

What was there in the weary, wasted days,
 The chill, uncanny nights, unblest and long?
 When love and hope have fled, wide realms are left
 Where guests unbidden throng.

And yet one thing remained to cheat despair,
 One thing that held the longing, wistful sight;
 Far up in the high roof a window small
 Gave to the air and light.

Sometimes upon that blessed field of space
 A tiny cloud, flushed with the sunset's hue,
 Floated—an argosy of happy thought
 Across the sapphire blue.

Sometimes a bird in keen and rapid flight,
 A free, wild thing, the airy vista crossed;
 And then, with yearning sigh, the shackled hands
 Were impotently tossed.

And from the midnight sky the solemn stars
 Shone steadfastly upon the weary eyes,
 Forever seeking for that force whose power
 Forecasts our destinies.

But watching hatred saw that upturned gaze;
 Too much of comfort on the captive shone,
 And morning, searching for the casement small,
 Fell on a new-set stone.

Then from that anguished soul, distraught, a cry!
 "Earth's breaking hearts are countless as her days,
 And He who strung the vibrant chords forgets,
 Or, unforgetting, slays."

Mary L. Ritter.

THE KU KLUX KLAN.*

ITS ORIGIN, GROWTH, AND DISBANDMENT.

NO CHAPTER in American history is more strange than the one which bears for a title: "Ku Klux Klan." The secret history of the Invisible Empire, as the Klan was also called, has never been written. The Klan disappeared from Southern life as it came into it, shrouded in deepest mystery. Its members would not disclose its secrets; others could not. Even the investigating committee appointed by Congress, after tedious and diligent inquiry, was baffled. The voluminous reports containing the results of the committee's labors do not tell when and where and how the Ku Klux Klan originated.

But the time has now arrived when the history of the origin, growth, and disbandment of "The Invisible Empire" may be given to the public. Circumstances, which need not be detailed here, have put it in the power of the writer to compile such a history. For obvious reasons

the names of individuals are withheld. But the reader may feel assured that this narrative is drawn from sources which are accurate and authentic. The writer does not profess to be able to reveal the secret signs, grips, and pass-words of the order. These have never been disclosed, and probably never will be. But we claim to narrate those facts relating to the order which have a historic and philosophic value. It is due to the truth of history, to the student of human nature, and to the statesman, that such facts connected with this remarkable episode in our nation's history be frankly and fairly told.

A wave of excitement, spreading by contagion till the minds of a whole people are in a ferment, is an event of frequent occurrence. The Ku Klux movement was peculiar by reason of the causes which produced and fed the excitement. It illustrates the weird and irresist-

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ible power of the unknown and mysterious over the minds of men of all classes and conditions in life; and it illustrates how men by circumstances and conditions, in part of their own creation, may be carried away from their moorings and drifted along in a course against which reason and judgment protest.

The popular idea supposes the Ku Klux movement to have been conceived in malice, and nursed by prejudice and hate, for lawlessness, rapine, and murder. The circumstances which brought the Klan into notice and notoriety were of a character to favor such a conclusion. No other seemed possible. The report of the Congressional investigating committee confirmed it. But granting the truthfulness of that report, it is fragmentary truth; it does not tell the whole story; and it leaves the impression that the Ku Klux Klan was conceived and carried out in pure and unmixed deviltry. Whether this conclusion is just and true, the reader who follows this narrative to its end will decide.

The Ku Klux Klan was the outgrowth of peculiar conditions, social, civil, and political, which prevailed at the South from 1865 to 1869. It was as much a product of those conditions as malaria is of a swamp and sun-heat. Its birth-place was Pulaski, the capital of Giles, one of the southern tier of counties in Middle Tennessee. Pulaski is a town of two thousand five hundred to three thousand inhabitants. Previous to the war the people possessed wealth and culture. The first was lost in the general wreck. Now the most intimate association with them fails to disclose a trace of the diabolism which, according to the popular idea, one would expect to find characterizing the people among whom the Ku Klux Klan originated. A male college and a female seminary are located at Pulaski, and receive liberal patronage. It is a town of churches.

There, in 1866, the name Ku Klux first fell from human lips. There began a movement which in a short time spread as far north as Virginia and as far south as Texas, and which for a period convulsed the country. Proclamations were fulminated against the Klan by the President and by the Governors of States; and hostile statutes were enacted both by State and national legislatures, for there had become associated with the name of Ku Klux Klan gross mistakes and lawless deeds of violence.

During the entire period of the Klan's organized existence Pulaski continued to be its central seat of authority, and some of its highest officers resided there. This narrative, therefore, will relate principally to the growth of the Klan and the measures taken

to suppress it in Tennessee. It is necessary to a clear understanding of the movement to observe that the history of the Klan is marked by two distinct and well-defined periods. The first period covers the time from its organization in 1866 to the summer of 1867. This period of its history, though less interesting, should be described somewhat minutely, because of its bearing on subsequent events.

When the war ended in 1865 the young men of Pulaski who escaped death on the battle-field returned home and passed through a period of enforced inactivity. In some respects it was more trying than the ordeal of war which lay behind them. The reaction which followed the excitement of army scenes and service was intense. There was nothing to relieve it. They could not engage in active business or professional pursuits. Their business habits were broken up. None had capital with which to conduct agricultural pursuits or to engage in mercantile enterprises. And this restlessness was made more intense by the total lack of the amusements and social diversions which prevail wherever society is in a normal condition. One evening in June, 1866, a few of these young men met in the office of one of the most prominent members of the Pulaski bar. In the course of the conversation one of the number said: "Boys, let us get up a club or a society of some description."

The suggestion was discussed with enthusiasm. Before they separated, it was agreed to invite a few others whose names were mentioned to join them, and to meet again the next evening at the same place. At the appointed time eight or ten young men had assembled. The club was organized by the election of a chairman and a secretary. There was entire unanimity among the members in regard to the end in view, which was diversion and amusement. The evening was spent discussing the best means of attaining the object in view. Two committees were appointed, one to select a name, the other to prepare a set of rules for the government of the society, and a ritual for the initiation of new members. Then the club adjourned, to meet the following week to hear and act upon the reports of these committees. Before the arrival of the appointed time for the next meeting one of the wealthiest and most prominent citizens of Pulaski went on a business trip to Columbus, Miss., taking his family with him. Before leaving he invited one of the leading spirits of the new society to take charge of and sleep at his house in his absence. This young man invited his comrades to join him there; so the place of meeting was changed from the law office

to this residence. The owner of the house outlived the Ku Klux Klan, and died ignorant of the fact that his house was the place where its organization was fully effected. This residence afterward came into the possession of Judge H. M. Spofford, of Spofford-Kellogg fame. It was his home at the time of his death, and is still owned by his widow.

