

Is That Truth?

Hypocrisy Seen

I am, I think, realistic and objective on this matter of race, having lived most of my life among colored peoples. My own ancestry is entirely Southern, and I am very familiar with the problems of white and colored in the South. I do not, however, believe their solution is to be found in what the average white Southerner says, in the familiar patter, that the Negro is a childish creature, delightful enough in his place, who only wants to be taken care of and fed and sheltered and treated kindly. That the Negro in the South often glibly falls in with such assertions means nothing; that Negro is afraid of his white master and says what the white man wants him to say. The same Negro quickly expresses himself in totally different terms as soon as he changes his locale and is relieved of his fear.

But be that as it may, the real point is that our democracy does not allow for the present division between a white ruler race and a subject colored race, and we ought to make up our minds as to what we want and then move to accomplish it. If the United States is to include subject and ruler peoples, then let us be honest about it and change the Constitution and make it plain that Negroes cannot share the privileges of the white people. True, we would then be totalitarian rather than democratic; but if that is what we want, let us say so and let us tell the Negro so. Then the white Americans will be relieved of the necessity of hypocrisy and the colored people will know where they are. They may even settle down into a docile subject race, so long as we are able to keep the weapons of rebellion from them—and these include education.