro defeat. For years Negroes attended and even taught in the University of South Carolina along with whites. Displaced by force and fraud, with the help of the federal government, new leaders appeared and separate colored schools. The man who started higher Negro education in this state with federal aid was a typical Southern gentleman, white in color, and carrying in his veins the proudest blood of Carolina; yet Thomas Miller admitted and boasted of his Negro strain. Tillman and Blease fought him to his death, disfranchised his people and drove him into exile.

Mansart remembered him. The college he founded eventually became the playground of white and black grafters, and totters today under the displeasure and neglect of Byrnes, once Supreme Court Justice, then Secretary of State and governor. Yet in this very state the groundswell against race caste in education began, and it may yet prove, thought Mansart, that white South

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Carolina was too successful in fighting blacks.

The man who once headed the Negro Land Grant College in Florida sat beside Mansart at lunch. He was a strong, independent man, a graduate of Oberlin, who had just been replaced by a more compliant Negro. Young had demanded independence and expansion for this school which the state authorities, already incurring criticism for yielding too much to this "impudent darky," had refused and hoped to secure more complacency from the new appointee. But to appease the black public and answer Northern criticism from tourists, they had just given the school the largest appropriation in history. Mansart had seen the fine library and modern hospital which they were building on the campus. He smiled as Young told him of his new job in Missouri, where a Negro grafter had just died and the voting colored citizens had revolted and demanded an outstanding scholar to head the school. What was "impudent" for Florida proved attractive to Missouri.

Mansart came to know Henry Hunt of North Carolina who was just transferring from a private church school to a state institution. He was thin and tall and looked like a poor white, which led to endless complications. But Hunt was cool, honest and persistent. He was a trained administrator with but one purpose—his people's best good. He smiled at Mansart wryly. "I've got a Board of complete sons-of-bitches, but they're cheap and inexperienced whites. If I let one steal a hundred dollars, he'll vote through five thousand dollars worth of needed repairs. It's their habit of direct insult in dealing with us, that rankles. But," he added philosophically, "I can keep still in seven different languages."

Jean introduced Mansart to Trenholm of the state school at Montgomery, Alabama. He was young, alert and had degrees from two excellent Northern colleges. In his battle for a Negro college he had lost and won. Here in Alabama between the Cotton Belt and the iron and coal mines, on the very site of Booker Washington's plan for industrial training of Negroes, he was stopped in his tracks by white trade unions from teaching Negroes trades. White political power would not permit him to teach the building trades, mining, weaving or spinning nor any modern industrial techniques; so he built a teachers' college and secured

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as some sort of compensation adequate buildings, good equipment and an overflowing body of students. Here was another Pyrrhic battle for the superior white race. Mansart spent an hour discussing Trenholm's problems after lunch. He was fascinated by the music program of the college led by Trenholm's wife.

From Mississippi came not its Negro leaders but two teachers from a small and almost forgotten school. Alcorn had once seen a future, but when the Negroes lost political power in 1876 it was neglected and the black folk under Isaiah Montgomery began a singular experiment in race segregation as an answer to the Negro problem. They founded the Negro city of Mound Bayou, and dreamed of furthering such experiments. The enterprise was widely hailed and publicized by the white world, but Negroes were not so unanimous. They whispered: what can a black town do in a white state where the blacks have no vote? Little or nothing, the Negro leaders themselves admitted; but all the more doggedly they maintained that their federal citizenship supported by membership in the great Republican Party would eventually restore the vote to the black majority of Mississippi, and let black towns, black banks and black industry flourish unhindered in the state. They fought long and hard and lost even their vote inside the Republican Party. The representatives from Alcorn reflected this. They were well-dressed and polite but silent. What could they say?

One man who addressed the presidents in the afternoon session attracted Mansart especially. Jean knew him well, but for some undisclosed reason did not like him and did not introduce him to Mansart. Hale of Tennessee was the colored son of a man once governor of his state and related to many of the first families. This relationship was well known and he openly used it for political power. Whatever Hale demanded for his Negro school he usually got. The school rose rapidly in size, power and equipment. He built one of the best stadiums for athletes in the South. He was a ruthless dictator on his campus, allowing no one a word or act without his personal permission. Yet he worshipped education and drove his pupils, his teachers and his own children. His career brought hatred on both sides of the color line. He handled state money carelessly and lavishly, and not long after this meeting, as a result of grave financial charges,

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he committed suicide. Mansart could never forget his clean-cut young arrogance.

There was a man at this gathering whom Mansart did not notice, and did not realize who he was, until years after. Banks, of Texas, was tall, lanky, awkward and self-effacing. His clothes did not fit, which made him noticeable in this well-dressed group. He had come up from a country field hand to working his way through college, teaching in the public schools and at Benson's school in Kowaliga, Alabama, finally gaining the presidency of an obscure Texas colored college supportedly stingily by the state to ease its educational conscience and avoid the law. He worked long and quietly until he knew every Negro high school in Texas, every principal and every graduate; he knew too every white man worth knowing, and white men wanted to know him because he knew so much and so accurately what they wanted to know. He asked nothing for himself; his salary remained ridiculously small as his school grew larger. He sought no office nor gift and no one thought of offering him graft. He just wanted to know about Negroes in Texas, what they were doing and what they needed. He became the admitted race relations consultant in a state which was rapidly becoming one of the most powerful in the nation and beginning to stir the world.

He organized his isolated school as a nearly self-sufficient economic unit, with food-raising, bakery, canning outfit, electric plant, home-building by student artisans; a hospital which even whites sought; a few hand industries and larger efforts in the wind if the state did not forbid. Indeed, Prairie View, rising on the lone plain, looked like a miracle created by faith in a people by one of them. What Banks wanted was to make this a real colored state university and industrial center as well as a center of scientific knowledge of the Negro.

Then came a sudden change. Texas became the home of monopoly in oil and sulphur and manufacturer of a thousand new products. This Negro problem must not interfere with industry and must find quick, easy solution. The millionaires planned a Negro University in the wonder city of Houston which they had moved from inland to the sea and made into a great port. This university would have money, teachers and buildings and be strictly controlled by white industry. Banks would be president,

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naturally. He was unassuming and safe. But Banks unexpectedly demurred. He was unwilling to be president under control. He preferred to be on the Board of Trustees, with access to the eyes and ears of the rulers. But this meant no salary. Very well; he would live on his small pension. He thus became and remains the strongest member of the Board of Trustees. His was the most extraordinary of the Negro Land Grant presidents' careers.

Mansart saw the Southern and Northern attitude towards Negro education changing. The Negro was determined to have college training for his youth. If it was not furnished in the South it would be sought in the North and no dependence on luck, or ability or discrimination in marking, would avail to stop it. Negro students often excelled—not always but often in the fierce competition of the North. Even the History Department of Chicago University could not continue to deny the Ph.D. degree, by unfair marking, although it tried desperately for years, and supported a department of white Southern race philosophy. Some colleges like Ohio State were being swamped by Negro students despite every subterfuge.

There was but one answer: Negro colleges in the South or admission of Negroes to all Southern colleges. This latter was unthinkable in 1936, so Big Business in its national philanthropic cloak, planned and began to endow a select set of private Negro colleges in the South like Fisk, Atlanta, and Dillard. They headed a "Negro College Fund" drive, much too small but advertised sufficiently to force beggars out of the field of philanthropy; and carefully supervised by Big Business. Even Hope, at the New Atlanta University, had white Florence Reed of the Rockefeller outfit planted to restrain his broader plans.

But South as well as North, the state university would eventually bear the burden of higher education. These universities must be under political control and thus Big Business would control democracy. In the South the Negro problem complicated all this. Despite the continuing push of Negro college presidents of the Land Grant group and the increasing millions already going to Negro state colleges, Negroes were still not getting half of what their proportion in the population entitled them to; if now a federal Supreme Court ever got guts enough to decree justice to Negroes; or more, if a federal administration was ever tempted

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by the growing Negro vote to administer federal funds equitably, the Southern Negro state college might soon equal and even overshadow the white. The South was scared.

All this was discussed in private conversation at the Baton Rouge meeting. Jean Du Bignon, through the man from West Virginia and the tall seer from Texas, laid out a tentative plan for cooperative, continuous sociological investigation in each state as a scientific beginning. It would be a controlled laboratory test on a grand scale unequalled in history. While plans for this were cooking, the president of Southern suggested in private that this study be centered at Georgia State and that preliminary to this, Mansart be encouraged to take a sabbatical in Europe to broaden his vision of the Race Problem.

"He is fine and sincere; but his education has been narrow. He simplifies the Negro Problem as one of education and ethics; he has no conception of the role of industry, the plight of the worker, and the work of the trade union. Indeed, most of our group, while running 'agricultural, mechanical and industrial colleges' really know little and do less in farming, industrial technique and production of goods. They realize this but do not know what to do about it. Again, we and Mansart know nothing of the central problem of colonies in the world."

Only a few of the presidents took much interest in this suggestion, or at most looked at it as a personal matter and perceived no overtones of the Huey Long line of thinking and doing. They did not realize how far in settling the Negro problem the role of the teacher was overshadowing the vital role of the worker. Indeed, because of the fight against Booker Washington's ideas there had grown something like enmity between teacher and laborer just when in the world labor was forging forward to its own.

On the other hand, they all agreed that Jean Du Bignon could in Mansart's absence plan and start the group study. This was rather unusual agreement on their part, for Negro men of action still harbored unconscious prejudice against women, stemming in part from the fact that family rebuilding among Negroes stressed "the woman in the home"; and partly because Negro girls were far outnumbering boys in school and thus presenting a severe problem of sex competition in earning a living.

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But Jean Du Bignon was in some ways different or at least seemed so. In spite of her comeliness she was not beautiful, and her total impression was not of sex but of sense. Her conversation with a man slipped easily from arch dalliance to straight talk on his pet subject in which he soon got the impression of someone who knew as much if not more than he. Of course, Jean was careful to pick her conferees from those interested in her own fields of study, and to avoid venturing into depths which she had not plumbed. She did not try to settle problems of family relationships or prospective love adventures. She linked psychology to work rather than play, and listened when art and literature were discussed. She listened, and also commented.

This proposal of Mansart's trip intrigued her. He needed not simply rest but total spiritual change. He needed to see a world divorced from the essentially trivial and temporary question of skin color which had always been the center of his thought and action, and to realize that to mankind at most times and in most places color of skin was no more important than color of hair or length of foot. No amount of argument would ever convince Manuel Mansart of this fact. He must see and live it. For this reason he must not go as a lone traveller, buffeted by fellow American tourists with their alternation of patronage and insult to dark folk. His must be a guided tour, but guided not by the usual commercial agencies but by special arrangements. She immediately began consultation and correspondence.

Jean wracked her brains for ways to make Mansart's trip a source of enlightenment and information and not a series of slights, discomfort and loneliness. She knew by reluctant testimony and observation, what such a trip might mean to a dark stranger in Europe. Without special and personal introductions to the right persons of knowledge and delicate intuitions, the stranger would be regarded as a curiosity, a matter of pitying condescension or of isolated position. He would be avoided from courtesy, fear or distaste. If to balance this, the colored person sought letters or words of introduction, who in America would furnish them? Would Senator Baldwin or any member of his board of trustees do so? Whom would a colored American know in England to ask to undertake such a task? In France, where colored folk were less in the category of curiosities in all levels of society,

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a Haitian or a Martiniquan might be suitably introduced and welcomed, but a Negro from the United States would know no such friends.

Jean had known many colored friends—teachers, professional persons and others—who returned from a trip to Europe thoroughly hurt and unhappy, even if they testified to enjoying it. They had been quite naturally introduced to Americans who either ignored or insulted them. They therefore tried to avoid white Americans like the plague, but where could they turn? If they had some special place or mission, like students or artists, or officials, they would after a time find their natural level with fellow workers; but a chance visitor or tourist? Jean shuddered as she contemplated the sensitive Mansart in such a role. She wrote to some former friends of school days and certain teachers with hearts and imagination.

After some months and a few trips, she evolved a plan. She arranged personal contacts in England, France and Germany. She secured friends and persons who could find other friends of the same kind. She thus got a number of persons of understanding who knew or could learn what an American Negro experienced and yet with sufficient manners not to let this sympathy and knowledge so obtrude as to make the colored man feel like a curiosity, a museum piece or an infant. This quest was not easy. He began to get advice. A United States Senator said:

"How do you do, President Mansart; I sure am glad to see you. I hear you're taking a sabbatical? That's fine. You deserve it. Where do you plan to go?"

"I had thought of England and France, sir; and Germany. Then, I'm a bit curious about Russia."

The Senator scowled. "I wouldn't advise that. I hear it's in an awful mess: a sort of national whore-house and murder racket. Have you read what Trotsky is revealing? When thieves fall out—you know. No, don't go there; it's liable to fall to pieces any day."

"I see. But I do want to see a bit of Asia."

"Good! Then go by way of Italy and Egypt and so to India. A fine trip—I'd like it myself."

"Sounds so, sir; I'll think it over. But I am afraid it might prove too long. But thank you for the advice."

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Mansart talked it over with Jean. She agreed. "You see," she said, "there's another reason; you might find that Russia is making swift headway instead of failing. In that case it would be unwise to say so when you returned. That would be difficult."

Mansart made no reply.

Mansart had been surprised by correspondence which began to drop out of nowhere. A visit to a meeting of the American Educational Association in Chicago brought an invitation to join a small party on a trip to England. It was fascinating, even when he did not realize what this companionship would save in embarrassment when seating in the ship's dining room and when placing of deck chairs harassed the steward. He gladly accepted. Then from England came an invitation from an elderly gentleman with a "Sir" before his name. He had heard of Manuel and his career—how, he did not say—and having an interest in the Negro race because his family lived long in Africa, he wondered if on his projected visit to England President Mansart would not be his guest? Details followed. Manuel was astonished and inclined to hesitate. In his experience invitations from white people to Negroes had strings attached. But Jean induced him to accept.

Next Jean started on France. After a glimpse at British aristocracy she wanted Manuel to come in contact with the French middle class; the people who worked, but lived for beauty and self-expression in a simple atmosphere. A young French writer living in London was about to return to his home in southern France. Jean found through a friend that he would be delighted to have Manuel as his guest, from whom he could learn of America from a Negro's point of view and in turn show him something of France—or rather of the world from the French point of view.

Asylum in Germany was finally obtained through the Karl Schurz Foundation. There was some hesitation, but this might prove good propaganda on both sides. China and Japan eagerly welcomed this visitor without special arrangements.

There was one matter which bothered Jean and Mansart and yet they said little about it to each other. That was the conduct of the school during his absence. Where would authority rest? Who would really be in charge? There were persons on the faculty who would be anxious to assume Mansart's power; there

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were other Negro officials in and out of the state who would be only too willing to step into Mansart's shoes; and above all, white trustees and merchants might see this absence as the time to work for a new distribution of authority. Against all this was the fact that the absence was to last but three months of actual school time; and above all, the machine was now running so smoothly and well, that it would take some time and work to disarrange it. Jean herself knew more of this working and was more efficiently entrenched in details than anyone else. Logically she ought to be made dean or acting dean. But sex jealousy among black and white precluded even the suggestion of this. Jean came forward with an idea which was adopted: A small executive committee was to be left in charge and Jean chose it. It consisted of a white trustee who appreciated Jean's work; a colored trustee who was not personally ambitious! The third member was Jean herself.

Jean had coached Mansart for his trip in various ways. She made discreet suggestions as to his table manners; she taught him how to eat a soft-boiled egg from the shell with a spoon. She secured through the brother of a white classmate the services of a first-rate tailor in New York and had him outfitted with suits for day and dress, fine shirts, pajamas and underwear. She saw to his hats, gloves and shoes. After much complaint he finally succumbed. The trustees were only too pleased to have Mansart take a year off with full salary. All had grown to like and respect him. He left in June, 1936.

In New York, Manuel Mansart stopped to call on Max Rosenfeld, the teacher who helped his daughter Sojourner in her music and taught for a while at his college. He had some difficulty in searching him out in his poor lodging on the East Side, but Rosenfeld was extravagantly pleased to see him. He was particularly interested to know that Mansart was going to Germany and said he wanted to send a message by him.

"But you must be careful. This goes to a Jewish proprietor of a bookstore, a cousin of mine. Remember that the Jews in Germany are in bad plight just now, so give it to him secretly, and then he will tell you what is going on."

Mansart was surprised. He had never had any real conception of a Jewish problem, except of course in religion, where the problem, as far as Mansart was concerned, centered in the fact

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that the Jews did not believe Jesus was God. He did not think that too important. Of problems beyond this, which were racial, cultural, and economic and involved hatreds quite as bitter as in the Negro problem, Mansart was only faintly aware. There was a Jewish wholesaler in Macon against whom the white merchants tried to gang up; but Mansart persisted in giving him custom and found him shrewd and honest. On the other hand, from the parents of his students in town and country, came frequent complaints of sharp practices and even cheating on the part of small Jewish merchants in their dealing with poor laborers and tenants. There seemed some basis for these complaints. He often had wanted to make inquiries, but there was never time.

On the boat Manuel had time to catch up with long-neglected reading. He read as he sailed, a version of what had happened lately to the world. European culture in the 19th century had rested on peace between the Great Powers; a world market regulated by international trade; a gold standard for prices and free individual initiative in industry for capitalists.

For about a hundred years, 1815 to 1914, peace among the leading European powers was fairly well kept. Wars for colonial empire, on the other hand, were continuous, linking imperial Europe and eventually North America in world domination of the darker peoples of the earth. As this European consortium became increasingly tightened and perfected, three nations, Germany, Italy and Japan, frozen out of their larger profits, began more and more peremptorily to demand a share of the colonial areas.

The result was the First World War, with Germany fighting for colonies against the great colonial powers and the United States; and these allies securing the cooperation of Japan, whose price was recognition as the equal partner of dominant white European powers. This war disrupted the industrial organization on which the 19th century rested. The world markets and the gold standard ceased to function, and Russia came forward with a design to challenge free industry by planned economy for the raising of workers' income and power.

Desperate effort was made from 1918 to 1929 to restore the world market and the gold standard; and to resist Communism in Russia. It was the irony of fate that just as Western Europe

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was practically united to overthrow Russia by force of arms, the system of culture which had lifted the West to world dominance during the 19th century, built on conquest of India, Negro slavery in America, the Sugar Empire, and Cotton Kingdom and the Industrial Revolution, crashed in unprecedented ruin. Naturally, in what Mansart read, there were interpretations which questioned or contradicted this thesis. But this was Mansart's general conclusion as he landed in England.