The committee appointed to select a name reported that they had found the task difficult, and had not made a selection. They explained that they had been trying to discover or invent a name which would be in some degree suggestive of the character and objects of the society. They mentioned several names which they had been considering. In this number was the name "Kukloi," from the Greek word κύκλος (kuklos), meaning a band or circle. At mention of this, some one cried out:

"Call it Ku Klux!"

"Klan" at once suggested itself, and was added to complete the alliteration. So, instead of adopting a name, as was the first intention, which had a definite meaning, they chose one which to the proposer and to every one else was absolutely meaningless. This trivial and apparently accidental incident had a most important bearing on the future of the organization so singularly named. Looking back over the history of the Klan, and at the causes under which it developed, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the order would never have grown to the proportions which it afterward assumed, or wielded the power it did, had it not borne this name, or some other equally as meaningless and mysterious. Had they called themselves the "Jolly Jokers," or the "Adelphi," or by some similar appellation, the organization would doubtless have had no more than the mere local and ephemeral existence which those who organized it contemplated for it. Hundreds of societies have originated just as this one did, and, after a brief existence, have passed away. But in the case before us there was a weird potency in the very name Ku Klux Klan! Let the reader pronounce it aloud. The sound of it is suggestive of bones rattling together! The potency of the name was not wholly in the impression made by it on the general public. It is a singular fact that the members of the Klan were themselves the first to feel its weird influence. They had adopted a mysterious name. Thereupon the original plan was modified so as to make everything connected with the order harmonize with the name.

Amusement was still the end in view; but the methods by which they proposed to win it were now those of secrecy and mystery. So when the report of the committee on rules and ritual came up for consideration, the rec-

ommendations were modified to adapt them to the new idea. The report, as finally adopted, provided for the following officers:

A Grand Cyclops, or presiding officer.

A Grand Magi, or vice-president.

A Grand Turk, or marshal.

A Grand Exchequer, or treasurer.

Two Lictors, who were the outer and inner guards of the "den," as the place of meeting was designated.

The one obligation exacted from members was to maintain absolute and profound secrecy with reference to the order and everything pertaining to it. This obligation prohibited those who assumed it from disclosing the fact that they were Ku Klux, or the name of any other member, and from soliciting any one to become a member. The last requirement was a singular one. It was exacted for two reasons. First, it was in keeping with their determination to appear as mysterious as possible, and thus play upon the curiosity of the public. Secondly, and mainly, it was designed to prevent unpleasantness following initiations. They wished to be able to say to novices: "You are here on your own solicitation, and not by invitation from us."

They desired accessions; to have them was indispensable; but they knew human nature well enough to know that if they made the impression that they wished to be exclusive and select, then applications for membership would be numerous. The result showed that they reasoned correctly. Each member was required to provide himself with the following outfit:

A white mask for the face with orifices for the eyes and nose.

A tall, fantastic cardboard hat, so constructed as to increase the wearer's apparent height.

A gown or robe of sufficient length to cover the entire person. No particular color or material was prescribed. These were left to the individual's taste and fancy; and each selected what in his judgment would be the most hideous and fantastic, with the aim of inspiring the greatest amount of awe in the novice. These robes of different colors—often of the most flashy patterns of "Dolly Varden" calicoes—added vastly to the grotesque appearance of the assembled Klan.

Each member carried also a small whistle, with which, by means of a code of signals agreed upon, they held communications with one another. The only utility in this was to awaken inquiry.

And the object of all this was—amusement. "Only this, and nothing more." A few young men, barred for the time by circumstances from entering any active business or professional pursuits, and deprived of the ordinary

diversions of social life, were seeking in this way to amuse and employ themselves. The organization of this Klan was to them both diversion and occupation. But where did the fun come in? Partly in exciting the curiosity of the public and then in baffling it, but mainly in the initiation of new members.

The ritual used in the initiation was elaborate, but not worthy of reproduction. It is enough to say that it was modeled on and embraced the leading features of the ritual of an order which has long been popular in colleges and universities under various names. In one place it is the "Sons of Confucius"; in another, the "Guiasticutas"; but everywhere the "ancient and the honorable," and the mirth-provoking.

The initiations were at first conducted in the law office where the suggestion for the formation of the Klan had been made; but it was not a suitable place. The room was small; it was near the business portion of the town, and while the members were in session there they never felt entirely free from apprehensions of interruption. On the brow of a ridge that runs along the western outskirts of the town there used to stand a handsome and commodious residence. The front or main building was of brick, the "L" of wood. In December, 1865, the brick portion of this house was demolished by a cyclone; the "L" remained standing. It consisted of three rooms. A stairway led from one of them to a large cellar beneath. No other houses stood near. Around these ruins were the storm-torn, limbless trunks of trees which had once formed a magnificent grove; now they stood up grim and gaunt like specter sentinels. A dreary, desolate, uncanny place it was; but in every way suitable for a "den," and the Klan appropriated it.

When a meeting was held, one Lictor was stationed at the house, the other fifty yards from it on the road leading into town. These were dressed in the fantastic regalia of the order and bore tremendous spears as the badge of their office.

As before stated, and for the reasons assigned, the Ku Klux did not solicit any one to join them; yet they had applications for membership. While members were not allowed to disclose the fact of their membership, they were allowed to talk with others in regard to anything that was a matter of common report in regard to the order. A member might express to an outsider his desire or intention to join. If the person addressed expressed a similar desire, the Ku Klux would then say to him, if he were a desirable person: "Well, I think I know how to get in. Meet me at such a place, on such a night, at such an hour,

and we will join together." Usually, curiosity would predominate over every other consideration, and the candidate would be found waiting at the appointed place.

As the Ku Klux and the candidate approached the sentinel Lictor, they were hailed and halted, and questioned. Having received the assurance that they desired to become Ku Klux, the Lictor blew the signal for his companion to come and take charge of the novices. The candidate, under the impression that his companion was similarly treated, was blindfolded and led to the "den." The preliminaries of the initiation consisted in leading the candidate around the rooms and down into the cellar, now and then placing before him obstructions, which added to his discomfort if not to his mystification. After some rough sport of this description he was led before the Grand Cyclops, who solemnly addressed to him numerous questions—some of them grave and serious, some of them absurd to the last degree. If the answers were satisfactory, the obligation to secrecy, which had already been administered in the beginning of the ceremony, was now exacted a second time. Then the Grand Cyclops commanded: "Place him before the royal altar and adorn his head with the regal crown."

