

Here and There

By Thomas Walker Wallace

DEATH PENALTY FOR CRIME

The proper punishment of criminals has been the subject of anxious thought for more generations than any one knows and still there has not been reached any absolute certainty as to how criminals are to be treated. One thing is certain that the infliction of death even upon murderers has not had the effect to reduce murders on the whole. There are possibly more murders being committed in America today than ever before in the history of the country. Of course, there are those who say that this condition is brought about by the remissness of the courts and the failure of the jury system of finding verdicts. It seems reasonable that when one man takes the life of his fellowman he should be deprived of his life. But this looks like revenge. On the score of revenge there are no other crimes that would require the death penalty. At one time horse thieves were punished with death when caught. Now, rapists are sentenced to death even upon the unsupported testimony of a woman and in interracial cases the woman may not be of any moral character worthwhile. It is decidedly a mistaken idea of chivalry to condemn men to death for alleged crimes against womanhood. Especially is this true in cases where the testimony is unsupported. The reasonable punishment for the crime of rape is to subject the rapist to a surgical operation taking away his sexual desire, since he cannot control it. It is written as the spoken expression of Jesus, "If the eye offends, it is better to pluck it out and go through life without sight rather than spend an eternity in a place of punishment." There is much to be said for this form of punishment. Those who know anything of animal husbandry know that a vicious bull is tamed by the process of taking away his sex consciousness, the same is true of the vicious boar hog, etc. So that when men show themselves to be incorrigible criminals just call in a skillful surgeon and the future will assume a pleasanter look as far as the criminality of that man is concerned. Again, since the bull transformed into a patient ox becomes a



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useful member of working society, just so this transformed criminal may also prove useful in the general scheme of things mundane. The ancients made many eunuchs and the households were safe and the eunuchs were happy. At least be careful about taking away life.

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ANOTHER OF LIFE'S LITTLE LAUGHS

I was somewhat amused to read a released expression from our dear General Pershing the other day to the effect that Christianity is in danger. He averred that we Christians have a great battle before us. Of course he was absolutely right as to the battle ahead of Christians but the conflict is not centered about the things he has in mind. Just think of the Christianity of a man who would go out of his way to utter a libel upon Negroes serving their country in the late war and think again how would Christianity square with the policy of the A. E. F. to replace Negro officers in Negro regiments by in some cases at least inferior white officers. I remember distinctly what a shock it was when the order came to the Old Fifteenth New York to release all colored officers and I also remember one white officer came, who shot down almost in cold blood a sentry who barred the way and who was carrying out the regimental order that no one was to leave camp. Captain Napoleon Bonaparte Marshall was kept in the rear to censor letters while with the 15th but when he was sent to the 92nd division he distinguished himself as very few others did in that war. He bears the marks in his body because of his bravery in action. But I started out to write about the real battle of Christianity. If white Christians can get the idea into their religious consciousness that Jesus preached and practiced universal brotherhood many other problems will lose their hardness. The fact is when this is done the battle for Christianity shall have been won. The greatest criticism against Christians is that they do not live up to the spirit of Jesus.

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DESPISING EARLY BRIDGES

It is written somewhere in the Bible, "Despise not the day of small things," but we are constantly doing that very little thing. Or else we in our desire to draw great contrasts throw aspersions on some of the things of the past. I think of this each time I read the expression that Tuskegee Institute began its sessions in a broken down "shanty church." It happens that I put my youthful feet on the campus when Tuskegee was an infant just nine years of age. The A. M. E. Zion Church, a neat little white building situated in a beautiful grove, was the church alluded to by