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# CHAPTER II

# THE COLOR OF ENGLAND

Sir John Rivers, who had a lovely estate in Essex, was immensely intrigued by the prospect of his black visitor from America. Lady Rivers was a bit worried. After all, she had heard disturbing tales of these colored folk. But a generation removed from actual savagery, the poor things could not of course be expected to have much culture; and fine as it was theoretically to make it pleasant for a deserving black teacher, she wished that Sir John had talked the matter over with her before actually committing himself. Three weeks! Good Lord! She discussed the situation carefully with Reeves and his wife, the butler and housekeeper. Her daughter, Sylvia, who taught at St. Hilda's, decided on a vacation in France during the time of Mansart's stay; and her grandmother, the dowager, would as usual spend most of her time in her own secluded apartment.

But Manuel proved disarming and quite charming. He was not loud like most Americans. He wore good clothes and clean linen and his table manners, though often strange, were never objectionable. Sir John was quite delighted. He was about Manuel's age and thoroughly British. He was big, red and healthy; he had never been obliged to earn a living but was broadly interested in life—that is, real life among people who were fortunate enough to have something of actual value to keep them busy. Sport interested but did not overwhelm him, and politics brought one into intimate contact with many people whom he decidedly disliked. For similar reasons, he never tried any of the professions, unless his efforts at farming and horticulture could be so denominated.

But he liked human beings in the abstract and certain concrete specimens attracted him greatly. This was particularly true of Negroes, especially those who were "rising"; that is, coming "up from slavery" to full freedom and manhood. He had journeyed to London in 1900 to meet Booker Washington, who was



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the guest of his friend, the Duke of Sutherland. He was gratified at Washington's modesty and solid manner, although a little disappointed at his silences.

For the first time in his life Manuel began to know just what a gracious and comfortable life could be. He breakfasted at nine when all his life he had been used to starting the day's work not later than seven. The breakfast was leisurely and individual, each dropping in as he chose. It was served usually out of doors on the terrace, with flowers near and a wide sweep of velvet grass guarded by noble trees. There was music from birds, and silent contemplation and carefree conversation and quiet, perfect service.

Indeed, all life here was leisurely, with time for thought and dreams; with no apprehension of ill or thought of lack of security. Without apparent plan or effort, the time was always filled in—wandering in the flower garden or though the solemn, lovely woods with little streams and a lake; there were the dogs and horses to visit, and one could descry the world from the hill or from the ancient tower built before America was discovered. It was a beautiful and peaceful world, with thatched cottages, winding roads, flocks and pastures; and here and there in the distance, great and palatial estates.

Visitors dropped by casually during the day, all groomed and spotless. even when in apparent undress. Conversation never lagged; it was pleasant and gay with sharp but kindly thrust and counter-stroke, and sometimes interesting reminiscences and late news and comment. Then there was the library, always quiet and musty, with chairs and couches, lights and ladders and beautifully bound books in every language. There were pictures on the wall and in portfolios and periodicals from all the world.

Dinner in the great hall was a ceremony which for some time Manuel dreaded. There was the unfamiliar dress which a valet always appeared in his bedroom to arrange, despite Manuel's repeated assurance that he could dress himself. There were the stony, very respectful but all-seeing eyes of the servants—the haughty butler and the two pretty but unsmiling maids; there was the endless array of unfamiliar silver and glasses and the quick retrieving of anything dropped or misplaced. Above all, the family and guests. But these unobtrusively guided conversation, told

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appropriate reminiscences and distracted attention from awkward situations. After the first week Manuel found he could eat dinner and really enjoy it.

Of all the meals, Mansart liked afternoon tea best, perhaps because it was so unusual at that time of day to stop everything and enjoy pleasant gossip and delightful tid-bits in the open or by the blazing hearth, in complete relaxation. Callers would drop in, dogs came in ingratiatingly and everybody would talk or keep happy silence. Manuel determined to have afternoon tea when he returned home. Of course, he never did.

Mansart from the first was fascinated by the servants; first by their number—the butler and housekeeper, the cook and her helpers, the maids and valets, the gardeners, chauffeurs and laborers. He counted fourteen for this family of four. Then there were their duties: they seemed so sure, so expert, and yet went about with so little effort. They accepted Manuel but of course, without, in their unemotional way, showing any evidence. They sensed that he knew what work meant and sympathized with any hardship. He did things which would have occurred to no gentleman-born, and yet were in no sense ill-bred—like turning and carrying the dining-room maid's extra heavy tray; and holding the door back for the laden butler. Sometimes Manuel asked questions which no one brought up to leisure would have thought of: their hours of work and their homes, and where they went to school, and—fancy!—if they liked their job! Now and then he voluntered his own experiences, for which naturally they were too well-bred to ask but eager to hear about. They learned that he had worked with his hands and been a servant and taught school.

On the other side, Manuel's manners were not only to the servants but to the family, a matter of pleasant surprise. He was quite unconscious of this and never appeared anxious or strained; often when he made a *faux pas* he smiled and mentioned it, asking the correct way. He expressed no alarm or shame. In all this, his ten years as a college head had helped. He was used to being stared at by thousands of bright, intelligent and exploring eyes; he knew how to sit quietly and apparently unmoved while white men of wealth and power tried to insult him or draw him out or confuse him. He knew not only how to conceal his thoughts

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or conclusions but better, how to let his observers wonder if he had sensibilities or judgments.

Here of course most strangers were kind and sympathetic and the family almost overdid it until they realized that he was a man of thought and experience which had caked into good manners. Now and then ill-bred or careless persons appeared, like the haughty old countess who asked if any black women were chaste; or the child who rubbed Manuel's face to see if the color was fast. He answered simply that his daughter was chaste, and held his cheek still while the child rubbed hard.

His intercourse developed slowly and naturally. They were all, and especially Sir John, careful to appear not in the least way inquisitive or over-curious. They sensed that his color and race had always been so central in his life that their first duty was to make him forget. So at first the talk ran to generalities and even trivialities. The weather served its eternal duty and its contrast to Georgia made it often quite interesting; the trip across the sea; the travel by rail, the trees, birds and flowers. Then came the food, the question of interesting games, the day's news. When Manuel realized how much they were really interested in him as a human being, he began to relate litle pieces of information—about his childhood; about his college and his students. He avoided the race problem as such but stressed the human side. They soon were hanging on his words. Quite naturally, Sir John began to compare experiences and was gratified to realize how alike human beings were even if they lived a thousand miles apart in distance and even further in cultural experience.

Sylvia had run down to pack for France and incidentally to appraise this wild black American. Lady Rivers asked, to keep up conversation:

"Mr. Mansart, what in England strikes you most?"

Manuel plunged: "Your idleness."

They were at tea. The flavor was rare; the scones were hot and delightful and the tea cakes unusual. The silent, efficient service saw that everyone had what they wanted just as they were aware of the need. A light rain was falling. The smooth, green lawn stretched richly to the magnificent woods.

"And don't you like it?"

"I love it, but it scares me. You see, I would not dare to

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rest so much while others work so hard. I suppose it is just a difference of what looks to some like duty."

"Or," said Lady Rivers, "perhaps it is only American rush and hurry which seems to us so unnecesary and even useless."

"Milady, you never picked cotton. You see, I was a child of workers. I was raised to work for what I wanted. You, if I may say so without offense—do not work."

Sylvia settled back in her chair, luxuriantly. Sir John came to the rescue.

"I realize your implied criticism, Mr. Mansart. You see, the situation is complicated and historical. To many it is hard to grasp. For instance, my grandfather pioneered in the Niger delta, traded in gold and pepper and at last in tin. He got title to valuable tin mines. He raised capital in England to develop the mines, hired natives to work them, brought in British technicians to direct this work; from the results of this, I and my family live."

Mansart was silent, but Sylvia looked at him and said smiling: "We are waiting, Mr. Mansart!"

Mansart was uncomfortable but replied, "I can see, Sir John, how your grandfather earned his income and how the natives must have been satisfied to work for him. But on my voyage over, I read a number of books which my assistant recommended. These have set me to thinking. My mind goes this way. Your grandfather's discovery of tin in Nigeria deserved reward. But not repeated reward; not continuous reward. Not extravagant reward. And reward for the discovery should go to the discoverer and not to his children. The tin belonged to Africa, not to England. After the discovery, it was certainly as much the property of the Africans as of the British. The British brought knowledge of extracting tin for use. This was of greatest importance. But this knowledge and technique was public property in Europe. Englishmen learning and using this knowledge deserved pay for their work. But not repeated and eternal pay. And this pay should go to the one who applied this skill for what he did and not to others who did nothing. And the machines and tools should be paid for, but paid for once, not continuously. Their repair should be paid for, but paid for once, not repeatedly. In other words, Sir, I can see clearly that your grandfather de-

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served pay for his work, for his effort in acquiring skill; for materials imported and used and their repair. But, pardon me, Sir, if I ask where do you come in? What effort are you being paid for? The black workers who served your grandfather got paid once; their descendants are being paid not for what their fathers did but for what they do now. Why this difference between the pay of the European and the African? Both should be paid for their effort—should they not?—and for nothing else."

"There comes in there, dear Mr. Mansart, something called Property."

"Is this Property the result of effort?"

"It is the result of law."

"Who makes the law?"

"It is here that the great British institution, the Family, comes in for understanding."

Sylvia stretched out her long limbs and took another cup of tea. "Daddy, do continue to tell Mr. Mansart," she said.

Sir John looked serious. "We Britishers believe in the Family—its long life, its unity, its sacrifice, its ideals. We strive to hold it together, to perpetuate it. Frankly, we do not believe in equality as you Americans profess to do. I even venture to believe you do not really, and are here precisely because you are superior, far superior to your fellow Americans, black and white. Some people are born to rule, to hold superior position, to have leisure for thought, creation and enjoyment. By selection of a ruling group the world advances and Empire spreads. Mistakes occur, to be sure; faults and even crimes crop out. But what other way has humanity yet discovered to advance but by way of aristocracy? I am first to admit that not all, not most of the subjects of the British Empire are happy or content. But I sincerely believe that most of them are getting what they deserve and as much as their natural station in life entitles them to."

Lady Rivers added: "You must admit two things, Mr. Mansart: first that our way of living is pleasant; and second, that no system of life could provide such comfort for everybody, even granted everybody would want it. Therefore, it comes down to this: on what basis shall we choose who shall have these amenities and comforts—by popular vote, by the king's grace or by the law of survival?"

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"We have served well," interrupted the Dowager in her thin but high-bred voice. She had today made one of her seldom appearances. She stared at Mansart quite frankly. "We have served nobly as heroes and conquerors; as knights and earls; as warriors on land and sea, at Agincourt, Flodden Field, Oudenarde, and," she choked a bit, "on Flanders Field!"

Sir John placed his hand gently on hers and said, "But, Maman, we must not boast; the world neither knows nor cares—that is, this world that has replaced the real world." She lapsed into calm silence. Sir John continued: "We had the skill and courage; the persistence. We found the tin, bought the machinery and showed the natives how to dig it."

Manuel was a little irritated. "And you, Sir, what did you do that these mines and these miners should work for you?"

Sylvia chortled, "You inherited, dear Dad—no more, no less. That wasn't hard work!"

"If not I, someone else; and although I am all too unworthy, I and my family can have the pleasure of entertaining you, Mr. Mansart. The world's best people should have wealth and authority. You, sir, are the exception among your folk. You have position and power. You should have more, but your family has just begun the long trek. It would never do to let the mass of American Negroes have power to do as they wish."

Manuel was astonished to realize that Sir John was quite sincere. He hastened to add: "You can't realize, Sir John, by what narrow chance I had the opportunity just to live, much less to grow healthy, go to school and college and get this work. I was born, Sir, in my father's blood as he was shot to bits by a mob. My mother worked her hands to the bone to keep me in school. I cringed and crawled to keep my job as a school teacher and to head this college. And while I was doing this, thousands of black boys and girls had no chance, no opportunity and sank to hunger and crime and shameful death because God forgot them.

"Sir John, I would not for a moment set my judgment against yours. But I have an experience which gives me a point of view which you can never understand. I know a nation and a land which talks as you do about ten million people—they are wrong and I know it because I am one of those people. We are not happy. We are not content. We are not in the status which best

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suits us or is best for the welfare of our white neighbors. The reason is that in deciding worth and ability, we are not consulted. Others judge what we deserve and what we can do and of just what worth we are. And Sir, while I have the deepest respect for your judgment, before agreeing with you I'd like to see African labor and hear what it says."

Said Sylvia, "You needn't go to Africa. Just listen to British workers and hear what they say of our leisure and the inborn superiority of British aristocracy."

Lady Rivers said: "I am afraid, Mr. Mansart, you do not realize just what my husband has done for his world: his breadth of sympathy which arose from broad reading and hard thinking; the positions of influence he has held, not eminent but so needed; his advice and wide individual acquaintanceship with high and low, rich and poor, peer and criminal. He has been rewarded graciously, I admit, but does this patrimony quite repay all that the Rivers family have given Britain, including—the life of my son?"

Mansart hastened to say: "I assure your ladyship that Sir John richly deserves what the world gives him. I only ask, and with humility, if Africa is today in position to pay the debt, and if her bankruptcy is her fault, since surely it is not the fault of Sir John?"

Sylvia burst out: "Africa? Can even England pay? Look at London's East End."

Her Ladyship complained, "This is more of Sylvia's socialism. Why, considering our own home—what would our servants do if we did not hire them?"

Sylvia yawned and flung back, rising: "I've said it before, our butler might enter Parliament and the maids could have babies, legitimate if possible."

Sir John laughed and also arose. "I'm wondering if Mr. Mansart would not like to drive up to London tomorrow and lunch at my club?"

"Can I drop in, too?" asked Sylvia.

"Delighted, my dear."

The trip to London in Sir John's Rolls-Royce was fascinating—beautiful as they rolled through Essex, interesting as they traversed the more and more crowded parts of the city. They skirted

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the crowded East End and came down through Epping and Barnett and then winding through the city came to the white marble façade of the Liberal Club. It was Mansart's first experience with the club life of London; those great, quiet buildings, luxuriously furnished, where the members could rest at ease and have their meal; where they could meet friends and if necessary themselves have a room for the night. Without his club, or perhaps two or three of them, no Londoner could realize English life at its best.

Sir John naturally belonged to several clubs but his favorite on the whole was the Liberal Club because it was more catholic in its tastes and one could meet all sorts of people and yet know that they were mostly well-bred Englishmen. They talked a while with a number of acquaintances to whom Sir John introduced his black friend. Mansart was, with perhaps one exception, received with courtesy and all talked together with mutual interest.

Naturally, the matter of the Empire had to intrude and something was said about the unrest in West Africa.

"Labor in Africa," said one gentleman, "must of course be more or less compulsory. The people are not used to our steady, dependable labor."

Another interrupted. "And, of course, compulsory labor must act as a drug, keeping the people traditionally in harness like the coolies of China or of India."

"Or," said another, "if the drug does not subdue them into insensibility it may on the other hand arouse them, so that they begin to get impatient and dissatisfied."

"You are implying," said the third, "that compulsory labor in colonies leads either to apathy or to revolution."

"And that," said the fourth, "is by no means confined to colonies."

At this time, as Sylvia arrived, a part of the company joined her and her father and Mansart at luncheon. The reserved table filled slowly. Sir John occupied the center of the side facing the main dining area. He placed Mansart at his right and his daughter at his left. Beside Manuel was a prosperous merchant, plump and pleasant. Opposite the host was a vacant chair and beside it a voluble, gray-haired lady, carelessly but expensively dressed and, as Manuel was told later, of considerable wealth. At last,

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a tall man approached the vacant chair. He was massive in build, smooth skinned and perfectly groomed from hair to shoes, from kerchief to folded yellow gloves. His attitude was clear conscious knowledge of his rank and power, with an air of distinct deprecation of any possible assertion of these, until his eyes fell on the black face of Mansart. Involuntarily he stiffened and his evident military bearing asserted itself. Without a word he did a right-about-face and quickly stepped into the hall. Sir John stared in astonishment, but quietly turned to order the lunch served when a servant hurried up with a message; Sir John excused himself and went to the lobby. He returned shortly with profound excuses from Sir Evelyn Charteris. It seems he had carelessly forgotten a most important engagement which he must not miss. He would try to return before lunch was finished. Meantime, would the guests accept his profound apologies. He especially sent regrets to dear Mrs. Cartwright——

Mrs. Cartwright was much put out. "I had so counted on seeing Sir Evelyn today. There is a great Englishman, my friends. On such as he the Empire rests!" Sir John took up the conversation easily, but Manuel was not for a moment deceived. Here was an imperial servant who did not eat with "Niggers." Was this a mistake of Sir John's ? A misunderstanding or what? It would of course be just like Sir John to forget to say, in inviting Sir Evelyn, that his American guest was black. The colloquy in the lobby had been a bit sharp: "But Sir John, I can't eat with a darkey—where would the British Empire go, if its representatives lowered themselves to the level of the hordes over whom we are supposed to rule?"

"This man is a gentleman, and the guest of my family, and I thought we were raising them, not lowering ourselves."

"But Hell, they can't be raised and if they can, they're even more dangerous and must be kicked back. But pardon me, old friend, why the devil didn't you say your American guest was black?"

"My God——"

"Well, well! Please make my excuses to the guests and especially to Elspeth."

Meantime the lunch went placidly on. The portly gentleman to Mansart's right took up the praise of Sir Evelyn.

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"Fine fellow. It's such staunch representatives of our rule that build our power. Absolutely fair, carefully trained, meticulous about his duties."

"He makes our dividends certain," mused Sylvia.

"But he's absolutely honest in his dealings with the natives."

"No reason why he shouldn't be. He's well paid, has luxurious quarters and more servants than he can use. The natives will pay him a good pension when he retires at sixty and he'll come home as an honored authority on native denizens of territories. He'll see a lot. Spiffy, I call it."

Mrs. Cartwright was indignant. "Sylvia, you have long needed spanking. Sir Evelyn deals honestly with the natives."

"But do we?" insisted Sylvia. "Don't let's be hypocrites!"

"Agreed, but we did free the slaves and stop the slave trade."

"Also, we made the Negro slave trade to America a great industry which built our cities and founded trade and industry. In the eighteenth century the African slave trade was the most valuable trade in our Empire and West Indian property our most valuable property. We kept it up as long as it paid. When the slaves revolted we stopped the trade; and when they refused to be as cheap labor as we could find in Asia or Africa, we found more profitable investment for our capital there. Philanthropy and religion help, but they follow the biggest dividends. Pitt, not Wilberforce, freed the slaves."