The "royal altar" was a large looking-glass. The "regal crown" was a huge hat bedecked with two enormous donkey ears. In this head-gear the candidate was placed before a mirror and directed to repeat the couplet:

"O wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as ithers see us."

As the last words were falling from his lips the Grand Turk removed the bandage, and before the candidate was his own image in the mirror. To increase the discomfiture and chagrin which any man in such a situation would naturally feel, the removal of the bandage was the signal to the Klan for indulgence in the most uproarious and boisterous mirth. The Grand Cyclops relaxed the rigor of his rule, and the decorum hitherto maintained disappeared, while the "den" rang with shouts and peals of laughter. And worse than all, as he looked about him, he saw that he was surrounded by men dressed in hideous garbs and masked so that he could not recognize one of them. The character of these initiatory proceedings explains why, from the very first, secrecy was so much insisted on. A single "tale out of school" would have spoiled the fun. For the same reason the Klan was, at first, very careful in regard to the character of the men admitted. Rash and imprudent men, such as could not be fully relied upon to keep their obligation to profound secrecy, were excluded.

Nor were those received who were addicted to the use of intoxicants. Later on in the history they were not so careful; but in the earlier period of its existence the Klan was composed of men of good character and good habits. In some instances persons of objectionable character were persistent, even to annoyance, in their efforts to gain admission to the order. Occasionally this persistence was rebuked in a manner more emphatic than tender. For example, one young man, who was personally very unpopular, made repeated attempts to join the Ku Klux. They arranged to have an initiation not provided for in the ritual. A meeting was appointed to be held on the top of a hill that rises by a gentle slope to a considerable height, on the northern limits of the town. The candidate, in the usual way,—blindfold excepted,—was led into the presence of the Grand Cyclops. This dignitary was standing on a stump. The tall hat, the flowing robe, and the elevated position made him appear at least ten feet tall. He addressed to the candidate a few unimportant and absurd questions, and then, turning to the Lictors, said: "Blindfold him and proceed." The "procedure" was to place the would-be Ku Klux in an empty barrel, provided for the purpose, and to send him whirling down the hill! To his credit be it said, he never revealed any of the secrets of the Ku Klux.

These details have an important bearing on the subsequent history of the Ku Klux. They show that the originators of the Klan were not meditating treason or lawlessness in any form. Yet the Klan's later history grew naturally out of the methods and measures which characterized this period of it. Its projectors did not expect it to spread; they thought it would "have its little day and die." It lived; more, it grew to vast proportions.

II.

THE SPREAD OF THE KLAN.

THE devices for attracting attention were eminently successful. During the months of July and August, 1866, the Klan was much talked about by the citizens of Pulaski. Its mysteriousness was the sensation of the hour. Every issue of the local paper contained some notice of the strange order. These notices were copied into other papers, and in this manner the way was prepared for the rapid growth and spread of the Klan, which soon followed.

Six weeks or less from the date of the organization, the sensation in Pulaski was waning. Curiosity in regard to it had abated to such a degree that the Klan would have certainly fallen to pieces but for the follow-

ing circumstances. By the time the eligible material in the town had been used up, young men from the country, whose curiosity had been inflamed by the notices in the papers, began to come in and apply for admission to the Klan. Some of these applications were accepted. In a little while the members so admitted asked permission to establish "dens" at various points in the county. No provision had been made for such a contingency, but the permission was granted; had it not been, the result would, in all probability, have been the same.

As the ritual followed by the Pulaski Klan could not be conveniently carried out in the country, various modifications and changes were permitted. But the strictest injunctions were laid on these new lodges, or "dens," in regard to secrecy, mystery, and the character of the men admitted. The growth in the rural districts was more rapid than it had been in the town. Applications for permission to establish "dens" multiplied rapidly.

The news that the Ku Klux were spreading to the country excited the attention of the country people as the existence of the Klan in town had not done. The same cause rekindled the waning interest of the town people. Every issue of the local papers in the "infected regions" bristled with highly mysterious and exciting accounts of the doings of the "fantastic gentry."

During the fall and winter of 1866 the growth of the Klan was rapid. It spread over a wide extent of territory. Sometimes, by a sudden leap, it appeared in localities far distant from any existing "dens." A stranger from West Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, or Texas, visiting in a neighborhood where the order prevailed, would be initiated, and on his departure carry with him permission to establish a "den" at home. In fact, it was done often without such permission. The connecting link between these "dens" was very fragile. By a sort of tacit agreement the Pulaski Klan was regarded as the source of power and authority. The Grand Cyclops of this "den" was virtually the ruler of the order; but as he had no method of communication with subjects or subordinates, and no way in which to enforce his mandates, his authority was more fancy than fact. But so far there had appeared no need for rigid rules and close supervision. The leading spirits of the Ku Klux were still contemplating nothing more serious than amusement. They enjoyed the baffled curiosity and wild speculations of a mystified public even more than the rude sport afforded by the ludicrous initiations. Such is the account of the Ku Klux Klan in the first period of its history, from June, 1866,

to April, 1867. Yet all this time it was gradually and in a very natural way taking on new features not at first remotely contemplated by the originators of the order; features which finally transformed the Ku Klux Klan into a band of "Regulators."

The transformation was effected by the combined operation of three causes: (1) the impression made by the order upon the minds of those who united with it; (2) the impression produced upon the public by its weird and mysterious ways; (3) the anomalous and peculiar condition of affairs in the South at this time.

The mystery and secrecy with which the Klan veiled itself made a singular impression on the minds of many who united with it. The most common conclusion reached by those whose attention was attracted to the Klan was that it contemplated some great and important mission; its rapid extension was regarded as confirmatory of this conclusion; and, when admitted to membership, this impression was deepened rather than dispelled by what they saw and heard. There was not a word in the ritual, or in the obligation, or in any part of the ceremony, to favor it; but the impression still remained that this mysteriousness and secrecy, the high-sounding titles of the officers, the grotesque dress of the members, and the formidable obligation to profound secrecy, all meant more than mere sport. This conviction was ineradicable, and the attitude of many of its members continued to be that of expecting great developments. Each had his own speculations as to what was to be the character of the serious work which the Klan was to do. It was an unhealthy and dangerous state of mind; bad results very naturally followed from it.

The impression made on the public was the second cause which contributed to the transformation of the Klan into regulators. When the Klan first began to hold its meetings in the dilapidated house on the hill, passers-by were frequent. Most of them passed the grim and ghostly sentinel on the roadside in silence, but always with a quickened step. Occasionally one would stop and ask: "Who are you?" In awfully sepulchral tones, the invariable answer was: "A spirit from the other world. I was killed at Chickamauga." Such an answer, especially when given to a superstitious negro, was extremely terrifying; and if, in addition, he heard the uproarious noises issuing from the "den" at the moment of a candidate's investiture with the "regal crown," he had the foundation for a most awe-inspiring story. There came from the country similar stories. The belated laborer, passing after nightfall some lonely and secluded spot, heard horrible noises and saw fearful sights.

These stories were repeated with such embellishments as the imagination of the narrator suggested, till the feeling of the negroes and of many white people at mention of the Ku Klux was one of awe and terror. In a short time the Lictor of the Pulaski "den" reported that travel along the road on which he had his post had almost entirely stopped. In the country it was noticed that the nocturnal perambulations of the colored population diminished or entirely ceased wherever the Ku Klux appeared. In this way the Klan gradually realized that the most powerful devices ever constructed for controlling the ignorant and superstitious were in their hands. Even the most highly cultured were not able wholly to resist the weird and peculiar feeling which pervaded the whole community. Each week some new incident occurred to illustrate the amazing power of the Unknown over the minds of men of all classes.

Circumstances made it evident that the measures and methods employed for sport might be effectually used to subserve the public welfare—to suppress lawlessness and protect property. When propositions to this effect began to be urged, there were many who hesitated, fearing danger. The majority regarded such fears as groundless. They pointed to the good results which had already been produced, and the question was decided without any formal action. The very force of circumstances had carried the Klan away from its original purpose; so that in the beginning of the year 1867 it was virtually, though not yet professedly, a band of regulators, honestly, but in an injudicious and dangerous way, trying to protect property and preserve peace and order.

After all, the most powerful agency in effecting this transformation—the agency which supplied the conditions under which the two causes just mentioned became operative—was the peculiar state of affairs existing in the South at that time. As every one knows, the condition of things was wholly anomalous; but no one can fully appreciate the circumstances by which the people of the South were surrounded, or pronounce a just judgment on their behavior, except from personal observations. On this account, not only the Ku Klux, but the mass of the Southern people, have been tried, convicted, and condemned at the bar of public opinion, and have been denied the privilege of having the sentence modified by mitigating circumstances, which in justice they have a right to plead.

At that time the throes of the great revolution were settling down to quiet. The almost universal disposition of the better class of the people was to accept the arbitrament which the sword had accorded them. On this

point there was practical unanimity. Those who had opportunity to do so engaged at once in agricultural, professional, or business pursuits. But there were two causes of vexation and exasperation which the people were in no good mood to bear. One of these causes related to that class of men who, like scum, were thrown to the surface in the great upheaval. Most of them had played traitor to both sides; on that account they were despised. Had they been Union men from conviction, that would have been forgiven them. But they were now engaged in keeping alive discord and strife between the sections, as the only means of preventing themselves from sinking back into the obscurity from which they had been upheaved. They were doing this in a way not only malicious, but exceedingly exasperating. The second disturbing element was the negroes. Their transition from slavery to citizenship was sudden. They were not only not fitted for the cares of self-control and maintenance so suddenly thrust upon them, but they entered their new rôle in life under the delusion that freedom meant license. They regarded themselves as freed men, not only from bondage to former masters, but from the common and ordinary obligations of citizenship. Many of them looked upon obedience to the laws of the State—which had been framed by their former owners—as in some measure a compromise of the rights with which they had been invested.

The administration of civil law was only partly reëstablished. On that account, and for other reasons mentioned, there was an amount of disorder and violence prevailing over the country which has never been equaled at any period of its history. The depredations on property by theft, and by wanton destruction for the gratification of petty revenge, were to the last degree annoying. A large part of these depredations was the work of bad white men, who expected that their lawless deeds would be credited to the negroes.

But perhaps the most potent of all causes in this transformation was the existence in the South of a spurious and perverted form of the "Union League."* It would be as unfair to this organization, as it existed at the North, to charge it with responsibility for the outrages committed in its name, as it is to charge upon the Ku Klux Klan much of the lawlessness and violence with which it is credited. But it is a part of the history of these times that there was a wide-spread organization

called the "Union League." It was composed of the disorderly elements of the negro population, and was led by white men of the basest and meanest type. They met frequently, went armed to the teeth, and literally "breathed out threatening and slaughter." They uttered the most violent threats against the persons, families, and property of men whose sole crime was that they had been in the Confederate army, and in not a few instances these threats were executed. It was partly to resist this organization that the Ku Klux were transformed into a protective organization. Whatever may be the judgment of history, those who were acquainted with the facts will ever remain firm in the conviction that the organization of the Ku Klux Klan was of immense service at this period. Without it life to decent people would not have been tolerable. It served a good purpose, for wherever the Ku Klux appeared the effect was salutary.

It was a dangerous experiment, this transforming of the Klan into regulators; on the whole it was no more successful than other experiments of a similar character have been. Yet, as we have said, the immediate results were good, and, for that reason, in their final issue the more disastrous. Permanent good was also effected; but whether enough of it to counterbalance the attending evils, is doubtful.

For a while the robberies ceased. The lawless class assumed the habits of good behavior. Under their fear of the dreaded Ku Klux the negroes made more progress in a few months in the needed lessons of self-control, industry, and respect for the rights of property and general good behavior, than they would have done in as many years but for this or some equally powerful impulse. The "Union League" relaxed its desperate severity and became more moderate. But events soon occurred which showed that the fears of those who apprehended danger were not wholly groundless, and it became evident that unless the Klan should be brought under better control than its leaders at this time exercised, it would cause greater evils than it suppressed.

III.

THE TRANSFORMATION.

UNTIL the beginning of 1867 the movements of the Klan had been characterized in the main by prudence and discretion, but

* What is meant here is "The Union League of America," a political organization having connections both north and south, and entirely distinct from the "Union League Club" of New York and from the club of the same name in Philadelphia. Viewed by the results of the Ku Klux conflict, and the reports of the time, what is here said of the dangerous character of the "Union League" at the South (except as it acted in self-defense) must be taken, we think, with a grain of allowance.—EDITOR.

there were exceptions. In some cases there had been a liberal construction of orders. The limits which it had been agreed not to pass had been overstepped.