Mrs. Cartwright retired into aristocratic silence. Manuel broke the silence by asking his neighbor a question which seemed to force itself on his tongue:

"I cannot help wondering just what this lunch costs in black miners' wages?"

The merchant stared and finally said:

"Supply and demand take care of such matters."

"British demand, African supply?"

"Naturally," said the merchant and turned to his neighbor who was expert on stock prices.

The company began to discuss labor and socialism. Mansart listened but said little, until someone turned to him.

"What, Mr. Mansart, is your attitude toward Africa? And what is the attitude of American Negroes in general?"

Mansart replied, "We really know comparatively little of Africa,

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but of course theoretically what we want is that Africa should be free and independent."

"Why?"

"Well, we sort of think that is the heritage of mankind."

"Of all men?"

"Yes, eventually of all men."

"If 'eventually'," said Sylvia, "lugs along a hundred years or more, I wonder if you're right. If it is a matter of beginning now and working in this generation, I agree with you."

"In a hurry as usual, Sylvia," said her father smiling. And then all arose to greet a newcomer. He was a young Englishman, tall and thin, rather carelessly dressed and very earnest in his manner. It seemed that he and Sylvia were planning to take Mansart on a journey. So after a time they left the group and the comfortable rooms of the great club with its marble façade and walked around the corner to Sylvia's little Austin. They drove away toward the east with desultory conversation and then, parking on the side, Sylvia produced a shabby old raincoat which she wanted Mansart to don. And she substituted a very disreputable hat for his new Knox.

"Please pardon us, but we're going into the slums."

The young man supplemented this by apologetically removing his tie and that of Mansart and proceeding to rumple up Mansart's clean linen. "You know, our hosts are a little sensitive when people, especially strangers, come among them and are too well dressed."

As Sylvia left them alone for a time, Manuel mentioned his stay at her home and how he had enjoyed it. The young man agreed about the family and touched the matter of the death of Sylvia's brother. "We were not exactly chummy, but I knew him well and his death was a blow to Sylvia; and yet a relief."

Manuel looked astonished: "A relief?"

The young man relighted his pipe and continued slowly:

"Yes, he was a snob, a born aristocrat, English style. He never worked, but expected the world to work for him; correctly schooled and tailored, a captain in the Guards, aiming at a rich marriage and a peerage; a dilettante in sports and arts, an exquisite idler who leapt at war just as he murdered Big Game. He died in a gutter filled with mud and the blood of England's flower. Sylvia was

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stricken, for she loved her handsome brother dearly. But she was glad he did not live to be what he wanted to be."

The little car lurched over the rough East End cobblestones. Endless miles of slum streets, their dreary murk broken only by the garish invitation of brightly lighted "pubs." At one time they entered one and ordered a pint of mild and bitter. The patrons were working folk, noisily comparing notes on wins or losses in the latest football pool or placing bets on the chances of Whitechapel's heavyweight pride, Erny Hawkins, to win the title. There were the usual number of beer-sodden men cradling head on arms in despairing attempt to get away from it all.

But it was the women who for years remained in Mansart's memory. One incident stayed with Mansart all his life. It was not the main picture nor most significant. But it persisted. Among the quiet women with shawled heads were many in tawdry finery, grimy feather boas encircling their unwashed necks, heads crowned by bedraggled plumed hats. The arms of one of these tipsy tarts cradled a babe. Its hungry wails put a damper on the "gaiety" until the barman protested: "'Ere naow, 'ere naow! If you cawn't shut the brat's mouth you'll 'ave to tyke 'im out of 'here!" The Cockney wit of her obscene retort drew guffaws of laughter, and the drunken madonna dragged a filthy handkerchief from her bosom, twisted up a corner, dipped it into her gin and put it in the infant's mouth. The wails subsided into a contented gurgle.

Mansart and his companions, choking back a rising nausea, emptied their glasses and quickly sought their car.

It was well toward midnight when Mansart and Sylvia, having dropped their companion by the way, arrived at the Rivers' house in Essex. For miles they had been very silent. Indeed, Mansart never fully expressed just what he saw in the London East End and what it meant to him; but it marked an epoch in his life. For the first time he realized that white men and women in a civilized country and in the twentieth century could suffer in degradation, helplessness and crime quite as much as any Negroes whom he knew in America; and, he surmised, as much as Negroes and Asians suffered overseas. It was to him an astonishing realization.

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# CHAPTER III

## THE COLOR OF EUROPE

Mansart spent about a week more in England and then one afternoon there came to the estate the young Frenchman who was to accompany him to France and be his host for several weeks. He was an interesting young man, well dressed and cultivated, speaking meticulously correct English and very polite and thoughtful. He said to Mansart and the family that he was sorry he was not going to be able to entertain his guest so graciously as he was being entertained in England. He explained that in France they had by no means recovered from the devastation of the First World War. "But," he said, "I hope to make you understand something of what France means to us and to the world."

He added, "I fear that in England you have seen the Extreme and not the Mean; the aristocracy and the slums but not the great English Middle Class. But," he added philosophically, "that makes little difference. This Middle Class gives birth to the nobility and both ape each other, so in a sense they are identical." Mansart, remembering the sturdy, satisfied and very respectable merchants and clerks he had seen, was not quite sure as to just what the typical Englishman was.

Both Sir John and Lady Rivers hastened to assure Mansart that he was going to have an unforgettable experience and that nothing in England, after all, was quite equal to what France had given civilization.

Singularly enough the matter that disturbed Mansart most on leaving Britain was the tips for the servants. He hated tipping; it stank of slavery. He did not believe in tipping and could not afford it. He took the bull—or rather the butler—by the horns and spoke to him frankly. The butler was polite and unperturbed. But he showed no enthusiasm. The housekeeper, when the message was delivered, was disgruntled: "If he's able to travel, he ought to be able to pay his way. I never did hold with niggers nohow." Some of the maids and men sneered; others giggled.



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As he rolled away on his journey, his hosts remembered not only this dark and well-bred gentleman who had become their friend, but for themselves they remembered their honeymoon in Paris at the Exposition of 1900, and the walks they took across the Pont Alexandre, the new bridge which was then linking France and Russia.

After a pleasant and uneventful journey across the rough channel and then on the train between Calais and Paris, Mansart and his friend came to a month of experience which always thereafter had for Mansart the uncertain quality of a dream.

Manuel Mansart did not realize until long afterward how expertly he was guided by M. Villiers. Villiers tried to show him at once the physical Paris and its meaning, past and present. They looked out upon the city from the Eiffel Tower and saw the Seine, the Left Bank and Notre Dame. They wandered in the Bois de Boulogne, having lunch in a secluded restaurant among the trees. Coming back they paused over the Eternal Fire within the Arc de Triomphe, and they went up to Montmartre. The beautiful church looked down upon the city which they had left with the Tuilleries in the distance, the Madeleine and the Palais Royale, and with the plethora of streets, churches, public buildings, and squares.

Walking down from the white church they came through the little streets of shops, and by the Moulin Rouge until they reached the Opera and the Grand Boulevards. They stopped one day for chocolate and soft-boiled eggs at a world-renowned little restaurant, and then taking a cab rode through the Square of the Republic to the Bastille.

Here the whole thing began to take on a different significance. Mansart was at the place where the French Revolution started, where the modern world was born, and where people began to dream of the equality of human beings and their right to have a voice in government. It seemed queer and unbelievable, the history that had taken place in this now so vast square with the old prison gone and the Column of July rising alone in the center.

As they walked they talked and Villiers tried in various ways to interpret the living France:

"It is difficult to characterize a nation. Hardly any classification of its motives is all wrong; none is completely right. The only final judgment is what happens and that is difficult to see as a whole

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and grasp entire. Complete and accurate measurement of what men do is not attempted; it is not even envisioned as possible nor desirable.

"How then shall we characterize France? We French are Saint Joan and her peasants who birth the people, believe in God and skimp and save and push the world backwards. We are the shopkeepers climbing into gross corporations, immortal, infernal, supermen, armed to the teeth, owning all ability; controlling thought and news; maiming, murdering and driving men insane. Yet we differ from you Americans—we still have writers and artists, unbribable, unsaleable, free and helpless, looking Death straight in the face. This picture of France, Mr. Mansart, is as false as the nation itself. While we are dirty and vile amid our beauty, and love sex and say so, yet we have not yet sunk to the level of the whores of Hollywood who wallow in pools and collect autographs and wave their legs and bare their asses to the world.

"And France is Europe. For five hundred years, all Europe has fattened on the entrails of Asia and Africa and built her glory on the blood and guts of 'chinks' and 'niggers.' What a brave and mighty folk we are, and how unrivalled and unprecedented in lying and murder!"

They stopped in a small restaurant along the Seine embankment. It was filled with laborers and clerks, but Villiers found some acquaintances in the rear and they crowded around a table against the wall. Among the group Manuel was pleased to see a colored man from the West Indies. He was a M. James and was a writer. With him was a Russian and a Frenchman who could speak Russian.

"Communists," said Villiers with a smile. Manuel was interested. He had never met a Communist and was curious.

"I have hoped," he said diffidently, "that your revolution would supplement the French, which gave us Liberty, Equality, and Brotherhood. . . ."

James flared. "You mean which tried and failed. The slave trade and slavery were the economic basis of the French Revolution. 'Sad irony of human history,' comments Jaurès. 'The fortunes created at Bordeaux, at Nantes, by the slave trade, gave to the bourgeoisie that pride which needed liberty and contributed to human emancipation.' The French revolt of 1789 gave liberty to a large group of Frenchmen, but it was the revolt of the slaves

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in Haiti which tried to force equality on France. But the reaction called Thermidor beat back the Terror of the rise of the French workers and crucified the house-servant Babeuf, who tried to lead them to brotherhood with black workers and brown. Thus, the French Revolution was never finished. Napoleon tried to transform it into colonial imperialism but Christophe and Dessalines balked him and the United States grabbed the spoil of Louisiana."

The Russian spoke rapidly as the Frenchman translated:

"And don't you see the Russian Revolution now comes to fulfill the French and Haitian? We take the worker to the place where the French Revolution tried to lift him and, setting him side by side with the black and colored people, bring a world brotherhood of which the most progressive white world never dreamed. Indeed, white Europe and America were headed straight toward a world war of race and color, which the Soviet Union alone will prevent."

Manuel stared at this interpretation of the Russian Revolution. He had heard the Soviet Union had made color discrimination a crime; but to him the "color line" was principally a matter of admission to street cars, trains, schools, and restaurants. Of an equality higher and broader than this, involving economic equality, he had not given much thought.

Some days later they came down to the Seine, looked at the fascinating book shops on its banks and then passing over, went to a restaurant which from its portico afforded a view of the celebrated Isle de la Cité, with the vast towers of Notre Dame in the distance. This was the center of Paris. There the first Napoleon was crowned and there stood the Palace of Justice.

They came across the Pont Neuf with the statue of Henry IV, and turning to the left saw the great palaces of the Louvre, the Arc du Carrousel, and the gardens of the Tuilleries. They looked through the Rue Royale toward the church of the Madelaine and rode up the Elysian fields through the Park of Peace, La Concorde.

It was in the Louvre itself that they spent long hours, not all at once but one and two hours at a time over a week of visiting. Mansart knew almost nothing of art. He had seen before coming abroad practically no great pictures and what he had looked upon as sculpture was rather miserable stuff. Here he could sit down quietly and look upon the Winged Victory of Samothrace and the Venus de Milo. He saw Mona Lisa, and his companion showed

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him many other pictures less advertised but quite as beautiful. He gained in time an idea of how the great painters of the world from Italy to Holland and France had tried to set down their conception of the beauty and meaning of the human body and its surrounding world. Later he tried to understand Matisse, Gauguin and Picasso. He emerged into a new conception of what the earth was and what man could see in it and its inhabitants.

After a week or so, they went to the Rive Gauche along the Boulevard St. Germaine and into the Boul'Mich. They spent afternoons in the beautiful gardens of Luxembourg and went down to see the loveliest of Botanical gardens. They rode by the Institute Pasteur on the Rue de Vaurigard and lived at a little hotel there for a week, a hotel characteristically parisien, with its black-gowned hostess, its omnipresent servant and its morning breakfast-in-bed of coffee and croissons. Many of these sights they visited again and again; the Bois de Boulogne, Montmartre, the garden of Tuilleries and the cemetery of Pére Lachaise.

During this time they were talking together, of themselves and their world; of that fabulous America of which the young man was both so curious and so critical and wanted specifically to be coached on just what a "lynching" was. He himself was the son of a well-to-do peasant in South France, who still tilled the family farm. Indeed, there he and his friend were going to spend the last week of this trip and there they would meet his father and mother and the married sister; a sister who, by the way, he said, had married an American and who wanted to go to America. But the husband was unwilling.

M. Villiers was unmarried and had a small income from his writings. He spoke with care and thought. He sought the exact word that would express just the specific meaning that he wished to convey. Save that he wanted to express himself in writing or by some other medium, he was not sure as to what his life was going to be. He had no plans. He did not have wealth nor want it. He was fairly certain not to starve. He sought a world of taste and discrimination, without suffering and hurt, and filled with all manner of men.

They came to the farm by way of Roman France; they saw Arles and Nîmes and they walked if they did not dance across the bridge at Avignon. They glimpsed the blue Mediterranean

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below the hill of their farm. The parents were simple and cordial, courteously curious and full of questions. The married sister especially greeted them with joy, because of her deep sympathy with her brother and her interest in America.

She talked freely about her husband who was not at the time present. He had been in the American army in the First World War and had been brigaded with the French army. He had been wounded and had won the Croix de Guerre. But he did not want to return to America. He seemed in a way curiously prejudiced against America and this his wife could not quite understand. She asked a great many questions about America and explained that in France it was difficult since the war for a young man to get a real start. Her husband lacked the over-precise curriculum of the French schools which was so necessary to get admission to certain lines of professional work. Naturally, he also did not have the connections and acquaintances which would open ways to him.

On the other hand, he had had a good American education and it seemed to her that the place to make his way was in America. The wages were high there, the chances of work were broad. She could not understand why he would not for a moment entertain the idea of going. Of course, she knew that Negroes formed a caste in America—but an officer and a gentleman would naturally be treated as one even in the United States. She talked earnestly to Mansart about this, and Mansart himself could not understand until the husband came home. He was a brown man.

It was characteristic, on the one hand, of his French hosts that they apparently had never thought of mentioning this fact to Mansart, which was of course in his mind of the greatest importance. It explained why the young husband did not want to return to America and why he knew, although he did not try to make this clear to his wife and her family, just why he could not see a career in America. He was a thick-set man of perhaps thirty-five; solidly built with a good-looking but rather discontented countenance. His mental balance was unstable. He was as startled when he saw Mansart as Mansart was to see him.

It is always a problem for American Negroes to know just what attitude they should assume toward each other when abroad. Of course, if they are alone they come rather naturally together. But if they are in different social settings, what then? This colored man

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was the husband of the only daughter in a French family and he, Mansart, a Negro teacher travelling in France. Shall they treat each other as understanding friends or shall they rather ignore each other, or what path between was there? Mansart tried to be pleasant and understanding but the young colored man did not respond very eagerly. He was curt in his answers and did not try to enter into the conversation. On the whole, it was rather an unpleasant experience.

Only once did Mansart seek to get close to him. They met in the fields by accident, looking out upon the well-fed cows and the waving grain.

"Do you think of returning to America at some time?" asked Mansart.

"No," said the man shortly.

"You have not been home in some years."

"No."

"Perhaps you won't mind if I tell you that there are changes in America—we are improving in our race relations and there is a chance for a Negro to get on rather better than I have ever seen before."

"I suppose you mean to get on as a Negro? I am not a Negro. I am a Frenchman, and I am going to stay so. But I tell you what I am going to do. I am going to Africa."

Mansart was a bit astonished. "Africa? Why—that's fine! I—I'm glad you thought of it."

"Oh, I don't mean the Africa you have in mind. I'm not going down on the fever coast to work like a 'nigger.' I'm going into the French Civil Service or perhaps the military service in French West Africa. I am going to invest there what money I can get hold of. I am going to have servants and laborers and live like a gentleman. I've been down there for a while and I know how a white man can live and what he can do. And I am a white man from now on."

Mansart said nothing.

"You have been talking to John, I see," said his young host. "I'm glad. I wish you'd try to have some influence on him. I confess I don't quite understand him. I can see why he doesn't want to return to America, and perhaps he's right. I've heard of the Negro's status there. But what in God's name does he want

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in West Africa? It's a hellish sort of hole, hot, fever-ridden, fly-blown. Of course, he is attracted by certain aspects of colonial life. If a man can get a well-paid position and is willing to do nothing for the rest of his life except to yell at servants, well, I suppose he can make it, although how he can live without art, literature, self-expression of any sort, I don't see; and I don't myself fancy being surrounded by poor devils, ignorant, diseased and hopeless. Apparently he rather likes that sort of thing. I'm sure my sister won't."

The sister came up about this time and she began talking with Mansart.

"I can understand," she said, "how a man brought up as John must have been wants to escape the plight of ordinary people without wealth and privilege. But I cannot see why he wants to go to the opposite extreme and lord it over the unfortunate. I rather like to work among the poor and the laborers. One finds real people there, don't you think?"

"I certainly do," said Mansart. "I can't imagine working anywhere else. And I question the whole institution of thoughtless service, of obeying commands on the farm or in the house or anywhere without any chance to know and to do on one's own account. It seems to me that there is something wrong with a man to whom that is an ideal."

John came up just then and he spoke bitterly. "Of course, you can't understand. You're a white folk's 'nigger,' Mansart. You've been kicked and walked on so much that you're used to it, and you wouldn't know what to do if you had a chance to do a little kicking yourself. Well, I am going to kick. I am going to step on people who are only worth stepping on. I am not going back to America. I am going to French West Africa and there I am going to be somebody." He turned away abruptly. There were tears in his wife's eyes as she followed him.

The incident of this talk with John led to further conversation concerning Black France.

"Your country, by the way, was a considerable colored empire—seventy-five million colonials against forty million home folks," said Mansart, who had been reading.

"Yes, we have fifty million in Africa, twenty-seven million in Asia and a half million in America. Frankly, I don't like it.

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Some of these we have assimilated by actual migration to France; others by making them legal French citizens in their homes. But that is but a handful; less than five million I should guess. The rest are ignorant serfs to be exploited by our Big Business. Some will free themselves by revolt as they are trying to do in Indo-China and may soon in North Africa. The five millions of Madagascar may erect their private system of home exploitation; a few more will become citizens and turn into exploiters of their kin, as John plans. It's a mess, Mansart, I admit. But what is the future of the world's colonies? Can you see it? I can't."

"I don't know. They must be led. Missionaries have proven but tools of Big Business. Business benevolence differs only in degree from Business for profit. I wonder if the world will ever produce a power which will open the way for colonies really to become free?"

"What is free?"

Mansart thought. "The right to vote, to work, to go to a school. . . ."

"No, freedom is the right to use the wealth they produce for themselves! Nothing else matters," said Villiers.

"Yes, something else—the knowledge how to use that produce for science, health and art."

"It's impossible!" said Villiers.

"Is it? If it is, civilization is impossible!"

"That may be so."

"In fact, it has been in Spain."

"Spain?" Mansart looked puzzled.

"Do not tell me that you do not know what my country, Britain and the United States have been doing—are doing to the people of Spain?"

Mansart was silent. No, he did not know. He had read something about a civil war there; and now a new leader, Franco, but . . .

"Germany and Italy are helping crush the Spanish republic; the United States, contrary to all its traditions is refusing arms. It is wicked. But surely you have heard of the International Brigade?"

"I never heard of it," confessed Mansart. Within he began

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to wonder how much of the real history of the world was being hidden from him.

After a month, a wonderful and unforgettable month, Mansart left France and through Switzerland came into Germany. It was now no longer a guided tour thoughtfully planned by careful friends. He was now on his own, face to face with white Europe. He met nothing of American indifference and antagonism, but also he met few friends. The surrounding world was curious and sometimes startled at his dark face, but he was treated with careful courtesy in hotels and restaurants and on the streets. He carried with him thoughts and memories of what he had been through, but he was unable to bring away from France as he had from England the picture of a complete civilization. France was something different from that; it was a continually developing idea; a certain attitude toward life; a way of thought and of changing ideal. It meant something when France had a dozen political parties, and England and the United States, two—or one with two names. But he was happy with the memories that he brought. He had something that he would never forget so long as he lived.

Mansart's trip to Germany was part of the plan of Americans of German descent, to bring Americans and Germans together; and after much thought it was decided that it might be well to include a Negro among the visiting Americans, so that in spite of the race propaganda in this new Germany, the Germans would realize that there were Negroes in America and that they were well-treated. The trip then was carefully planned so that Mansart should meet as little personal indignity as possible, but on the other hand there was little of the social contact which he had had in England and France. He was put on guided tours, he made visits in company with groups, and he had plenty of leisure to read.

Mansart went to Switzerland by way of Lyons and Geneva. He saw the great French manufacturing city much more quiet and settled than similar American or British towns, but skillful, tasteful, and with a certain contentment and happiness.

Then he went on to Geneva, crossed the beautiful lake of Lausanne, and came to Bern. He never forgot that sight of the Alps at Bern. He was standing on the high plaza looking up over

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the city to the mountains and the great white cloud formations above, and thinking how lovely it all was. And then almost by accident he raised his eyes to the skies and there above the towers, above the mountains and above the clouds, rose the startling magnificence of the high Alps with their silver peaks piercing to the top of the sky. He shuddered in ecstasy. Never before had he seen anything quite so magnificent. And he said to himself, "With all its dirt and sin and disappointment, this world is a beautiful, a very beautiful thing."

Eventually, by rail Manuel Mansart came to Munich in South Germany. He used haltingly some of the German which he had learned in school. He realized that this city was being re-built and renewed in folkways as the center of that new rising power in Germany under Adolf Hitler. It was almost by accident that he went to see the Museum of Technology. Never before had he witnessed anything like it. He saw the modern world in microcosm. It had 70,000 exhibits extending through nine miles of rooms. Merely to glimpse it Mansart spent four days walking through. There were seventy-three rooms devoted to geology, mining and metallurgy, with a complete coal mine. There were thirty rooms for transportation and twenty-one rooms for clocks, mechanics and electricity. Ten rooms exhibited sound and music, and in the rooms devoted to chemistry one could traverse four centuries in an hour. All the wood products of the world were there, and three planetariums illustrating the heavens. All this technique was the foundation of the power which Europe had directed for her world domination, and this was the explanation of the world in 1936.

Mansart realized that while he knew something of raising raw material—cotton, rice and sugar, corn, wheat and peanuts—of the intricate and long processes by which material was turned into consumer goods, he and his people knew little. He turned to his guide, an old man, white-haired and white-bearded, who spoke several languages well and clearly and had evidently been a man of status once in his life; but now beginning to break, with no light in his eyes. Mansart started to ask him some technical questions about the exhibit, and then suddenly found himself saying,

"Sir, when Germans have all this and can use it, why do they fight?"

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The man stopped and stared at him, reddened and then seeing how serious Mansart was, said:

"That, sir, will take some telling, but perhaps if you will join me at lunch we can talk about it."

They went out together at noon, and Mansart suggested apologetically that the guide allow him to be the host and that they go to some well-known restaurant so that he could see something of the real life of Munich. The guide hesitated and then said,

"There is one restaurant in town which every stranger ought to see, and that is the Münchner Hofbräu. I cannot afford to go there but if you can, I will be your guest there. At one time this was the greatest restaurant in Bavaria, with the finest beer. It has lost much of its prestige and its beer is just ordinary stuff, to be exported to . . ." He started to say, "America," and then added ". . . foreigners."

"Let me tell you, young man," he proceeded, "Germany, although separated and provincial, was a great country in the 17th and 18th centuries. Its work then, its thought, its science, can never be forgotten. But politically we were in a strait-jacket, so that men were asking: 'Where is the German fatherland?' We were humiliated by the French and by an Italian peasant with delusions of grandeur.

"In the 19th century we had to fight in order to form what we thought would be a self-protecting nation, one of the great three countries of the world. The Germans would think, France would feel, and let England trade. I was at one time a professor in one of our greatest universities. I saw our science, our music, our social investigations leading the world, so that those who wanted to do and know studied in Germany. Where else?

"We had to make ourselves an armed nation. And led by the great Bismarck and culminating at Sedan, we became the German Empire. But this was not the world that it used to be when we started on this path. It was a changed world. It was a world which was not built of nations unified, each with its own educated directing and laboring classes; but part of a new organization of dominant nations where the working classes were not mainly within the nations but in colonies overseas. And we Germans had no colonies and unless we got colonies we were going to fall far behind in what was a world fight.

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"Even our great Bismarck did not recognize this. He did not want colonies. He wanted a unified Germany. He gave Africa to France and Britain, and ignored Asia. But he was forcibly put out of office, and into power came the men who knew that Germany must have colonies, a navy and an army to maintain its place in the world." He paused and asked:

"Do you remember the Races Congress in London, in 1911?"

"No," said Mansart. "I was teaching at the time and read about it in our magazine, the *Crisis*. But I could not attend."

"It was a great meeting," answered the guide. "It would have been epoch-making if it had not come on the threshold of world war. There were great and wise men there and they were trying to unite the world across the barriers of race. Black, yellow and white men met and conferred as equals. They would have been very influential if at that time it had not been absolutely necessary for the survival of Germany to restrain England and France in their headlong economic imperialism. I remember some of the colored men there—Indians, Chinese and Japanese—one young black social scientist from America, from a school called Wilberforce, Earl Finch. And an editor who read a poem. But Science and Poetry were not listened to. Indeed, it was one of our own greatest scientists who said at that meeting—and almost disrupted it—that Germany must arm for war! He meant that Industry and Commerce must rule civilization and not considerations of humanity, happiness and knowledge.

"Well, it was all of no use. We armed, we fought, we lost the flower of our youth, and we went down into the fires of hell. Do you realize what happened to Germany at Versailles? Do you realize the succession of blows that have prostrated this nation since? Look at me. I was once an honored man, with a small but assured income from a pension so that I could have ended my life in study and ease. I lost everything. I am now the paid servant of foreigners, from most of whom I do not meet the courtesy that you have shown me today."

And so, after eating in this great and garish restaurant with crowds of tourists and few Germans, they went back to finish the Museum of Technology.

From Munich Mansart went north to Beyreuth. This was a tribute to his daughter, Sojourner, at home. He himself knew

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little of music and drama but he must not miss this opportunity to hear the great works of Richard Wagner. He found lodging on a street where once Liszt had lived and not far from Wagner's own home. The hostess was a lady of breeding who spoke English quite well. She recognized her guest's innate breeding but hesitated at his color. She was a widow, whose sole fortune was this beautiful house in the better part of the city. Here she made a living by giving board and lodging to tourists, chiefly English and American. The color prejudice of Americans was well-known and even among Germans there was being expressed a new race prejudice due to the rise of Hitler and his doctrines. Nevertheless, she yielded to the chance of free opportunity to see the old and wonderful operas and accepted Mansart's hesitating invitation to accompany him. It was different from anything that he had conceived. The opera was really a day's work. One went out to the suburbs, arriving at four in the afternoon, and sitting down to the curtain at five. Then, for three hours one looked and listened. At eight all paused an hour for dinner: elaborate courses, easy conversation, lounging. And then they went back for another two or three hours of theater. Except in the case of one English couple, the presence of Mansart excited no comment. A few stared, but on the whole the hostess enjoyed the evening.

What astonished Mansart was the picture of the German soul which this music and theater painted. He thought how among American Negroes, legend and fantasy might thus be wed to histrionic ability and imagination, to build a great dramatic tradition. The one here was magnificent. The rolling thunder of the music transported him. He did not pretend to understand it. Sometimes it was vague and voiceless, but at other times he knew what Wagner meant and what he had accomplished. Especially at that last portrayal of the Death of the Gods, the power and glory of the music gripped him. He could never forget it.

When he returned home he talked with the hostess and as she conversed with him tears came into her eyes. "See what we have lost, Mr. Mansart. Think of the nation which built this music and the genius which voiced it. It went down in awful war. But one man is holding it together, and that is Adolf Hitler. He keeps Beyreuth going, and I don't care what may be said about him. This one thing makes him to me the greatest of men. We

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lost, but not forever, not entirely."

From Beyreuth Mansart went to Frankfurt, and then took that unforgettable journey down the Rhine. The boats were less crowded and slower, naturally, than those coming up from Rotterdam. Nevertheless there was more time and even with Mansart's small knowledge of German one could listen to conversation and look at the people.

One afternoon they were passing mountains. They saw old castles, lovely vineyards and nestling towns. Mansart seemed vaguely to remember about one mountain and consulted his guidebook. Then he turned to a fellow-traveller and said in halting German:

"Is not this the Lorelei and is not there a song?"

The German scowled at him. *"Ja!"* he snapped, *"Das is die Lorelei. .Aber heute, kein echte Deutscher singt das lied der Juden, Heine!* (But no German sings the song of that Jew, Heine!)" And almost at the moment a group of boys and girls on vacation began to sing a song, but it was not the Lorelei.

Mansart asked no more questions. He saw the busy Ruhr, that great manufacturing district, whose work and profit united French and German capitalists even in the midst of war. And then after a hurried glimpse of Holland and Belgium—crowded, clean, well-to-do and busy, he came to the real object of this trip—Tervourien.

The beautiful building was set within a magnificent park and yet began on a false note. In its first room was the exhibit of the exploitable riches of Africa on which European culture could be built. The Belgian Congo was fourteen times the size of the mother state and from the first was regarded primarily as a profitable investment. The worst outrages of Leopold had now been curbed. Missions were at work on elementary education and laws restricting the great corporations had been enacted. But still, as Mansart could see as he wandered through the endless and beautifully arranged rooms, the chief end of the Belgian Congo today, as it was under Leopold I, was to increase the private fortunes of Belgian, and of European and American capitalists.

Mansart remembered the story of cheating and cruelty which had made the heart of Africa a colony of Europeans. He re-

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membered particularly the flamboyant promise of Henry M. Stanley peacefully to plant "Christianity and civilization." In fact, they planted theft, murder and disease, while the people died at their hands. But here they were, the people and their products, but from the first room to the last exhibit, the emphasis was not on the people nor on their products but on the profit which the processing and sale of these products would bring; and would bring not to black men but to white.

Mansart now journeyed overland. He stopped at Eisenach near Luther's Wartburg, and at Goethe's Weimar. Then down by the great trading houses of Leipzig and the art of Dresden, up to Berlin, the capital of Germany. He was met at the station by a tall, blond-haired youth, who greeted him in excellent English and took him out to the small but neat suburban home where he was assigned to stay by the Carl Schurz Foundation. The mother was gracious and kept a typical, neat German home. She did not speak English but as time went on she and Mansart talked together with the help of her tall son. Soon her grievance and her prayer burst out. This son of hers, with all his Nordic blondness and evident talent, could get neither work, education nor a career in the Germany of that day, because as she said, "His father was a Jew!"

Mansart evidently looked astonished and puzzled, but she explained.

"With the new racial philosophy which Hitler has brought, the state helps only Germans. Others, even those half-German, can get no encouragement nor support.

"My son therefore has but one alternative, and that is to leave Germany. I especially asked to have you stop with us because I wanted to beg you to use your influence to get an opening for my son in America."

Mansart smiled wryly, and then was near to tears. It was difficult to explain to this woman how little influence he had in America and how he would be the last man on earth to be able to help this young man in finding a career. It seemed as though even to the last the woman could not quite understand.

Mansart began to see and know Berlin as a great and efficient modern city. But it was tense, filled with meetings and its streets thundered with glaring radio propaganda. It was curiously upset

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with what Mansart regarded as unimportant things. For instance, he went to a movie to see the fight of Joe Louis with Schmeling. The audience was in turmoil. Their championship of the German fighter was uproarious. Their race hate of the young brown contender was frightening. When Louis was knocked out the whole audience went berserk. One would have thought that St. George had slain the Dragon. Mansart could hardly understand. The scene, however, was made clearer when he visited the Olympic games held in Berlin that summer.

The setting was imposing and Mansart thrilled to witness so fine an example of human equality, as dark figures threaded the stadium and every race and nation bore its banners aloft. It happened that American Negro athletes were unusually prominent. Owens, little and lithe, won the 100 and 200 meter races and the broad jump, over world competition. The stadium thundered with applause. Woodruff, tall, thin and brilliant bronze, won the 800 meter run; and big, black Johnson soared to victory in the high jump. And then Hitler, who had paraded and poured praise on the white victors, failed to put in an appearance. It was a petty pout, but it spoiled Mansart's feeling of triumph, just as it shamed many Germans.

Mansart's guides, however, were careful that he should see just what the new Germany was doing.

"You must realize what Hitler has done for us. A year ago we had seven million unemployed. You must see the roads and homes which he has built. Remember what the Treaty of Versailles did to us and is still attempting to do. But, by God, we'll escape. Germany will rise again."

Then, there were also Germans whom he met who were more apologetic and knew that Mansart sensed that all was not well and that there was opposition to dominant trends. One professor at the University burst out in the midst of his defense of the Nazis and said,

"But there are limits. I will not be pushed too far."

He did not go into details and years after Mansart wondered how far he had been pushed.

Once Mansart was invited to supper at the apartment of a teacher in a gymnasium, as German high schools are called. There were six or eight persons present and Mansart could not help

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noticing that when after eating they relaxed for conversation, the curtains were lowered, and during the rest of the evening the voices remained low. The teacher said bluntly:

"I am ashamed of what we are doing to the Jews." Then immediately he began some justification. "Of course, the Jews themselves are in part to blame. They have bought up lands and property. They are pushing the small German shopkeepers into bankruptcy. They are flooding the professions. I know, I know, but that does not excuse the treatment some of them are getting. I am ashamed!"

Mansart listened during the evening to charge and countercharge, and to overwhelming excuse and bitter regret. Mansart listened and wondered. He knew in a general way that Germany had a Jewish problem. He had intended to find out how far this problem resembled the Negro problem in America, but hitherto had seen no opportunity. Now he suddenly remembered the letter from Max Rosenfels which he had not yet delivered. Next day he excused himself from the planned itinerary and went off by himself. He rode up Friedrichsstrasse across the Spree to Oranienburgerstrasse and there found, after some search, in a basement the number he was looking for. It was a dark and uninviting bookshop. There were no customers and apparently no attendant. He browsed a while and finally, raising his voice asked in German:

"Anybody here?"

A thin man finally emerged from the back, dressed in a long black gown and spectacled. He said softly, "Did you want something?"

Mansart handed him a list of several books which he had decided he ought to read, including Marx' *Capital,* a *History of Jews in Germany,* some books on Russia, and others. The man scarcely glancing at the list handed it back to him and said,

"Sorry, but we have none of these," and turned to leave.

But Mansart addressed him again. "Are you the proprietor of this shop?"

The man looked at him suspiciously. "No," he said.

"But," said Mansart, "I have a letter for the proprietor."

The man stopped, took the letter, read it and rushed into the back of the shop. After some pause he came back with an older

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man, and hurriedly, after looking out on the street, they took him into the back. While the younger man returned and lingered in the shop, the old man talked.

"Welcome," he said. "Welcome! Pardon our manners. We have to be very careful. I am glad to hear from my cousin Max. You must tell him when you go home that we are in bad way, that millions of Jews will die and be ruined before this world is much older."

And then they had a long talk. "You see," said the Rabbi, "German Jews for centuries have made common cause with the aristocracy and lost the sympathy, indeed invited the enmity, of the workers and shopkeepers. That was not entirely the Jews' fault. They were not allowed to work as artisans or farmers or to trade in earlier times. They became bankers and merchants, and in alliance with the privileged classes made their way and gained at least in part their freedom. The French Jews made similar alliance with the leaders of the new Big Business and they're still prosperous. The British Jews joined in commerce and with the politicians. The Russian Jews had the foresight to join with the workers and forward the socialism of the world."

"Socialism?" asked Mansart. "Do you think Socialism will win?"

"Will win?" replied the rabbi, "It has won! We're all socialists now. Every country has some degree of socialism. Even your own Roosevelt is leading a socialist revolution. The difference you see is difference of leadership, of dictatorship. The ignorant mass cannot lead itself into economic emancipation, requiring scientific technique and capital, with the forces and classes now against it. Here in Germany, this Hitler has made alliance with the great corporations. They are going to give the mass of people as much socialism as will keep them quiet.

"In France, the state owns and governs education, transportation and almost all national enterprise. In England, the power is in the hands of the aristocracy, with help from the skilled artisans. Whether they will win through this partial dictatorship I do not know. You see, if such an experiment as the Russian should succeed, if the mass of the working people could really secure a dictatorship which would guide the state toward

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complete socialism, the more would be emancipated. But they can't. It will be impossible for people so ignorant and inexperienced as the Russians to choose or keep in power a dictatorship of the proletariat. They will fall out among themselves and then the foreigners will rush in."