Attempts had been made to correct by positive means evils which menaces had not been sufficient to remove. Rash, imprudent, and bad men had gotten into the order. The danger which the more prudent and thoughtful had apprehended as possible was now a reality. Had it been possible to do so, the leaders would have been willing to disband the Klan. That could not be done. They had evoked a spirit from the "vasty deep"; it would not down at their bidding. The only course which seemed to promise a satisfactory solution of the difficulty was this: to reorganize the Klan on a plan corresponding to its size and present purposes; to bind the isolated "dens" together; to secure unity of purpose and concert of action; to hedge the members up by such limitations and regulations as were best adapted to restrain them within proper limits; to distribute the authority among prudent men at local centers, and exact from them a close supervision of those under their charge. In this way it was hoped the impending dangers would be effectually guarded against.

With this object in view the Grand Cyclops of the Pulaski "den" sent out a request to all the "dens" of which he had knowledge to appoint delegates to meet in convention at Nashville, Tenn., in the spring of 1867. At the appointed time this convention was held. Delegates were present from Tennessee, Alabama, and a number of other States. A plan of reorganization, previously prepared, was submitted to this convention and adopted. After the transaction of some further business, the convention adjourned, and the delegates returned home without having attracted any attention.

At this convention the territory covered by the Klan was designated as "The Invisible Empire." This was subdivided into "realms," coterminous with the boundaries of States. The "realms" were divided into "dominions," corresponding to congressional districts; the "dominions" into "provinces," coterminous with counties; and the "provinces" into "dens."

To each of these departments officers were assigned. Except in the case of the supreme officer, the duties of each were minutely specified. These officers were:

The Grand Wizard of the Invisible Empire and his ten Genii. The powers of this officer were almost autocratic.

The Grand Dragon of the Realm and his eight Hydras.

The Grand Titan of the Dominion and his six Furies.

The Grand Giant of the Province and his four Goblins.

The Grand Cyclops of the Den and his two Night Hawks.

A Grand Monk.

A Grand Scribe.

A Grand Exchequer.

A Grand Turk.

A Grand Sentinel.

One of the most important things done by this Nashville convention was to make a positive and emphatic statement of the principles of the order. It was in the following terms:

"We recognize our relation to the United States Government; the supremacy of the Constitution; the constitutional laws thereof; and the union of States thereunder."

If these men were plotting treason, it puzzles one to know why they should make such a statement as that in setting forth the principles of the order. This statement was not intended for public circulation. It is now given to the public for the first time. Every man who was a Ku Klux really took an oath to support the Constitution of the United States.

This Nashville convention also set forth the peculiar objects of the order, as follows:

(1) To protect the weak, the innocent, and the defenseless from the indignities, wrongs, and outrages of the lawless, the violent, and the brutal; to relieve the injured and the oppressed; to succor the suffering, and especially the widows and orphans of Confederate soldiers. (2) To protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, and all laws passed in conformity thereto, and to protect the States and people thereof from all invasion from any source whatever. (3) To aid and assist in the execution of all constitutional laws, and to protect the people from unlawful seizure, and from trial except by their peers in conformity to the laws of the land.

This outline of Klan legislation bears internal evidence of what we know from other sources to be the truth. Those who were attempting to direct the movements of the Klan were now principally concerned about devising such measures as would control the Klan itself and keep it within what they conceived to be safe limits. The majority had up to this time shown a fair appreciation of the responsibilities of their self-imposed task of preserving social order. But excesses had been committed, and it was foreseen and feared that, if such things continued or increased, the hostility of State and Federal governments would be kindled against the Klan, and active measures taken to suppress it. The hope was entertained that the legislation taken by the convention and the reorganization would not only enable the Klan to enact its rôle as regulators with greater success, but would

keep its members within the prescribed limits, and so guard against the contingencies referred to. They desired on the one hand to restrain and control their own members; on the other, to correct evils and promote order in society; and to do the latter *solely* by utilizing for this purpose the means and methods originally employed for amusement. They failed in both directions. How and why will be told presently.

By the reorganization no material change was made in the methods of the Klan's operations. Some of the old methods were modified, some new features were added. The essential features of mystery, secrecy, and grotesqueness were retained, and steps were taken with a view to deepening and intensifying the impressions already made upon the public mind. They attempted to push to the extreme limits of illustration the power of the mysterious over the minds of men. Henceforth they courted publicity as assiduously as they had formerly seemed to shun it. They appeared at different points at the same time, and always when and where they were the least expected. Devices were multiplied to deceive people in regard to their numbers and everything else, and to play upon the fears of the superstitious.

As it was now the policy of the Klan to appear in public, an order was issued by the Grand Dragon of the Realm of Tennessee to the Grand Giants of the Provinces for a general parade, in the capital town of each province, on the night of the 4th of July, 1867. It will be sufficient for this narrative to describe that parade as witnessed by the citizens of Pulaski. On the morning of that day the citizens found the sidewalks thickly strewn with slips of paper bearing the printed words: "The Ku Klux will parade the streets to-night." This announcement created great excitement. The people supposed that their curiosity, so long baffled, would now be gratified. They were confident that this parade would at least afford them the opportunity of learning who belonged to the Ku Klux Klan.

Soon after nightfall the streets were lined with an expectant and excited throng of people. Many came from the surrounding country. The members of the Klan in the county left their homes in the afternoon and traveled alone or in squads of two or three, with their paraphernalia carefully concealed. If questioned, they answered that they were going to Pulaski to see the Ku Klux parade. After nightfall they assembled at designated points near the four main roads leading into the town. Here they donned their robes and disguises, and put covers of gaudy materials

on their horses. A sky-rocket sent up from some point in the town was the signal to mount and move. The different companies met and joined each other on the public square in perfect silence; the discipline appeared to be admirable. Not a word was spoken. Necessary orders were given by means of the whistles. In single file, in death-like stillness, with funeral slowness, they marched and countermarched throughout the town. While the column was headed north on one street it was going south on another. By crossing over in opposite directions the lines were kept up in almost unbroken continuity. The effect was to create the impression of vast numbers. This marching and countermarching was kept up for about two hours, and the Klan departed as noiselessly as they came. The public were more than ever mystified. The efforts of the most curious to find out who were Ku Klux failed. One gentleman from the country was confident that he could identify the riders by the horses. But, as we have said, the horses were disguised as well as the riders. Determined not to be baffled, during a halt of the column he lifted the cover of a horse that was near him, and recognized his own steed and saddle, on which he had ridden into town. The town people were on the alert to see who of the young men of the town would be with the Ku Klux. All of them, almost without exception, were marked mingling freely and conspicuously with the spectators.