"But I understand," said Mansart, "they are having some success."

"Some success, yes, I hope more; but I doubt it. I seriously doubt it. If they should succeed, then the dream of our Karl Marx might come true. The mass of people would be so well educated and trained, so experienced and so schooled in new folk ways, that they would not need a state. But that is a dream, a wild dream.

"But I am glad to see you, Mr. Mansart, because I want to call attention to one mistake that you American Negroes are making. You are trying to make alliance with the old planter class, and the new rich of the North. That's a great mistake. First of all, it makes the worker and the poor whites your enemies. They lead the mobs and do the lynching. You have got to change your alliances or you are going to lose."

Mansart was astonished. "I cannot believe it!" he said. "I cannot believe it! At any rate, I think after all I ought to see Russia!"

But Mansart had to remember that his chief errand in Germany was to learn of industrial education in the German state. To this he now turned as his time was growing short. He soon learned that Germany was not seeking to use industry as a means of education. It was using education as a means of carrying on and perfecting industry. So too, Mansart knew that in America the white philosophy back of the Tuskegee idea was not to use industry to teach Negroes, but Negroes to help industry.

In 1936, the electrical industry of Germany and a large part of Europe was divided between two great German corporations of which Siemens was the oldest and largest. It was capitalized at $100,000,000 and employed more than sixty thousand of the highest skilled workers in Europe.

By permission, Mansart entered this city within a city. Among the many factories was one large, seven-story building. The chief

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aim of this building was to produce a human product of the most careful and precise nature, to be used in the productive processes of this mighty industry. Industry here was dealing with men as it would deal with cotton: studying them, experimenting with them. Knowing exactly what it wanted men for, it proceeded with painstaking care, endless experiment and expert training to deliver a finished product which was unsurpassed in the world for efficient, delicate, precise and regular workmanship.

It takes from grammar school or high school graduates, 150 apprentices each year. They are children who have done their school work well, and the children of employees of the company were preferred. Only the very best material was selected. Those whom Mansart saw were from twelve to fifteen years of age, and were going to study four years after careful testing. The students were paid as they studied, not much but an increasing part of their living expenses were thus met as they proceeded through the course. They were entering a life work, would follow it all their working years and be pensioned after they were retired.

With a skilled working class, educated for a specific life work, it was evident to Germany that democratic control of the state could not be entrusted to them. Industry in Germany was to be controlled by a closely knit hierarchy for support of a wealthy class to whom the bulk of income and of power went. While these workers had some democratic power in their public life, in choice of local government officials and other smaller matters, on the other hand, in the great matters of government policy, general laws and the distribution of capital, of industrial aim and organization, of colonial administration, there was no democracy. The demands of the workers through their trade unions could not be wholly disregarded, but these demands were mainly in the matter of wages, and these wages and conditions of work must be improved and the cost of them taken from profits. This process, naturally, had to be watched carefully.

It was clear, not of course from what Mansart heard in the factory or from his interpreters, but from the newspapers and the broadcasts and from a colonial exposition which he visited, that

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the Germans thought they must have colonies and that the new colonies must not be simply those they lost in the First World War but larger colonial territory; that these colonies would supply this great industrial machine with raw materials raised on cheap land by cheap colonial labor.

The new colonial territory might be, of course, conceded by Britain or France in the face of the new German army and navy. But the chief idea of Germany in 1936, to Mansart's surprise, was that the new territory was to come from Soviet Russia, and it was Germany's growing thought and aim to take this territory. Consequently there was, while Mansart was in Germany, furious propaganda against the Soviets. Communism was denounced, its crimes were emphasized, and its inevitable failure foretold. Yet, and this is what intrigued Mansart, most methods which Russia had followed or announced were being imitated in Germany. Germany was a "socialist" state, in the sense that to an increasing degree the government owned and controlled industry. It controlled money and banking; it was moving toward ownership and control of land. Work and wages, roads and homes, were under government control. There remained only the question: Who will control the government?

When the dictators arose in Italy and in Germany, the industrial world of England, France and America applauded because they saw in the dictators an answer to Communism. Mansart was continually astonished at the way in which Russia was the center of German, if not of European thought. Before that, to Mansart's recollection, Russia had been significant mainly as a national problem which was going to be of tremendous importance to the world. But it was no threat; rather an experiment and a dream yet to be realized or to die with noble memories.

But in Germany in 1936 Russia was a fact; an accomplished experiment, so successful as to pose the immediate question of acceptance by modern culture or violent uprooting by every means. Britain was an enemy, but an enemy to be copied in success and method. France was an ideal which needed only German science. Italy was an ally. But Russia was something threatening which must be put under German control.

Here came Adolf Hitler, a psychopath and a dreamer, with

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delusions of grandeur, frustrated by poverty and war; ruthless in his idealism; bold, cunning, with a voice of brass and a knowledge of the human soul. This was the instrument which the captains of German industry picked out at the time of their defeat and despair to become master, not only of Germany but of Europe and possibly of the modern world.

Hitler was an artisan. He came from a part of Austria where the anti-Jewish feeling was strong, as was also his own economic rivalry with Jews as a worker. In 1932 Germany had been near anarchy. The next year, although still a minority, the Nazis attacked Jews, burned the Reichstag building and took power. Industry was frightened, the Junkers were frightened, the managers, engineers and small shopkeepers were frightened. They all submitted to a man who had been at first a joke, then a pest, and who now suddenly loomed as a dictator. Union labor, with its 8,000,000 members, proceeded to squabble as to whether to usher in the millenium immediately or gradually; through this squabble Adolf Hitler and Big Industry drove a carriage and four.

The greatest single invention of World War I was propaganda—the systematic distortion of the truth for the purpose of making large numbers of people believe anything authority wished them to believe. It grew into an art, if not a science. Nowhere was it used to such tremendous advantage as by Hitler in Germany. Newspapers, public speakers, the radio, expositions, celebrations, books and periodicals, every possible vehicle of information and training, including schools, were used on German people to teach them that they were the most remarkable people on earth; that the National Socialist government would be the best government for Germany, if not for the world; that other countries, especially Russia, were in the depths of misery and that Jews were responsible for all criticism heaped on Germany and for most of the other ills of modern countries.

All this Mansart learned while in Germany, while talking with his English-speaking companions, from several confidential interviews with German teachers and workers, from listening to the endless broadcasts as they were interpreted to him; and by walking, looking, listening. His stay in Germany could by no means be compared to his experiences in England and France. He made almost no friends. He came into no intimate contact with the

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people. But he did do much reading, and he began to understand Germany as never before. He got some glimpse of what it had been in the 19th century—a great country of science and education, of ideals, with music and art. A people which, rising from the utter depths of conquest under the first Napoleon became in its own eyes and even that of the world, one of the greatest if not the greatest country on earth, and now was in the midst of revolution.

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# CHAPTER IV

## THE COLOR OF ASIA

All this, of course, made Mansart eager to visit Russia, that weird land around which all revolutionary hope and fear were swirling, and thence to pass on for a glance at Asia. He had had Russia in mind when he first began this trip, but he had been advised by friends and people whom he had met in America, England and France that perhaps such a trip would not be wise; that Russia was in turmoil and that no one knew just how things were coming out. So he had given up the idea. But he was going to Asia, and the quickest way to Asia was across Russia by way of the Trans-Siberian railroad. It seemed foolish and too costly for him to go around by the Mediterranean. So he thought that perhaps he could spend a month in Russia and then go on.

This he found out was not possible. For some reason which he could not imagine, he was refused the right to stop in Russia. He did not know about the unfortunate experiences of the Russian Intourist effort; and of the new strains which the West was beginning to put upon this struggling country. So that the best he could do was to make the trip from Moscow into Manchuria without halt. This he finally decided upon. He wrote home as he started east:

> "It is October, 1936. I am in Russia. I am here where the world's greatest experiment in organized life is in the making, whether it fails or not. Nothing since the discovery of America and the French Revolution is of equal importance. And yet this experiment is being made in the midst of unexampled hostility; amid deep-seated bitterness and recrimination such as men reserve usually for crime, degeneracy and blasphemy."

He neared Mongolia and wrote:

> "We were nearing Mongolia, and already in the Province of the Buriats. The slim firs stood sturdily with straight heads



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and shoulders sagging with snow. The lonely silence of a Siberian night was about us. We climbed down a pass in the Black Mountains, following a river half hidden in ice. Suddenly the tempo of the scene changed. A large new factory blazed up in the night. Great piles of lumber lined the river bank. An electric road showed a beginning of modern road-making. Tracks of rails stretched wide on either side, until a modern railway yard was evident. Then we swept into Vereudinsk, now newly named, and the world was soldiers. They filled the depot, covered the platform, crowded a standing train and marched about in overcoats to their heels, buttoned closely; some with guns, some with bundles. All was now clear. This was a frontier point of concentration against the threat of Japan.

"Ten thousand miles east of our East lies a land, lonely and dust-swept, pregnant with history in the dim past. Hence came the Mongol hordes that swept from Asia to Germany and Italy, and changed the history of the modern world. Brown men they were and yellow, with broad faces and flat noses and wild, straight black hair. They are here about me today, November 1936—perhaps 25,000,000 of them—in Inner and Outer Mongolia and in Manchuria.

"It was a new world. My color was nothing unusual. All the world was sallow, yellow or brown, except the blonde white Russian girls who waited on tables in the restaurants and on the dining car. The train swung out toward the East. I was in a Pullman car made in America. The porter was not of my own expert race, and I felt like giving him a few pointers. The roadbed was better than in Siberia. Always war hovered near us. They pulled down the curtains early. I wanted to look out but fortunately I first read the posted notices: 'Passengers between Hake and Agounor must not look out of the windows on penalty of severe punishment.' I did not look out.

"We swept along a great, wide plain, and the cold wind poured straight down from the North Pole. It was a desolate, barren land, and the seldom folk crept wearily along the lonely way. Then the whole scene changed as if by magic. We slipped out of the desolation of the northern desert. We flew easily on a perfect roadbed, ballasted with rock, and in Japanese cars better than Pullmans. The service was perfect. We were leaving the old border and haunts of the bandits, the modern successors of Genghis Khan. We came to Hsinksing,

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capital of the new Manchurian state, set up by Japan in 1932.

"I hurried on to China which was end and aim of all imperial planning, from America to Japan and from the 10th century to the 20th. In the morning I went down to the great harbor of Dairen. My friends handed me three colored streamers of farewell, and following the beautiful Japanese custom I and a dozen others held one end while the friends ashore unwound the other ends until a rainbow of colored strips of paper streamed from ship to shore and I bade Manchukuo goodbye.

"China is inconceivable. Here first a man out of the empty West realizes where the population of the world really centers. Never before has a land so affected me. China, to the wayfarer of a little week and I suspect a little year, is incomprehensible. I have, of course, a theory and explanation which brings some vague meaning to the mass of things I have seen and heard. I understand now as never before how I have believed the human history set before me and missed the whole meaning of a people. And this I know: any attempt to explain the world without giving China a place of extraordinary prominence, is futile. Perhaps the riddle of the universe will be settled in China, and if not, in no part of the world which ignores China.

"I write this standing on the Great Wall of China, with 23 centuries beneath my feet. The purple crags of Manchuria lie beyond the valley, while behind are the yellow and brown mountains of China. For seventy cents I have been carried up on the shoulders of four men and down again. And here I stand on what has been called the only work of man visible from Mars. It is no mud fence nor pile of cobbles. It surpasses that mighty bastion at Constantinople which for so many centuries saved Mediterranean civilization from German barbarism. This is a wall of carefully cut stone, fitted and laid with clean matching and eternal mortar, from twenty to fifty feet high, and 2,500 miles long; built by a million men, castellated with perfect brick, and standing mute and immutable for more than two thousand years. Such is China.

"I talked with a group of Chinese leaders and business men. We talked nearly three hours. I plunged in recklessly. I told them of my slave ancestors, of my education and travels; of the Negro problem in America. Then I turned on them and said: 'How far do you think Europe can continue to dominate the world; or how far do you envisage a world

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whose spiritual center is Asia and the colored races? You have escaped from the domination of Europe politically since the World War—at least in part; but how do you propose to escape from the domination of European capital? How are your working classes progressing? Why is it that you hate Japan more than Europe when you have suffered more from England, France and Germany than from Japan?' "

Mansart wanted to forestall the usual question and comment of foreigners on the Negro problem in America and instead elicit so far as possible information about China from Chinese lips. He continued:

"I saw today something on the streets of your city which reminded me of America. A well-dressed English child of perhaps six years was walking with his nurse along the Bund when he met some Chinese children, small, poorly dressed and dirty. With a gesture he ordered them off the sidewalk; they meekly obeyed and walked in the gutter. In general the whites here treat the Chinese just as we Negroes are treated in the Southern United States. I hear that only recently have Chinese been admitted to the Race Track which is the fashionable amusement center of your city. The white foreigners rule your city, force your children into separate schools and in general act as though they owned China and the Chinese. Why do you permit this?"

In later years, Mansart was deeply ashamed of calling this conference and asking these questions because he came to realize how abysmally ignorant he was of China and her history. He had never studied or read Chinese history or literature. In elementary school, China was a joke and its people "queer." In college he learned about the kings of England and France but nothing of the Han or Ming emperors. At this very moment, in 1936, Mansart had no dream of the frightful tragedy playing over China, or of the "Long March" of 8,000 miles, circling from Fukien to Yunnan, Szechwan and Shenshi. Just then, Chu Teh, of whom Mansart never heard, fleeing from capture in the freezing snows of Tibet, was starting out to join Mao Tse-tung in the future Red Capital of Yennan. The long-enslaved, raped and murdered peasants of China were at last reeling to their feet, covered with blood and lice,

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to rule a world. And yet, of their fateful history of three thousand years and its bloody culmination in the twentieth century, Mansart in his ignorance was questioning Chinese leaders in Shanghai as to why they let the West insult and rule them! They must have wondered whether he was fool or spy.

Of what the West had done to China since 1839, Mansart had heard little—of the Opium Wars to enrich England and reduce China to a colony; of the Chinese revolt called the Taiping "rebellion," in which the whoremonger and murderer, Chinese Gordon, began his saintly career which ended when the Negroes of the Sudan cut off his head; of the slave trade in Chinese coolies which sent cheap labor to America and the second frenzied revolt of the Chinese under the Boxers in 1899, when the Christian world united to steal China's treasures and partition her land. All this was either distorted or utterly unknown to this colored American. When he asked why they submitted to the West, there was a sensible pause quite as awkward for Mansart as for the five Chinese present at the dinner. Mansart remembered how often he had sat in similar quandary when well-meaning strangers had stripped his soul bare in public and blandly asked him why and how and what? Present with him today were five persons—the superintendent of the Chinese elementary schools; the president of a college, supported largely by missionary funds from the United States; a young banker; a well-to-do merchant; and a civil servant.

The school superintendent spoke first. "We are, sir, as you say, in a sense strangers and outcasts in our own land. That we realize each day. But we are not sitting supinely by and doing nothing. Oh, no! Europe is not always going to own and rule Asia. We have started a good system of schools, well supported, with Chinese teachers. There are not enough schools, to be sure, but they are growing. We share today in the government of this city as we did not a decade ago, and there is no longer exclusion of Chinese citizens from public places."

"But," said the merchant, "as you surmise, the chief difficulty is industrial. The Chinese are poor, miserably poor, and crowded into this city in a great hungry mass; foreign capital can easily get work done at the lowest wages and there is yet no effective effort to keep the income of the poor much above starvation. Such unions as we have are ineffective, and the Chinese employers

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cannot raise wages in face of foreign competition. But we are moving, as our banker can tell you."

"At last," said the banker, "we issue our own money and are not forced to use British currency. That is a start. But of course only a beginning, so long as industry is monopolized by outsiders. They own the factories and ships. But we have plans afoot. Down the river from Shanghai and nearer the sea, we are building a new industrial capital which will one day intercept the world trade which now centers in white-ruled Shanghai. You shall visit it this afternoon."

"Now," began the college president, "about Japan."

He probably sensed that Mansart had the Western prejudice in favor of the Japanese and knew nothing of recent occurrences. Indeed, when Mansart only that very morning had seen the monument erected in 1932 for the Chinese murdered in Chapei by the Japanese, he had not dreamed of what Japan had done to crush China as Sun Yat-sen struggled to free it. Before he left China, Chiang Kai-shek was captured in his night-shirt and made to promise to help China ward off Japan; Mansart knew almost nothing of this man whom our own General Stilwell called "a grasping, bigoted, ungrateful little rattlesnake" but who was given 3 billion dollars of our tax money—to become our "ally" in Formosa.

The president continued: "The Japanese are our kin. We gave them the civilization which they have developed. But today they despise us because we are victims of Western aggression which they barely escaped, and because of their power they propose to replace the West as our masters. It is explicable that we hate so fiercely our own Asiatic brothers who plan to treat us worse than the foreign devils from beyond the seas."

The talk proceeded and food and tea passed. Later the group visited the classes in the public schools where of course no white child entered. At last they came to that new ghost city beside the sea in the wide mouth of the Yangtze River. The marble city hall stood beautiful and empty; there were streets and stores, public buildings and parks, docks and storehouses. Almost everything except people. Mansart stared and wondered. When would the people come? When would the dream awake?

Yet, he also realized that the traveller must take with him much knowledge or he will never see what is before his eyes, or hear with

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his ears. He knew of British culture before he went to England; he knew much of France before he saw it. But of China what little he knew was mostly distortion. Through that false fog he saw little even when he stood with open eyes.

One of his final days he spent in Hangchow, that lovely city of islands and palatial homes, of tree and verdure, where the wealth of Chinese rests in peace. It was a singular echo of that other great monument at which he but glanced, that magnificent palace of the proud Empress Dowager where, with imperial gesture, this indomitable ruler of hundreds of millions of human beings tossed away the money which her nation gave her for a navy to defend them from the West, and instead built a fairyland of water, bridge and stone, of ebony and ivory, of flower and fountain and vine, of lovely couch and carved statue—to speak of Beauty and never of War.