Perhaps the greatest illusion produced was in regard to the numbers taking part in the parade. Reputable citizens were confident that the number was not less than three thousand. Others, whose imaginations were more easily wrought upon, were quite certain there were ten thousand. The truth is that the number of Ku Klux in the parade did not exceed four hundred. This delusion in regard to numbers prevailed wherever the Ku Klux appeared. It illustrates how little the testimony of even an eye-witness is worth in regard to anything which makes a deep impression on him by reason of its mysteriousness.

The Klan had a large membership; it exerted a vast and terrifying power; but its influence was never at any time dependent on, or proportioned to, its membership. It was in the mystery in which the comparatively few enshrouded themselves. It is an error to suppose that the entire male population of the South were Ku Klux, or even a majority of the people were privy to its secrets and in sympathy with its extremest measures. To many of them, perhaps to a majority, the Ku Klux Klan was as vague, impersonal, and mysterious as to the people of the North or

of England; they did — do to this day — attribute to it great good.

One or two incidents will illustrate the methods resorted to to play upon the superstitious fears of the negroes and others. At the parade in Pulaski, while the procession was passing a corner on which a negro man was standing, a tall horseman in hideous garb turned aside from the line, dismounted, and stretched out his bridle-rein toward the negro, as if he desired him to hold his horse. Not daring to refuse, the frightened African extended his hand to grasp the rein. As he did so, the Ku Klux took his own head from his shoulders and offered to place that also in the outstretched hand. The negro stood not upon the order of his going, but departed with a yell of terror. To this day he will tell you: "He done it, suah, boss. I seed him do it." The gown was fastened by a drawstring over the top of the wearer's head. Over this was worn an artificial skull made of a large gourd or of pasteboard. This, with the hat, could be readily removed, and the man would then appear to be headless. Such tricks gave rise to the belief — still prevalent among the negroes — that the Ku Klux could take themselves all to pieces whenever they wanted to. Some of the Ku Klux carried skeleton hands. These were made of bone or wood, with a wrist or handle long enough to be held in the hand, which was concealed by the sleeve of the gown. The possessor of one of these was invariably of a friendly turn, and offered to shake hands with all he met, with what effect may be readily imagined. A trick of frequent perpetration in the country was for a horseman, spectral and ghostly-looking, to stop before the cabin of some negro needing a wholesome impression and call for a bucket of water. If a dipper or gourd was brought it was declined, and the bucketful of water demanded. As if consumed by raging thirst, the horseman grasped it and pressed it to his lips. He held it there till every drop of the water was poured into a gum or oiled sack concealed beneath the Ku Klux robe. Then the empty bucket was returned to the amazed negro with the remark: "That's good. It is the first drink of water I have had since I was killed at Shiloh." Then a few words of counsel as to future behavior made an impression not easily forgotten or likely to be disregarded.

IV.

THE DECLINE.

FOR a while after the reorganization of the Klan, those concerned for its welfare and right conduct congratulated themselves that

all was now well. Closer organization and stricter official supervision had a restraining influence upon the members. Many things seemed to indicate that the future work of the Klan would be wholly good. These hopes were rudely shattered. Before long official supervision grew less rigid, or was less regarded. The membership was steadily increasing. Among those who were added were bad men who could not be — at least, were not — controlled. In the winter and spring of 1867 and 1868 many things were done by members or professed members of the Klan which were the subject of universal regret and condemnation. In many ways the grave censure of those who had hitherto been its friends was evoked against the Klan, and occasion was given its enemies to petition for the intervention of the Government to suppress it. This was done. The end came rapidly. We must now trace the causes which wrought the decay and downfall of the "Invisible Empire."

Men of the character of the majority of those who composed this Klan do not disregard their own professed principles and violate self-assumed obligations carelessly. To see men who were just now the advocates of law and order defying the one and destroying the other, is a sight singular enough to elicit inquiry as to the causes that wrought the change. The transformation of the Ku Klux Klan from a band of regulators, honestly, but in a mistaken way, trying to preserve peace and order, into the body of desperate men who in 1869 convulsed the country by deeds of violence, and set at defiance the mandates of both State and Federal governments, is greater than the transformation which we have already traced. In both cases there were causes adequate to the results produced; causes from which these results followed naturally and almost necessarily, and which have never been fully and fairly followed out. They may be classed under three heads: (1) unjust charges; (2) misapprehension of the nature and objects of the order by those not members of it; (3) unwise and over-severe legislation. As has already been pointed out, the order contained within itself, by reason of its purpose and methods, sources of weakness. The devices by which the Klan deceived outsiders enabled all who were so disposed, even its own members, to practice deception upon the Klan itself. It placed in the hands of its members facilities for doing deeds of violence for the gratification of innate deviltry or personal enmity, and for having them credited to the Klan. To evilly disposed men membership in the Klan was an inducement to wrong-doing; in fact, it presented to all men a dangerous temptation. In

certain contingencies, at any time likely to arise, it required a considerable amount of moral robustness to withstand this temptation. Many did not withstand it, and deeds of violence were done by men who were Ku Klux, but who at the time were acting under cover of their connection with the Klan, but not under its orders; and, because these men were Ku Klux, the Klan had to bear the odium of their misdeeds.

In addition to this, the very class which the Klan proposed to hold in check and awe into good behavior, after a while became wholly unmanageable. Those who had formerly committed depredations to be laid to the charge of the poor negroes now assumed the guise of Ku Klux, and returned to their old ways with renewed ardor. In some cases even the negroes played Ku Klux. Outrages were committed by masked men in regions far remote from any Ku Klux organization. The fact that these persons took pains to declare that they were Ku Klux was evidence that they were not. In this way it came about that all the disorder prevailing in the country was charged upon the Ku Klux. The Klan had no way in which to refute or disprove the charge. They felt that it was hard to be charged with violence of which they were innocent. At the same time they felt that it was natural and not wholly unjust that this should be the case. They had assumed the office of regulators. It was therefore due society, due the Government, which so far had not molested them, that they should at least not afford the lawless class facilities for the commission of excesses greater than any they had hitherto indulged in; and, above all, that they should restrain their own members from lawlessness. The Klan felt all this; and in its efforts to relieve itself of the stigma thus incurred, it acted in some cases against the offending parties with a severity well merited no doubt, but unjustifiable. As is frequently the case, they were carried beyond the limits of prudence and right by a hot zeal for self-vindication against unjust aspersions. They thought the charge of wrong was unfairly brought against them. They did worse wrong than that charged to clear themselves of the charge.

The Klan, from the first, shrouded itself in deepest mystery, and out of this grew trouble not at first apprehended. They wished people not to understand; they tried to keep them profoundly ignorant. The result was that the Klan and its objects were wholly misunderstood and misinterpreted. Many who joined the Klan, and many who did not, were certain that it contemplated some mission far more important than its overt acts gave evidence of. Some were sure it meant trea-

son and revolution. The negroes, and the whites whose consciences made them the subjects of guilty fears, were sure it boded no good to them. When the first impressions of awe and terror to some extent wore off, a feeling of intense hostility toward the Ku Klux followed. This feeling was all the more bitter because founded, not on overt acts which the Ku Klux had done, but on vague fears and surmises as to what they intended to do. Those who entertained such fears were in some cases impelled by them to become the aggressors. They attacked the Ku Klux before receiving from them any provocation. The negroes formed organizations of a military character, and drilled by night. These organizations had for their avowed purpose "to make war upon and exterminate the Ku Klux." On several occasions the Klan was fired into. The effect of such attacks was to provoke counter hostility from the Klan; and so there was irritation and counter-irritation, till the state of things became little short of open warfare. In some respects it was worse; the parties wholly misunderstood each other. Each party felt that its cause was the just one; each justified the deed by the provocation.

The Ku Klux, intending wrong, as they believed, to no one, were aggrieved that acts which they had not done should be charged to them; and they felt outraged that they should be molested and assaulted. The other party, satisfied that they were acting in self-defense, felt fully justified in assaulting them. And so each party goaded the other from one degree of lawlessness to another.

The following extracts from a General Order of the Grand Dragon of the Realm of Tennessee will illustrate the operation of both these causes. It was issued in the fall of the year 1868. It shows what were the principles and objects which the Klan still professed, and it also shows how it was being forced away from them:

"HEAD-QUARTERS REALM NO. 1.

"DREADFUL ERA, BLACK EPOCH, DREADFUL HOUR.

"GENERAL ORDER NO. 1.

"Whereas, information of an authentic character has reached these head-quarters that the blacks in the counties of Marshall, Maury, Giles, and Lawrence are organized into military companies, with the avowed determination to make war upon and exterminate the Ku Klux Klan, said blacks are hereby solemnly warned and ordered to desist from further action in such organizations, if they exist.

"The G. D. [Grand Dragon] regrets the necessity of such an order. But this Klan shall not be outraged and interfered with by lawless negroes and meaner white men, who do not and never have understood our purposes.

"In the first place this Klan is not an institution of violence, lawlessness, and cruelty; it is not lawless;

it is not aggressive; it is not military; it is not revolutionary.

"It is essentially, originally, and inherently a protective organization; it proposes to execute law instead of resisting it, and to protect all good men, whether white or black, from the outrages and atrocities of bad men of both colors, who have been for the past three years a terror to society, and an injury to us all.

"The blacks seem to be impressed with the belief that this Klan is especially their enemy. We are not the enemy of the blacks, as long as they behave themselves, make no threats upon us, and do not attack or interfere with us.

"But if they make war upon us, they must abide the awful retributions that will follow.

"This Klan, while in its peaceful movements and disturbing no one, has been fired into three times. This will not be endured any longer; and if it occurs again, and the parties be discovered, a remorseless vengeance will be wreaked upon them.

"We reiterate that we are for peace and law and order. No man, white or black, shall be molested for his political sentiments. This Klan is not a political party; it is not a military party; it is a protective organization, and will never use violence except in resisting violence.

"Outrages have been perpetrated by irresponsible parties in the name of this Klan. Should such parties be apprehended, they will be dealt with in a manner to insure us future exemption from such imposition. These impostors have, in some instances, whipped negroes. This is wrong! Wrong! It is denounced by this Klan as it must be by all good and humane men.

"The Klan now, as in the past, is prohibited from doing such things. We are striving to protect all good, peaceful, well-disposed, and law-abiding men, whether white or black.

"The G. D. deems this order due to the public, due to the Klan, and due to those who are misguided and misinformed.

"We therefore request that all newspapers who are friendly to law, and peace, and the public welfare, will publish the same.

"By order of the G. D., Realm No. 1.

"By the Grand Scribe."

Granting that this order expressed the principles which the Klan was honestly trying to maintain, it also illustrates how it was driven to violate them by the very earnestness and vehemence with which they attempted to maintain them. If it is asked why, under these embarrassing circumstances, the Klan did not disband and close its operations, the answer is plain. The members persuaded themselves that there was now more reason than ever for the Klan's existence. They felt that they ought not to abandon their important and needful work because they encountered unforeseen difficulties in accomplishing it. It is an illustration of the fatuity which sometimes marks the lives of men, that they did not perceive that these evils grew out of their own methods, and must continue and increase while the Klan existed. Men are not always wise. They frequently persist in a course which, to others differently situated, appears not less absurd than wicked. We cannot apologize for their course. We cannot

excuse it. But justice requires that a fair and truthful statement be made of the embarrassments and temptations which surrounded them.

Matters grew worse and worse, till it was imperatively necessary for the State authorities to interfere. There was a general feeling that legislation on the subject was necessary. But few were prepared to expect such legislation as that enacted by the famous—or infamous, as the reader chooses—Legislature called together by Governor Brownlow in September, 1868.

Tennessee was the first State to pass an anti-Ku Klux statute. In September, 1868, Governor Brownlow called the Legislature together in extra session to devise measures for the suppression of the order. A relentless and bloody statute was passed; and to enforce it the Governor was authorized, if he deemed it necessary, to declare martial law on the infected counties and to call out troops. The law passed, and the method of enforcing it increased rather than quieted disorder. The statute is long, and, as a whole, not worth quoting. Its leading provisions were the following:

(1) For association or connection with the Ku Klux a fine of five hundred dollars and imprisonment in the penitentiary not less than five years; and "*shall be rendered infamous.*" (2) Persons impaneled for jury service were required to answer under oath whether they were obnoxious to the first section of the act. (3) Prosecuting attorneys and grand jurors were directed to summon persons whom they suspected "or had cause to suspect," and to force them to testify what they knew of the Ku Klux. If those so summoned failed to appear or refused to testify, the penalty was a fine of five hundred dollars. (4) Every "inhabitant" of the State was constituted an officer extraordinary, with power "to arrest without process" any one known or suspected to be a Ku Klux. (5) To feed, lodge, entertain, or conceal a Ku Klux exposed the offender to infamy, a fine of five hundred dollars, and imprisonment for five years. (6) It was made unlawful to publish any order emanating from the Klan. (7) There was but one clause in the law which bears the semblance of mercy. Its provisions are so odious as to be shocking. The one way by which a man could relieve himself of liability to this law was by turning informer. As additional inducement to do this a reward of half the fine was offered. (8) But, most remarkable of all, the statute was made penal against offenses committed previous to its passage. The last section of it reads: "Nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to prevent or exempt any person heretofore guilty of any of the offenses herein contained from prosecutions under the law as it now stands."