Across the straits Mansart hurried to Japan, the one colored nation whose talent, industry and military might the white West feared. He looked on the island mountains with intense curiosity. He sensed a difference immediately. In China he had received every courtesy and yet he knew that China felt itself part of a white world and planned its future as part of that world. No sooner had he set foot in Japan than he felt himself in a colored nation who hated the white world just as he, despite all effort, did himself. He was received almost as a fellow-citizen. He again wrote home:

> "I have never been welcomed to a land, least of all to my own, as I was welcomed to Japan. I was helped past the port officials, white Americans being politely but firmly elbowed aside, to their open-mouthed surprise. It was astonishing to be at last in a colored country, able and determined to run itself without white advice. And Japan considers itself colored and not white. I have already tested this in conversation and suggestion.
>
> "What is Japan? I am, I admit, prejudiced in its favor. But I am trying to judge it fairly. First of all, it is colored. The blonde-haired world of my summer and fall is gone. The hair of the Japanese is coal black, with once in a thousand a faint brown. The skins vary from white to sallow, and then to yellow and brown. Casually, if I woke up suddenly in Japan, I should imagine myself among New Orleans or Charleston mulattoes.

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"But the most extraordinary thing about the Japanese is not physical; it is spiritual. They are independent and self-reliant and self-sufficient colored folk in a world now dominated by whites. They have no fear of white folks nor secret envy. Whatever white folk do or have done, the Japanese are sure they can do better.

"It was the fear of England that was pushing Japan. England dominated China and India, Australia and New Zealand. But for the grace of God and the vigilance of the Japanese, she would own Japan. At one time during and after the Russo-Japanese war, recognizing the power and ability of the Japanese, England made alliance with her as an equal. Then, with no reason except the unstated one of color prejudice in America, South Africa and Australia, Britain broke the alliance in 1921, unwilling to link her fortunes with yellow people.

"Japan found herself between the devil and the deep blue sea; rapprochement with China, based on blood kinship and cultural likeness, was stopped by war and boycott, and reached unbelievable depths of hatred. Japan saw China kow-towing to the West, dragging whites about in human-powered rickshaws; she sensed nothing of the unbreakable strength of China, beneath a thousand years of humility. Europeans secretly and openly encouraged a split between these colored peoples which played directly into their hands. There seemed nothing for Japan to do but seek alliance with Germany and Italy, despite the fact that Germany despises yellow races and Italy's hands are red with the blood of black Africa.

"There is poverty in Japan; there is oppression; there is no democratic freedom. But nowhere in the modern world is there higher literacy, as newspaper circulations of one, three and even five millions prove. The Japanese laborer is not happy but he is not hopelessly discontented, for he belongs to the same class and family as the highest Japanese. They will guide and protect. He will obey.

"To me, the tragedy of this epoch was that Japan learned Western ways too soon and too well, and turned from Asia to Europe. She had a fine culture, an exquisite art, and an industrial technique miraculous in workmanship and adaptability. The Japanese clan was an effective social organ and her art expression was unsurpassed. She might have led Asia and the world into a new era. But her head-

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strong leaders chose to apply Western imperialism to her domination of the East, and Western profit-making replaced Eastern idealism. If she had succeeded, it might have happened that she would indeed have spread her culture and achieved a co-prosperity sphere with freedom of soul. Perhaps!"

In the dying days of 1936, while great Fujiyama still veiled its silver face, Mansart went down to Yokohama and set foot upon the sea. He sailed east into the sunset again to discover America, in his own thought and through the thinking and doing of other folk. Ten days he journeyed until he came, at Christmas, to an unbelievable land of raining sunshine and everlasting flowers, called Hawaii.

New Years, 1937, he stood in California of fact and fable, with the city of St. Francis of poverty and the birds before him, and lifted up his eyes to the hills beyond the Golden Gate. Lifted them and let them drop; two small years, two little years; suddenly he saw the whole world again aflame.

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# CHAPTER V

# COLOR IN THE WEST INDIES

Manuel Mansart was standing at the front gate of his campus in Macon, looking over the grounds. He was scowling a little and tapping his foot. It was a beautiful morning, one of those soft, glowing fall days of the South where there is no hint of cold weather and yet the heat of summer has gone. It was balmy, the trees were beautiful, and the breezes enticing.

The President had been back from his trip around the world for several months, and as he looked about he was beginning to ask himself, why are we here, and for what end? What is our duty and our ideal?

Just then he heard a sneeze and saw Jean approaching to begin her morning's work. They greeted each other cordially.

"You've got a cold," he said.

"Yes, I have. Perhaps I've been overworking a little. It wasn't really so hard while you were away, but of course there were some irritating matters. You know, our colored men I think even more than whites, are not yet used to seeing authority in the hands of a woman. They knew that I could do your work but they resented it—not so much in word but in various ways. They resented having me put over them, and also some of the trustees were a little doubtful of my beliefs. But there was no real difficulty because, after all, I knew the work and the details and they knew that I knew, and they let matters go on. But I did have to keep busy and watchful, and perhaps I'm a bit run down."

"I'm sorry you are," Mansart said. "I tell you what I think you ought to do. Take a month off after the holidays and run down to the West Indies and look about. I got a new slant on the West Indies while I was in France. A Negro named James gave me his book to read and it is revolutionary. We must include the West Indies in our survey. You'll not have time for doing much, but induce one or two delegates to attend our conference."

"I think I may," said Jean. And then she asked, "May I ask



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what you were thinking about? That scowl on your forehead was ominous."

"Yes," he said. "I came home from looking at the world with the idea that, after all, the object of our life is or should be Beauty, having lovely things about us. I think of those ancient wooden temples high in the forests of Japan. I think of that cathedral near where I lived in England. I think of the castles on the Loire in France. I think of so many lovely things. This world was meant to be beautiful. Beauty is, after all, the object of life."

Jean demurred. "Beauty? Yes, one object, of course. But not only beauty. In a way, not simply beauty. There must be people to know it and appreciate it, and they must have time to look and hear and enjoy. Looking about us here, how many people have time or training to enjoy a Titian painting or a great piece of statuary?"

Manuel was silent. Then he said slowly, "Nevertheless, for those who have time, for those who can, we must have beautiful things, even while we wait for more folks to enjoy them. And this campus is ugly. Oh, there are some good things; there are the classic lines of our Administration Hall. We have kept the old pillars of the South which the South in some curious way took from the Greeks. And yonder is a simple but rather fine façade."

"Yes," answered Jean. "Only one thing bothers me. The South in its better homes did keep simple, classic and beautiful lines. But have you ever thought that the Southern home never had space or a place for a kitchen, much as it needed kitchens? They had to be stuck on, apart from the main house."

Mansart smiled and said, "At any rate I'm going to have some grass on this campus, or something that looks like grass. I'm going to have some more trees planted, and then I'm going to have some pieces of sculpture. And in the halls some good paintings."

"Fine!" said Jean. "Only of course you must remember that the Trustees are going to ask about the cost of all this!" And laughing, she went into the building.

She realized that Mansart's wonderful trip around the world had broadened his outlook and broken down some of the barriers that had hemmed him in to a narrow racial world. Life had become beauty, logic, and comfort. But also Jean wondered if this very breadth was going to make Mansart forget or ignore the narrow

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demands of his exacting job from which he had glimpsed so fine a freedom.

Jean's cold persisted, and after Christmas she planned a trip to the West Indies. She remembered that from Virginia, through the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida to Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, and Panama, lay an unbroken country where Negroes and mulattoes were in recurrent majority groups. Whatever touched and influenced one part of this group, influenced the whole. Then she read James' *Black Jacobins* and Leger's *History of Haiti* and other books. She was astonished and thrilled. She wanted particularly to stand on that battlefield where Dessalines overthrew the power of France in 1803.

She went on one of those floating steamers making a round trip from Miami and touching briefly, all too briefly, at Cuba and Jamaica, Haiti, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Bahamas. As usual, she travelled alone. She had no white friends with whom she could go, and of course colored friends could not secure accommodations.

She was first struck by the unbelievable beauty in these mountains stretching up from the depths of the seas into the heavens, with glorious foliage and flowers beyond description. And then, still amazed, she was depressed by the poverty, ignorance, and disease crawling upon them, dotted here and there with white vulgarity and tourist extravagance. Especially the tourists infuriated her—these droves of stupid, gaping fools intermingled with thieves, gamblers, whores, and idlers. All with money and few with anything else. Unaware of where they were and blind to what they said, laughing at the natives, sneering at poverty and ignorance; tossing alms like bones to dogs and revelling in menial service from cheap "niggers."

She glimpsed Cuba and Jamaica. She saw the same pattern: a colored and black aristocracy climbing desperately on the backs of black peasants in order to ape the wealth and extravagance of white Englishmen or Americans; while writhing below, great clotted masses of filth and sorrow, struggling toward the sun, but smothered with mist so that European race superiority and American robbery and rape looked like the uplift of man.

Jean debarked at Haiti, looked at Port-au-Prince and then went north to the Citadel of Christophe and his palace. Then she came

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to Cap Haitien and sat in the square. She met the man quite by accident in the neglected square of Cap Haitien. She had asked her way in passable French of a loitering boy, to the battlefield where Dessalines conquered Rochambeau. He did not understand, speaking only Creole; but the man sitting near answered.

Jean looked at him with interest and instead of immediately seeking the battlefield, started to talk. The man, Dr. Duval (he preferred writing it "du Val") was a well-known character on the Cape. Educated in France and long a teacher in Haiti, he was now retired on a tiny pension which hardly sufficed for his support. He spent his time in reading and study and sat almost daily in the city park with books beside him and pamphlets and papers in his pockets. His greatest joy was to run across some intelligent listener with whom he could discuss West Indian history. He gave information gladly and at length, but was sensitive at any patronage or attempt to pay him for what he regarded as simple courtesy among gentlefolk. A showy American tourist once handed him a five dollar bill after receiving his guidance for nearly an hour. The enraged Duval threw the money in the gutter and indignantly strode away.

"What the hell ails the nigger," sputtered the American. "Wasn't that tip enough?"

Today, the Doctor sensed in Jean an intelligent lady of breeding. He talked voluminously.

He first pointed across the square to the road leading to that last battlefield November 18, 1803, "when Dessalines and Capois overthrew the young Rochambeau, leader of the armies of Napoleon, who was seeking vainly a new empire in America."

"So Britain seized the West and the United States had Louisiana and the Pacific thrown into her lap for less than a song," said Jean. The man appeared gratified.

"Ah, you know something of history." Jean told him of her studies. "Hm!" he muttered. "But that is Anglo-Saxon history. The West Indies carried on the Renaissance; they formed a microcosm of modern history after 1500. But their story has been forgotten, distorted, twisted, and especially ridiculed—ridiculed and sneered into a mass of lies.

"Abbé Reynal said that labor in the West Indies 'may be

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considered as the principal cause of the rapid motion which now agitates the universe!' "

"But just how did this happen?" asked Jean.

"San Domingo was the finest colony in the world and its possibilities seemed limitless. After the independence of America in 1783, this French colony doubled its production in six years. In these years, Bordeaux alone invested 100 millions of dollars in San Domingo. The British bourgeois were the great rivals of the French. All through the eighteenth century, they fought each other in every part of the world."

"But the British stopped the African slave trade and eventually abolished slavery."

"The British colonies had enough slaves. San Domingo needed more. With tears for the poor suffering blacks, the new British bourgeois set up a great howl for the abolition of the slave trade, feeling their way to a greater exploitation of India. They began to abuse the West Indies as 'sterile rocks,' and asked if the interest of the nation should be sacrificed to 72,000 masters and 400,000 slaves?"

"But there was surely much real philanthropy in England?"

"Of course; and also faith that England was God's favorite. As one Englishman wrote: 'It seemed as if Providence, when it took from us America, would not leave its favorite people without an ample substitute.' Pitt saw a chance of capturing the continental market from France by East India sugar. The production of cotton in India doubled in a few years. Indian free labor cost a penny a day!"

As they conversed, Jean and her friend both stared across the great Northern plain toward the mountains where in dark and sombre beauty loomed the mighty citadel of Christophe. Dr. Duval was thin and yellow, shabbily but neatly dressed and a cultured gentleman in manner and language. There was about him no faint trace of servility, or thought that any woman of any color should not be honored by his attention. He pointed to the vast plain:

"Yonder the black slaves came, swept on like a hurricane; but what summoned them was the Wheel."

"The Wheel?"

"The Wheel, where they crucified the handsome Ogé, the mulatto educated in France where he fought boldly for the Free

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Negroes of Haiti. He said no word for the black slaves. Indeed, mulattoes, educated in Paris during the Seven Years' War, were often slave-owners."

"Why was Ogé attacked?"

"Ogé had sought status for Free Negroes alongside the whites of San Domingo as citizens of France. The whites would have no such alliance. They seized Ogé and Chavannes. They bound them to a great wheel; they broke their bones with bars of iron, and exposed them writhing and bloody to the burning midday sun until they died in agony."

"I remember," said Jean. "The whites and free mulattoes began to fight."

"But on the 14th of August, 1791, down from the crags and valleys of yonder sinister mountains and across that wide and fertile plain which for one hundred and twenty-five years had been making France rich and Europe envious—down poured four hundred thousand black men, most of them slaves, some freemen whose forebears had hidden in these mountains for more than a century. Over the long, green snake and the reeking entrails of a wild boar they had sworn allegiance to Boukman, crying in Creole to 'The God who created the Sun which gives us light; who arouses the waves and rules the Storm; who sees what the White Man does: watch over us and lead us!'

"In a few days one-half of the famous North Plain was a flaming ruin. From Le Cap the whole horizon was a wall of fire. From this wall continually rose thick black volumes of smoke, through which came tongues of flame leaping to the very sky. For nearly three weeks the people of Le Cap could barely distinguish night from day, while a rain of burning cane straw, driven before the wind like flakes of snow, flew over the city and the shipping in the harbor, threatening both with destruction . . .

"They, whose women had undergone countless violations, violated all the white women who fell into their hands, often on the bodies of their still bleeding husbands, fathers, and brothers. 'Vengeance! Vengeance!' was their war-cry, and they carried a white child on a pike as a standard!"

Jean looked at her companion and murmured:

"So the Reign of Terror came from France to Haiti."

"Oh, no, no! The reign of Terror started in Haiti; it did not

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reach France until three years later, when white French workers recognized their unity with black slaves and fought with and for them. Indeed, the French Revolution itself started in the West Indies, in the twenty-five uprisings of black workers which from 1523 to 1780 swept the West Indies and erupted in Paris in 1789."

Jean stared at her companion. What looked like disbelief in her eyes, was really resentment that in her study of history, in her attempt to know what the world had done, this central bit of history had been almost entirely concealed and distorted.

"You do not believe me!" he said.

"Oh, yes, yes!" she protested, "only the interpretation is so unusual—so new—"

He smiled and started to his feet:

"I will give you names of books; as you travel home, read them. But twilight falls. Before dark we have time to visit the battlefield which you wished to see."

Jean insisted on hiring a ramshackle cab and they rode west. As they rode Jean asked:

"After the uprising of the slaves, what happened?"

"Both Spain and Britain tried to seize San Domingo, while France strove to keep it. But its value was its slaves, and this threw contradiction into the lap of the Revolution. Toussaint appeared as leader of the slaves and Spain secured his services since he distrusted the French. The San Domingo planters invited in the English, and William Pitt seized most of Haiti and several other islands. Britain was on the edge of owning the rich West Indies. This would mean the re-establishment of slavery in the West Indies and a rich Britain could then overthrow the Revolution in France.

"But in France, Revolution reached its climax. The working masses of the French people took power in their own hands and the Reign of Terror ensued. The owners of wealth and employers of labor bowed to the workers. They declared hate for the 'aristocracy of the skin' and refused to drink coffee because it was stained with the blood of slaves. Then from the West Indies came a dramatic climax. In January, 1794, three deputies arrived from San Domingo—a white man, a mulatto, and a black man. When this black man, Bellay, finished his speech, the Convention declared the abolition of slavery in the French colonies!

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"Immediately, Toussaint left the service of Spain and took charge of the French forces in San Domingo, proclaiming the freedom of the slaves. This black West Indian drove the British army out of San Domingo."

"But could Negro slaves oppose the British army?"

"They did. Fortesque, historian of the army, said the year 1795 was 'the most disgraceful year in the history of the British army.' The English in three years lost 80,000 soldiers in the West Indies, a loss greater than Wellington's in the Peninsular campaign. They spent $25,000,000 and General White advised withdrawal. General Maitland entered into negotiations with Toussaint.

"A convention was signed in which the English evacuated the island. General Maitland arranged a brilliant parade and royal banquet, after which he presented Toussaint, in the name of the King of England, a bronze cannon from the mansion of the Governor and superb vessels of silver and gold."

"What now was the real significance of Thermidor for black slaves?" asked Jean.

"The counter-revolution of Thermidor meant not only the triumph of the bourgeoisie over the workers, but the attempt to restore 'order' in San Domingo. French owners and investors wept. 'There is no longer any ship-building in our ports. The manufactories are deserted and even the shops are closed. Thus, thanks to your sublime decree, every day is a holiday for the workers. We can count more than three hundred thousand in our different towns who have no other occupation than, arms folded, to talk about the news of the day, of the Rights of Man, and of the Constitution.'

"Babeuf, a menial servant, preached communism, freedom for the blacks, and the unity of white and black workers. He organized the 'Society of Equals' but was executed in 1797. The owners and merchants raged. France tried to support the mulatto Rigaud against Toussaint, since Rigaud fought for slavery of the blacks. Toussaint triumphed again and the French bourgeoisie did not dare to try to re-establish slavery, but they began to fear that Toussaint might set up an independent island. The English encouraged this idea. But Toussaint believed in France and showed his faith in France by sending his sons there for education."

"And his reward?"

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"His reward was eventual betrayal and cruel death in France at the hands of Napoleon."

They stepped out of the cab and looked about the bare field.

Jean went back in thought to the fall of the Directory in France and the establishment of the Consulate of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Duval continued: "It was clear that Napoleon hated and feared Negroes, and this despite the fact that his first step upward in Paris, came from his marriage to a West Indian octoroon. Josephine de Beauharnais had married into the French nobility. When her husband was guillotined, she found protection at the hands of friends of Napoleon and became the most glamorous figure in Paris society.

"Napoleon married her just before he started on his Italian campaign. He coveted for France its richest colonial possession, and was frightened at seeing it fall into the hands of the British. But before he could turn his attention to the West Indies, Toussaint had arisen and made himself practically independent of France. He had seized the whole island from Spain and in 1801 actually had the impudence to proclaim a constitution. He protested, and quite sincerely, his loyalty to France. But Napoleon, furious, determined to kill him. He planned a formidable fleet of 86 ships built in France, Spain, and Holland. It carried 22,000 soldiers trained under Napoleon himself and commanded by his brother-in-law, Leclerc.

"The fleet anchored at Cap Haitien in February, 1802. The city was under the command of Christophe. Leclerc ordered surrender in twenty-four hours. The reply was a volley of artillery fire and then Christophe burned the city, including his own home, to the ground. There followed two years of fearful war. The troops and the fever decimated the French.

"Leclerc soon was frightened. He wrote: 'My position becomes worse every day. Sickness carries off the men. Toussaint is not to be trusted, as I had indeed expected, but I have drawn from his submission the object I had expected.'

"Leclerc then resorted to disgraceful deceit. He lured Toussaint aboard his flagship on pretense of further negotiation. There the great black leader was seized and taken to France.

"Toussaint was murdered by cold and neglect in the snows

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of the Alps. This Napoleon thought would be the end, but it was not. First, Leclerc was in dread about slavery. He wrote Napoleon. Read here in this book: 'Do not think of establishing slavery here for some time. All the blacks are persuaded, by letters which have come from France, by the law which re-establishes the slave trade, by the decree of General Richepanse which re-established slavery in Guadeloupe, that the intention is to make them slaves again.'

"Then he screams: 'I have just discovered a great plot which aimed at raising the whole colony in revolt by the end of Thermidor. It was only partially executed for lack of a leader. It is not enough to have taken away Toussaint, there are 2,000 chiefs to be taken away. . . .

" 'Although I have painted such a horrible situation I ought to say that I am not without courage. . . . For four months now I exist merely by adroitness, without having any real force; judge if I can fulfill the intentions of the Government.'

"On November 2, the sick and distracted Leclerc died. Of the 34,000 French soldiers he had brought, 24,000 had died, 8,000 were in the hospital, and only 2,000 exhausted men remained. Rochambeau succeeded Leclerc.

"Rochambeau was a ruthless beast. He received 20,000 new French troops after the death of Leclerc. He drowned so many people in the Bay of Cap Haitien that fish were no longer eaten. He hunted down the blacks with dogs. He burned Negroes alive, hanged and tortured them, and buried them to the neck in nests of insects.

"But Dessalines returned blow for blow. He hanged 500 white troops before Rochambeau's eyes. He burned the North Plain until it was a charred desert. On this spot here, Dessalines tore the white stripe from the red, white, and blue of the tricolor, and made the remaining red and blue, Blood and Sky, the flag of free Haiti. On November 16, 1803, the blacks and mulattoes gathered for a last attack upon Cap Haitien. A white slave-owner wrote a half-century later: 'But what black men these are! How they fight and how they die! I have seen a solid column, torn by grape-shot from four pieces of cannon, advance without making a retrograde step. The more fell, the greater seemed to be the courage of the rest. . . .'

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" 'Those songs shouted into the sky in unison by 2,000 voices, to which the cannon formed the bass, produced a thrilling effect. The French too marched singing to their death, lighted by a magnificent sun. Even today after more than 40 years, this majestic and glorious spectacle still lives as vividly in my imagination as in the moments when I saw it.'

"On November 28, Rochambeau surrendered and took refuge with the British. He left the corpses of 60,000 French soldiers and sailors behind. On December 31, Dessalines read the Haitian Declaration of Independence."

It was dark as Jean turned to leave this bare old battlefield. As they rode back, her guide continued:

"Christophe, who followed Dessalines, could not hold the blacks and mulattoes in one government. It was no longer slavery that kept them apart, but a different conception of the state. The North under Christophe harked back to African communism, with dictatorship and discipline to ward off the white world of colonial imperialism. Hence the citadel of defense yonder at La Ferrière, one of the wonders of the world.

"But Pétion and his mulattoes in the south had their faces set toward the new democracy of the nineteenth century, as led by France and America. Pétion helped forward the independence of South America and sought in vain the good will of the United States. But white labor democracy in France and England, built on the exploitation of colored labor, repudiated all union with black Haiti, save as a quasi-colonial area."

The next day after thanking her guide and mentor cordially, Jean left the Cape for Port-au-Prince. She perused in the books loaned her the extraordinary story of Haiti. From the day when the English overcome the French in Asia and conquered India; when the French, rich from slavery in the West Indies, found their nation overthrown at home and threatened by a demand for the equality of workers, black and white; when the English tried to seize the West Indies; when Napoleon tried to enter Asia by way of Egypt and Toussaint L'Ouverture overthrew French, English, and Spanish; when the French workers tried to unite black and white in one struggle and the British subordinated the black worker under the white and bribed the white with higher wages, the

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color line stood until Russia abolished it and saved the world from a war of colors.

It seemed curiously clear now to Jean what had happened since. Great Britain had transferred her investments in the West Indies, and in the name of emancipation exchanged the West Indian plantations for new investment and expanded capitalism in African and Asian colonies. Thence came the industrial revolution and the new imperialism, born of the blood of Negro slaves.

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# CHAPTER VI

# THE CONFERENCE

**Jean re-embarked at Port-au-Prince and sailed to Puerto Rico whence she planned to return home by way of the Bahamas. But at San Juan she left the ship again and went to the Virgin Islands. She wanted to be alone to read and think about the West Indies, and plan a message which she could bring back to Manuel Mansart.**

On returning, Jean accomplished one goal she had long had in mind. She became dean of the college. She had long been this in fact and was acting dean when Mansart was abroad. On his return, the office of full dean should have been established, but in that case a man would naturally have been appointed. Since no man on the faculty seemed fitted for the job, the matter was dropped. Then Mansart got back in harness, and the need of a dean with authority became clear, especially as Mansart's mind and activities became increasingly engrossed in large matters outside the college. Quietly therefore Mansart and Coypel, head of the white University system and Mansart's superior, with the careless consent of Baldwin, voice of Big Business, succeeded in making Jean du Bignon titular dean of the college.

Outside her routine duties Jean now gave most of her time to the new organization for southwide study of race relations. She planned to have the first conference at the state college in 1938, including not only the teachers of sociology in the Land-Grant colleges and the private colored institutions of the South, but a few leading social thinkers of the nation. She wanted in that way first to settle questions of method and aim in sociology for the guidance of the colored colleges; and also to get various institutions more and more interested and involved in this movement.

First, she corresponded with the presidents of the colored Land-Grant colleges, urging them themselves to attend, and especially to send their professors of sociology or teachers of analogous subjects. Nearly all the colleges promised co-operation. Then Jean began writing to southern white institutions to invite their sociol-



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ogists to meet with the conference as observers and advisers. A few responded. Finally, she sought to insure the attendance of certain leading Northern teachers and writers on social subjects. She induced Mansart to promise them expenses with board either in the college or at the white hotels in the city. Several consented.

Jean tried to keep central in her mind the object of this purely scientific program as the best way to ward off criticism and make sure of the co-operation of all the colored people and especially of the white trustees. On the other hand, no scientific work can function in a vacuum and Jean knew that inevitably the conferees would be considering in their own minds how and why the information gathered would eventually be used. In her own thinking she had assumed that the "socialism" of the Roosevelt era would be regarded as normal for the future by those who attended the conference. But in that case the more ticklish question of Negro political power must be in the minds of all, if not actually mentioned; for socialism could only be established by votes. Moreover, all the conferees must know that organized industry was increasingly going to center its efforts in the South because of its resources, its climate, its cheap labor and lack of labor organization. She conceived therefore that the trade union movement, particularly in the South, would be an object for her to investigate and, so far as possible, influence.

There was also the accompanying question of how far the American Negro, especially in the South, should try to develop as a self-supporting unit inside the white group. Already this path was recognized in music and art; it was venturing into drama, and it was manifest also in a distinct body of literature. But Jean saw that the economic aspect was as yet but partially conceived. There was, of course, the "Group Economy" discussed in the Atlanta University studies; and there was "Consumers' Co-operation" which the *Crisis*, organ of the NAACP, was pushing. But heavy industry and the trade unions, and the part and place of the Negro in this crucial development was not yet envisaged. Should separate trade unions be organized for Negroes, and a nation-wide Negro trade union movement be organized? Jean pondered long on these matters. What would be the relation of Negro business to the national business development? But all these considerations Jean put sternly aside from her main object in this organ-

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ization, which was truth about race relations in the United States, gathered scientifically and presented to the world without bias.

But, Jean continued to reflect, here was Mansart's ideal of beauty, and here was the poverty that could not appreciate it. What was to be done about this? She kept thinking this over. Her idea, firmly fixed at first, was to achieve a scientific knowledge of the truth, even in sociology, a discovery of its rhythms, a realization of the possibility of prophecy. To this she still held.

Manuel Mansart, while obsessed by his realization of the beauty and order of the world, was interested in the economic development of the Negro. He agreed with Jean's plans to study the Negro on a wide scientific scale. He wanted to plot the Negro's industrial future in this world which industry ruled. But he saw no clear path at present. Meantime, he wanted his college, his teachers and students, to realize what the world meant now as a place to live in.

First of all, he himself began to have a conception of the world as one unified dwelling place. He was escaping from his racial provincialism. He began to think of himself as part of humanity and not simply as an American Negro over against a white world. As he looked about, it seemed to him that one place to start was by beginning to make the State College at Macon a more beautiful and satisfying place than it had been, a better expression of the breadth and beauty of life. Interfering with this and disturbing his thought was the unrest in Europe, the premonition of possible war. Yet, he insisted on thinking of the broader aims of civilization, of the integration of mankind into the world; of the appeal to duty and order through peace. He did not believe, he could not believe, that there was going to be another world war.

He said to himself and repeated to Jean: "Surely it is quite impossible that civilization should try war again?"

Jean looked at him contemplatively and said: "I'm not so sure, President Mansart. I'm not at all sure. You see, the difficulty is that the problem which drove us into the First World War is unsettled, and that is the domination of the backward parts of the earth for the benefit of Europe and North America; and the use of the profit from colonialism to settle the problem of the worker in imperial nations. All that we settled or seemed to settle

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in the First World War was that Germany was not going to be admitted as an equal partner in colonial imperialism with France and England. And now, you see, that is rebounding. Germany and Italy are insisting not simply on world partnership, but it would seem that they want world dictatorship."

Manuel mused a considerable time. Then he said, "I think I have learned something new concerning nations, colonies and social classes on this trip. The classic division of classes within countries in the past left a great mass of labor at the bottom, working in ignorance and sickness chiefly for the benefit of a small hereditary aristocracy. This is still a pattern in much of the Middle East and in Central and South America.

"But in Western Europe and North America this pattern has changed. There, a considerable but a much smaller mass of ignorant and sick labor is at the bottom; and feeding on that, as well as subsidized by a powerful ruling oligarchy, is a large middle group of skilled and white-collar workers who think they have more to lose in any revolution than chains; they can lose homes and musical instruments, automobiles, electrical gadgets, servants, and the opportunity to live as superiors over lower classes. Their temptation to curb or overthrow the ruling oligarchy is modified first by the real chance that some of their own group may be able to join the rich, or negated by their share in the profit of exploiting not only the lowest classes in their own country but the majority of the working people of the world in Asia, Africa and South America."

Jean assented and added: "This turns most of the well-paid laborers of Britain, France and the United States into supporters of the ruling rich. In defense of their higher wage they join in oppression of the poor, and all the more cruelly because they so vividly know and fear poverty. Then, too, they consent to serve as well-paid soldiers to keep the poor peoples of the world in servitude to the rich. Thus, by higher wages and political power, they share in the loot of Asia, Africa, Central and South America, the Caribbean and South Sea areas.

"Especially in the United States, the middle-class well-paid worker has long been inured to oppression by living beside despised and exploited groups like Negroes, Indians and foreign immigrants. The law permitted this oppression and custom set few limits.

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Democracy was denied most such groups, and if war comes again, here lurks the cause."

Manuel went on with his thoughts and plans. First, he began to beautify the college grounds with trees, flowers and shrubs. He repaired and built fences and painted woodwork. Pictures seemed to have never been thought of in his college and indeed not often in the South. He found he could easily get large reproductions of the world's best pictures, and his students in their carpentry classes could frame them. So there began to appear in the halls and in the dormitories representations of European art: the older and greater painters, Michelangelo, Titian and Rubens, the dark visages of Goya, and some representation of the newer trends—Matisse and Gauguin and even Picasso. Especially, he wanted colored faces portrayed in a region where all skins were rendered white or caricatured. Works of colored artists like Tanner and Meta Warrick were sought.

To this, Manuel managed to add some large pieces of statuary. The trustees were not altogether in agreement here. They did not like naked white Greek figures. They thought it would have a bad effect on the morals of Negroes. But the Venus of Milo demanded entrance, and the Victory of Samothrace, and some Roman athletes. There were busts of Douglass and Booker Washington.

It then occurred to Manuel that he must do something more about the library. He really needed a new library building. And by arrangement with the New Deal Administration a rather fine building was erected in 1938, with both books and room to read and lounge. He secured a trained colored librarian with imagination, and began to buy books systematically. Back of the library a large room was set aside as a little theater, which thus brought a new and interesting member to the staff and resulted in entertainment for the students and some original writing.

In consultation with his daughter Sojourner, Mansart enlarged his whole music program. He forecast a school of music which not only would emphasize American Negro music but the music of Africa, the West Indies and South America, then go on to cover the great music of the modern world with Bach, Beethoven and Wagner. Some of the trustees thought this program over-ambitious; and the teachers had difficulty in gathering talent for orchestration, voices for singing and audiences to listen. But

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the work grew slowly. Colored singers like Hayes and pianists like Maud Cuney appeared in concert.

Jean's plan was to induce each Negro college to undertake continuous social study of the Negro population of its own state. This would be financed by the local institution itself and would be on as wide and intensive a scale as it could afford. It would take advantage of local and current studies of every kind, made by the state, organizations or private individuals; it would use the data of the United States Census, classifying matter which the census would not care or could not afford to use. Jean hoped that gradually these studies would become broader and more systematic and, following the criticisms of the sociologists gathered at the conferences, would also become more scientific and reliable. In time, Jean dreamed, there would emerge the largest and most complete, continuous study of the actions of a definite human group which the world anywhere was attempting, and out of this might come measurements for a science of sociology such as never yet had existed.

Naturally, the actual conference was disappointing. Only a few of the colored presidents attended. Most of the institutions, however, sent teachers of social science; but they were not a very promising group. The first step toward a realization of her project, Jean saw, would be to have better teachers hired and give them more time and money for this work. Four white Northern sociologists came and were very encouraging about the general program. They did not expect a Science of Sociology to emerge as Jean did, but they were sure that with care and some money, a most interesting body of knowledge might gradually be accumulated. The two white Southerners who came also expressed interest, along with some surprise. They wondered if Negroes could carry out such a plan. If they could, it would be an excellent effort.

There were only a few set speeches; most of the work was discussion, and that often was stimulating. There were few studies already in the making, and therefore few reports; but many plans were announced. Among the set speeches was one by a chance visitor.

Aba Aziz, who called himself in America, Alexander Abraham, was visiting the college. As was the custom, strangers of distinction, especially if colored, were welcomed at the college and enter-

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tained. This one seemed a man of education, and was asked by the President to stop over and to address the conference.

He was tall, thin, black of skin, with close-curled hair. His English was beautiful, as was indeed his French, German, Italian, Russian and Arabic; which last two languages he never used or admitted knowing when in the United States. His address was clear and short, but puzzling. He said:

"We admit that clear knowledge of Things is the best way to understanding. Yet an embarrassing question may here be asked: What do we really know of the Things we think about if indeed there are any real Things beyond our thought of them? Common sense comes to support Science and says, let us act as though this outer world really exists and proceed to know and measure it. On this hypothesis we build up a world of mass and energy which moves in Time and Space and shows astonishing regularities. Indeed, last century we had reached the place where we believed we were on the track of the Universal Laws of action among Things and closing in on analogous laws governing all life, vegetable, animal and human. Then in our day came a halting.

"This moving mass, at one end infinitely small and at the other a vast reach of stars, with earth between, when interrogated not only refused to exhibit the same regularities, but differed widely and disturbingly. They contradicted each other so that at least among the atoms we could speak only of Probability and even of sheer Chance which the pre-scientific students had rather infelicitously called Free Will. Time and Space seemed to be but aspects of one Thing and the universe could only be explained scientifically if we mathematically assumed that we had measured what was at present Unmeasurable unless and until we know what is now apparently Unknowable.

"All this the oldest, exact scientist resented, the Priest ridiculed, but the mathematician proved true by splitting and fusing atoms; while bending rays of light and blending motion and mass. All of which challenges the present day student. In this complex the present conference, as I understand, takes its place. It will, so far as it can, measure human conduct in a distinct and controlled area and there either discover Law or delimit the boundaries of Chance."

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Mr. Abraham sat down amid a polite but faint applause. Few in the audience had any idea of what he was trying to say. Some of the white trustees consulted later.

"What the Hell was he talking about?"

"Sounded like nonsense to me."

"Who is he?"

"What does he really know about atoms? If so, how and why?"

"Let's get in touch with the FBI; he may bear investigation."

The FBI gathered in the next year an astonishing amount of knowledge about Aziz. The man was born in Yemen.

Where is Yemen? East of Egypt! But in what nation? Saudi Arabia.

Was he a Jew? Not of the orthodox types usually so known. But connected with the ancient rites—a Black Jew.

Educated? Oh, variously: in Cairo at El Azhar; in India at Calcutta; at Peking and the Univeristy of Tokyo; in Berlin, the Sorbonne and the University of London; also at Yale. He had taught short periods and on various subjects in Europe, Asia and Africa; in Spanish America.

In the Soviet Union? Oh yes, lived and studied for a year at Moscow. He had worked as an artisan in the United States—in electricity in Poughkeepsie and in a chemical plant in Chicago.

This information was easily secured and Aziz spoke frankly even about his change of name. But the conclusion was that he was either a spy or saboteur. He admitted that he was a Communist.

"I greatly admire the Russians and their system of education," he said casually, as he was taken to prison. Then he dropped from sight. A final report said that he had apparently been accidentally killed by falling from the walls of Alcatraz.

The trustees of the Georgia State College were on the whole gratified and pleasantly disappointed at the conference. The meeting was not radical or inflammatory. It enhanced the reputation of the State College. The chief result, beyond promise for the future, was the stimulation among the local teachers and the visitors of arguments and exchanges of views as to the future development of the American Negroes, especially along industrial lines. The place and future of the trade union movement came in for consideration, and then the general industrial policy within the race and over the nation. One of Mansart's most informing

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talks came after the conference, in a conversation with the Dark Dane, whom Jean had invited to the conference.

She explained to Mansart just what a Dark Dane was.

"The Danes, when they owned the Virgin Islands, used in certain cases to decree that individual Negroes of distinction were legally 'white,' with all the rights of Danes. Some descendants of such families still live on the islands and usually occupy high positions."

He was a black man, tall, with velvet skin and sharp features—a typical Scandinavian in all save color. A century since, the Danish government, ruling the Virgin Islands after Spain, France, the Knights of Malta and Britain, had decreed that his Negro ancestor was hereafter legally "white." His family henceforth was one with the rulers of the island of St. Croix. He had a good common school and high school education added to reading; he was familiar with the literature of Scandinavia and Britain, and knew something of the French. But he was insular. He had never travelled much, and his experience among men was narrow. He did not like white Americans and regarded their purchase of his island as a calamity. He met Manuel with grave courtesy which later ripened into friendship and considerable understanding.

"The West Indies," he said, "once were on the way to becoming highways of modern Europe to China and India. Beautiful beyond dream, with perfect climate, mountain, song and sea, they began to reflect European civilization in microcosm. Here culture, reborn in the Renaissance, lurched upward to new realization of a new world; new vegetation, free gold and such meeting of souls as once island Greece had known. Here Poverty, the scourge of Man, was to be conquered and Eternal Life achieved. Over these fortunate isles, out of Atlantis, the best of men started toward fabulous Asia, mother of human culture.

"But into this paradise the Serpent of Greed entered, and instead of an Eden for its own dark people and their European guests, arose Hell for the Indian, in blind effort to build a white heaven. But they made a mistake. They looked back; they turned back to Africa, the first of continents, so as to enslave its flesh and blood. They tried to forget Africa's past, malign its present and make its future a tale for beasts. To do this they had to blaspheme religion and lie to truth. The result was disaster: in slave revolt, human hate and

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degradation. All this brought revolution to Haiti, North America and France, and then came that revolution in industry which engulfed the modern world.

"This vast and fatal change in ways of making wealth and giving human service became more than successful in production but tragic in the way its results were divided among men. Not new culture in the dark West Indies, nor reborn civilization in China, brown India or black Africa became heirs of the new earth, but all these were forced to be sick, stupid, hungry victims of Great White Europe who tried to inherit the Earth. The world advance was twisted in Europe; Asia struggled and Africa shrieked until World War brought promise of utter disappearance of civilization."

Thus the Dark Dane spoke while Manuel listened in much astonishment, some doubt and a little agreement. He ventured at last to question:

"But what is happening in the West Indies, I cannot understand. I hear of undreamed of beauty in all these scattered islands; I hear of music and laughter and yet too, unease, sickness, unhappiness and the almost universal belief that real life and steady progress lie quite beyond these happy isles. Above all, the people: there is no people; or there are peoples of every sort, kind, and hue, and yet the bond between is so fragile and thin. They dislike each other so cordially!"

The Dark Dane counted on his fingers. "We are seven," he said. "The whites and the native whites; the mulattoes and the blacks; the Americans and Refugees; and the Tourists. Yes, God forgive us, the Tourists, who never belonged here and yet whom we invite and fawn on and let trample us to dust."

"But I thought—" said Manuel, astonished.

The Dark Dane interrupted. "You thought that the destiny of the West Indies was to be the playground of rich Americans where they could gamble, whore and get drunk at their sweet will, unhampered by law or gospel or even by the dictates of decent society; and above all where they could get rich on the ignorance, servility and poverty of the 'niggers.'"

"Well, no, not exactly that; but these hotels—"

"The chromium finish in Puerto Rico, in Cuba, San Domingo and Haiti. The cars and beaches, the dining, dancing and yacht-

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ing, the shops and jewels—no, no! The West Indies should be center of a new and better world culture arising from and around and for their ten million colored folk and for such other human beings who wish to share their destiny as equal citizens and human companions. Impossible? Oh no! I've thought it all out. Listen.

"We would begin as a small compact group here in St. Croix; ten families, a hundred, a thousand, with a little money, able to read and write, trained to think. First on fair-sized plots of average land we would raise what we needed to eat, importing nothing but what we absolutely must; using brown sugar, unrefined by cheating Americans; eating our own abundant fruit and vegetables with no canned slop; balancing our diet according to science but avoiding fads. We would build our own outdoor homes; low, ventilated and sun-bathed. We would dare shake our fists in the face of Paris and New York fashion, and weave our own cloth from our own fibres. When we could we would learn to make and use the new synthetic fibres; but cotton, wool, flax and silk could cover us until nylon monopoly was broken. We would till the ground by inches, not by miles, and use hands and feet instead of tractors until better machines for simpler land culture were invented by our own brains or the brains of other human beings working for human happiness and not merely for profit.

"And all our object would be leisure, not work; time for thought, education, painting, poetry and sculpture; scientific exploration and invention. There would be no patents or copyrights but rewards, prizes and scholarships for individuals; drama and theater, visitors—not stupid 'tourists'—but artists and singers, poor in pocket, rich in talent and unwilling to barter their souls to the metropolitan tyrants; writers out of whom greedy publishers could not make money and therefore try to starve."

"But wait," interrupted Manuel. "You go fast and make fearful progress in words. But there are obstacles. First, land. The land of the West Indies either already is or is rapidly becoming monopolized. Where would your community live?"

"We would tax heavily all unused land and let each use tax free what land he needs for crops or homes. Property would be a social trust, revocable at will, with just compensation for any real sacrifice; ownership of property always known and publicly regis-

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tered, and all income of everybody known to all with source and reason."

"But the power to do this?"

"We can vote."

"But my dear man, so can other millions; but they vote as the rich and powerful order or—"

"Are destroyed. But we would realize Democracy. We would vote as we wanted and we would learn and teach what we ought to want and how to get it."

"But do you realize how little of such democratic government there is in the world and how quickly and effectively that little can be nullified or done away with? And how in God's name can you get a voting body intelligent enough to know what is best for them and how to vote it in?"

"My dear President Mansart, do you actually doubt the possibility of human intelligence and the practicability of education?"

"Well, no, but universal popular education started a hundred years ago and where are we?"

"Did it start with the Reform Bill, or did we merely start talking about it? I tell you, it's possible."

"Moreover, your land program and rewards, and I suppose with Social Medicine and Old Age Security, public ownership of public utilities—all this sounds much like Communism."

"Like Communism?"

"You know, the Russian way—Iron Curtain and all that."

"Is that Communism? Why I thought Communists were murderers, conspirators and liars—at least so I have been told."

"And naturally believed it, as you will in future believe what you are told about other things. You see, dear friend, we are all at the mercy of what we are told, and ever will be."

"And education is impossible because Truth is unattainable?"

"Well—"

"It is not well; it is ill." The Dark Dane looked disgusted. Mansart served tea.

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# CHAPTER VII

## THE SOUTHERN WORKER

Jean was thoughtful after the conference. She was at once disappointed and encouraged. Her main object seemed attained—that of securing co-operation from the teachers in the various colored colleges. But in conversing with the delegates and visitors she found surprisingly little sense of the use to which the facts of social investigation should be put. Some seemed to think that the object of the studies was the skills and training secured by the investigators. Of further use of this body of knowledge for social reform, their ideas were curiously vague.

Jean was aware that this was to be expected from her plan, and that this was her proclaimed object. But she realized that despite her own purely scientific goal, she was really most interested in the uses of information rather than just in obtaining it; that this was the only excuse for all this trouble in these critical times.

The more she thought the matter over, the more she herself wanted to become familiar with industry which dominated the world. It must dominate the world, for men must work for food and shelter before they could rightly think and feel. She was aware of how theoretical her knowledge of factories and real production was. The labor movement to her was mainly words and theory. What was true in her own case was even more true of her fellow teachers. They knew industry as brute toil, seldom as organized and planned execution. They knew of servants, laborers, teachers and professional men, but seldom of skilled factory hands, union members and labor leaders.

She determined, therefore, to take her summer vacation of three months away from the college to cross into the neighboring but far-off white world and learn what a textile factory really was. There was risk in thus crossing the color line. Hitherto, her chief difficulty had been to stay within her "race." Now she would



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use her opportunity and be for a time what she seemed to be—"white."

She knew that hiding would be easiest nearby, and so she just rode to Atlanta, and got acquainted with the members of the Textile Union. The union was not large. It had no valid contracts with the industry, and its membership was firm on the exclusion of Negroes. She learned that in North Carolina Negro tobacco workers and white union textile workers had found some common ground, but had been suppressed by the militia. The new CIO was working in the South, and large numbers of Negroes were coming into the general union movement, but not into textiles.

Jean rented a room in the white working section and began to talk to the women workers. She said that she wanted to become an apprentice in spinning and weaving. They laughed at her.

"Why on earth do you want to work in a mill? You've got an education," they contended.

"Yes," said Jean, "but I want to know how to do the work. I want to become a worker, and see if we can't organize for better wages and conditions."

"Well, we can't. If we go into the union and try to force the employers, first thing you know they'd have 'niggers' here working in our place."

"In that case," said Jean argumentatively, "I wonder if it wouldn't be a good plan to anticipate the mand get some good reliable Negro workers into the mills."

The woman she was talking to sniffed. "I'd die first," she said.

Jean kept on. Over a period of three months she got the chance to work as an apprentice. Then she joined the union and finally spent a week working in one of the factories. She talked with labor leaders and found them discouraged.

"With whites and Negroes competing we can't get anywhere in the labor movement."

"Then," said Jean, "stop competing. Unite."

"I know it," he said. "That's what we ought to do, but that's exactly what we can't. It's the one thing that's quite impossible."

"I wonder if we couldn't try the impossible," Jean said. And she made arrangements the following summer to help in the state office as a volunteer.

After the winter had passed Jean returned to Atlanta. One

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morning Zoe Scroggs, who was now in charge of the state office, arrived to find a visitor waiting.

Zoe was the daughter of Coypel, the superintendent of Atlanta schools who had made Manuel Mansart head of the colored schools. It was Zoe who was in the street encounter which resulted in the beating of Mansart's son, Bruce. Eventually Zoe had married Scroggs, the labor leader, who once ran for governor and now headed the state labor movement. Zoe apologized for being late and quickly got to her desk.

"So sorry to be late. What can I do for you, Miss—?"

Jean Du Bignon looked at Zoe thoughtfully. She had come to talk with Joe Scroggs to learn more about the union movement, and also if possible to sound him out about the future of Negroes in the union movement. She had not known that Zoe was active in this work, and that put a new idea into her head. Why not try to enlist Zoe's sympathy? It would be a risk, and she might spoil her own plans. But Zoe looked intelligent and Jean knew something about her. She even sensed her contacts with Bruce Mansart, Manuel's ill-fated son. This might be providential; also, it might be fatal. She smiled and said:

"Officially, I am Jean Smith, studying about trade unions and seeking summer work. In fact—" she paused and looked Zoe in the eye; "in fact, I am colored and teach in the colored State College at Macon. My real interest is the future relation of Negroes to organized labor. My real name is Jean du Bignon."

There was a pause and Jean waited. She saw surprise, resentment, indecision and resolve chase themselves across Zoe's countenance. Then Zoe said slowly:

"I have heard of you from my father. I am glad to know you." Then she made the last gesture of surrender from a Southern white to a colored person: she held out her hand.

They talked for an hour on the union movement in general, in the nation and in Georgia. Then Jean began to talk about Negro workers. But Zoe stopped her. She hesitated and then blurted out:

"Did you know Bruce Mansart?"

"Oh yes; quite well. He was in one of my classes. I was at the college when the football game was played in Atlanta."

Zoe went white and was silent. Then she whispered, "He is dead?"

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"Yes."

"How did—he die?"

Jean paused and lowered her eyes. "He was hanged."

Zoe gripped her hands together and shivered. But Jean continued: "It was for a murder committed in Missouri. The poor boy had gone mad. Indeed, I am sure that he was never wholly sane after that beating by the police in Atlanta."

"That is true; it must be true."

"And now what I want is to be sure in the future that boys like Bruce with a mechanical gift, and other Negro workers who can help in the world's work, get a chance to work beside their white fellows, so that together they can raise the working class to such respect and income that they can occupy their rightful leadership in the world."

Zoe, with tears in her eyes, said, "What a loss, what a horrible loss to the world, when a man like Bruce Mansart is driven from work to crime by senseless prejudice. We'll be pals. We'll work together. We won't tell Joe all of this yet. He wouldn't understand. He's honest and he's striving toward right. But he needs time and knowledge. I'll see you have a job here this summer. You guide my studies and I'll guide Joe. We'll reach the right if it takes a lifetime."

Then Zoe added, "You know that Angelo Herndon has been freed by the Supreme Court?"

"Yes," said Jean, "that was a queer case; I never understood it."

"It was white and black labor trying to get together; but you see, it was led by the Communists and my husband didn't dare take part. A colored and white group met one night to talk over a proposed strike and to unite blacks and whites in one union. Somebody told the police and they raided the house. Angelo Herndon was arrested and thrown into jail. That was in 1932. He was a nice-looking colored boy of 19 from Cincinnati. He was charged with having Communist literature and sentenced to 18 years imprisonment. He got out on $15,000 bail raised by public subscription. The Supreme Court turned down his first appeal in 1935, but young Ben Davis—do you know him?—fought the case until in April this year the Supreme Court, 5 to 4, declared the Georgia statute unconstitutional and Herndon is free."

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"How splendid. And this Ben Davis, I must hunt him up. I know of his father."

"I believe he is in New York now and one of the officials of the Communist Party; but listen, have you heard of Herndon's brother?"

"No; gracious! how ignorant I am, on matters where I'm supposed to be expert!"

"This is about the Lincoln Battalion in Spain."

"Oh, Communists again?"

"Not exactly. Spain massacred striking miners in 1934, but the radical Left parties won the elections of 1936 and set up a republic. Civil war ensued, Franco leading, with Hitler and Mussolini helping, while Britain and the United States gave no assistance and allowed none. Then, in America arose that marvelous Lincoln Battalion—a miscellaneous mass of youth—from workers, writers and artists to bums and ne'er-do-wells—who threw themselves into a crusade for Spanish freedom. Among the first was Milton Herndon, brother of Angelo. Tall, handsome, quick to learn, he was commander of a section in the machine-gun company of the Mackenzie-Papineau Canadian Battalion when he left his cover to go to the aid of a wounded soldier. He was killed while dragging the helpless man to safety.

"Among the 3,000 volunteers who went to fight for freedom were other Negroes—Sergeant Joe Taylor, who sang Negro spirituals on the battlefield; Commissar Morris Wickman, of Philadelphia; Bunny Rucker, of Cleveland, a light-skinned Negro whose quiet efficiency won him the respect of the entire regiment; Roach, the Negro machine gunner from Provincetown; McDaniells, whom Spaniards called 'Fantastico.' I am told the Negroes loved Spain more than they had ever loved America, for in Spain there was no prejudice against their color. Of the battalion, 2,600 died crying, 'If Spain is lost there will be a Second World War!' "

"I heard parts of this story," Jean said, "but knew nothing of the Negroes save what I read in Shirley Graham's beautiful biography of Paul Robeson. He was in Spain when civil war was brewing, and sang especially to the workers. But why, why is so much of this unknown, hidden from the public?"

Zoe looked thoughtful. "Well, you see, so many Communists were involved. Even Russia sent aid to victims of Franco's bombs

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and barbarism. We in America are afraid of Communism, just as Hitler was in Germany."

"Then how on earth did you learn all this?"

"Well you see, I've been talking to young Ben Davis."

Jean returned to Macon just as Chamberlain returned to England from Munich where he had signed a treaty and proclaimed: "Peace in our Time." But in 1939 the world rushed to war. Franco triumphed in Spain, Germany and Italy united, Germany declared war on Poland, and Great Britain on Germany. But it was the sudden expansion of Japan which astonished Jean. Japan had already seized Korea and Manchuria.

Jean drew Mansart's attention to Japan. Manuel was, of course, interested but not alarmed. He admitted that Japan wanted to be one of the great nations of the world, and partners with Europe and America in exploiting Asia.

"And," said Jean, "I suspect that this exploitation will be just as bad and just as thorough as that which Great Britain and France have been carrying on."

"Oh, no," said Manuel. "No, this is going to be a different thing. This is going to be a colored folk taking charge of the development of colored folk; and because they themselves know what domination and exploitation is, they are going to do better. I am sure of that. Perhaps this is the beginning of the rise of the colored peoples of the world."

"Or," said Jean, "it is the ending of the old capitalistic exploitation with a few improvements. Moreover," added Jean, "you must not lose your interest in Germany. You know what Hitler was trying to do when you were there. Well, he is carrying it out and pretty soon the rest of the white world is going to make alliance with him. A Second World War is begun!"

"I doubt that very much," said Manuel. "I think he's going to find himself with strong opposition and that he will not dare face it."

"That," said Jean, "is not at all evident in his treatment of the Jews. The United States will soon be in this war and on which side I am not sure."

Mansart insisted that there was hope. In the case of American Negroes, there was progress. "There are things that Negroes can boast of. The NAACP still lives; there is one Negro in Congress

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and one state senator; there are 14 members of state legislatures and 12 members of city councils; there are artists like Hayes, Robeson, Bledsoe and Marian Anderson; there are little theaters among Negroes in four or five cities and one in Texas; there are 19,000 Negroes in colleges and 2,000 graduates a year. In the courts there have been some victories. Some Negroes' books have been published. The wife of the colored congressman dared drink tea at the White House; and there are triumphs here and there in athletics."

As Mansart voiced these considerations to his students and at teachers' meetings, inevitably a subject forced itself into discussion which ordinarily was not discussed, and that was politics. For forty years among the better class of Negroes in the South, it was not regarded good form to discuss politics. They were as a mass disfranchised, and while this situation could not and should not persist, yet as the dead Booker Washington had advised, discussion should not be insisted on at present.

But discussion could not be avoided. Jean said at Teachers' Prayer Meeting: "How shall Negroes vote next Fall—those who can vote? Remember that Negroes who do not vote are still the basis of each state's representation in Congress and somebody casts their ballot if they do not. It isn't a matter simply of doing away with the Negro vote, the right still exists; but it is exercised not by the Negro but by the white man, and not by the white worker but by the white landholder and investor, by capitalists and employers. With this increased voting power, the South can send to Congress the most reactionary defenders of wealth and monopoly, can hold the most powerful committee assignments, and this hard, immovable core of opposition cannot be met by reason or appeal."

"I don't quite see that," complained a professor.

Jean got a copy of the *Crisis* for 1928 and explained. "In the presidential election of 1920, a million voters on the Pacific coast elected 12 congressmen. In the Middle West, a million voters elected 13 congressmen. In New England, due to disfranchised foreigners, a million voters elected 16 congressmen. But in the South, the poor and ignorant South, with Negroes and poor whites disfranchised, a million voters elected 45 congressmen. In five states of the Southern South, out of more than five million

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