There were hundreds of men in the Klan who were not law-breakers. There had been no law against association with the Ku Klux. They had had no personal participation in the excesses in which some of the Klan had indulged. They were ready to admit that the movement had proven to be injudicious. Good had been done, but harm had followed. They

would cheerfully have obeyed a legal command to sever their connection with the Ku Klux and desist from further operations. But when these men were declared infamous, made liable to fine and imprisonment, and exposed to arrest "without process" by any one who chose to inform against them, the effect was to drive them to absolute desperation.

In some sections of the State a reign of terror followed the passage of this act. The Ku Klux were now almost in the attitude of men fighting for life and liberty. There was no hope in submission except on terms which to men of honor were more hateful than death.

v.

DISBANDMENT.

ON the 20th of February, 1869, Governor Brownlow resigned his position as Governor to take the seat in the United States Senate to which he had been elected. The last paper to which he affixed his signature as Governor of Tennessee proclaimed martial law in certain counties, and ordered troops to be sent thither. This proclamation was dated February 20, 1869. In a few days it was followed by a proclamation from the "Grand Wizard of the Invisible Empire" to his subjects. It recited the legislation directed against the Klan, and stated that the order had now in large measure accomplished the objects of its existence. At a time when the civil law afforded inadequate protection to life and property, when robbery and lawlessness of every description were unrebuked, when all the better elements of society were in constant dread for the safety of their property, persons, and families, the Klan had afforded protection and security to many firesides, and in many ways contributed to the public welfare. But, greatly to the regret of all good citizens, he further said, some members of the Klan had violated positive orders; others, under the name and disguises of the organization, had assumed to do acts of violence, for which the Klan was held responsible. The Grand Wizard had been invested with the power to determine questions of paramount importance to the interests of the order. Therefore, in the exercise of that power, the Grand Wizard declared that the organization

heretofore known as the Ku Klux Klan was dissolved and disbanded.

Members were directed to burn or destroy all regalia and paraphernalia of every description, and to desist from any further assemblies or acts as Ku Klux. They were told, further, that they would continue in the future, as heretofore, to assist all good people of the land in maintaining and upholding the civil laws, and in putting down lawlessness.

This proclamation was directed to all Realms, Dominions, Provinces, and Dens in "the Empire." It may be that there were portions of the Empire never reached by it. The Grand Wizard was a citizen of Tennessee; and as no paper in that State could publish the order, because of the stringent law against such publication, there was no way in which the proclamation could be fully distributed. Where it was promulgated, obedience to it was prompt and implicit.

But whether obeyed or not, this proclamation terminated the Klan's organized existence as decisively as General Lee's last general order, on the morning of the 10th of April, 1865, disbanded the army of Northern Virginia. When the office of Grand Wizard was created and its duties defined, it was explicitly provided that he should have "the power to determine questions of paramount importance, and his decision shall be final." To continue the organization or to disband it was such a question. He decided in favor of disbanding. Therefore, the Ku Klux Klan had no organized existence after March, 1869.

The report of the Congressional Investigating Committee contains a mass of very disreputable history, which belongs to a later date, and is attributed to the Klan, but not justly so. These persons were acting in the name of the Klan and under its disguises, but not by its authority. They were acting on their own responsibility.

Thus lived, so died, this strange order. Its birth was an accident; its growth was a comedy, its death a tragedy. It owed its existence wholly to the anomalous condition of social and civil affairs in the South during the years immediately succeeding the unfortunate contest in which so many brave men in blue and gray fell, martyrs to their convictions. There never was, before or since, a period of our history when such an order could have lived. May there never be again!

D. L. Wilson.

bonnet, she continued: "I don't s'pose it's done any good, talkin' to ye so; but it's kinder eased my mind. You and I hev met for the last time. I am an old woman, and it's time I was settin' my house in order, and I shall get on better for this clearin' out; and

I hope the Lord will reward ye, and I've got faith to believe he will."

Giving a tug to her bonnet-strings, she dragged her trunk out on the doorstep, and, closing the door behind her with a decisive bang, departed.

Julia D. Whiting.

TOPICS OF THE TIME.

New Light on the Ku Klux Klan.

IN the present number of *THE CENTURY* may be found a chapter of the inside history of the Ku Klux Klan, which is, in many respects, remarkable. It describes the somewhat trivial origin of the Klan out of circumstances which account for the mystery attending its rise and growth; it traces the causes which changed the Klan into a powerful organization called "the Invisible Empire"; and it leaves the history at the point where, in 1869, the "Grand Wizard" disbanded the Empire, though, for a long time after, bands of men calling themselves Ku Klux continued to "regulate" affairs in the South, on secret mob principles.

In its specific statements of fact, the narrative, we think, bears inherent marks of authenticity. It is proper to say that the writer of the paper is an active minister in the Southern Presbyterian Church. We may state also that he has no personal knowledge of the Ku Klux, although he has had abundant opportunity to know as much of the inside history of the Klan as if he had been a leading member; he has had access, besides, to authentic private documents.

Many of the facts related by him will be as new, probably, to most readers at the South, who were personally acquainted with the "mission" and deeds of "the Invisible Empire," but not with its origin, as to those readers at the North who remember the name Ku Klux only as the synonym for midnight murder and political infamy. These are harsh terms, but they are none too harsh if one is to characterize frankly that unfortunate period in our history, which has come to be regarded at the South with solid, though softening, satisfaction, and at the North with lessening disapproval of the results, though with lasting abhorrence of the methods.

In its drift, the paper may be regarded as a moderate apology for the Ku Klux, on the score of unpremeditated "mission" and extenuating provocation. Its conclusions in this regard are partly unsound, because the writer does not properly bring into the premises the real impelling idea of "the Invisible Empire." Its members were a people who had sought by revolution to insure the perpetuity of a slave system, which was the corner-stone of their social and industrial life. The penalty of defeat required that they should be governed in large part by the politically unskilled and mentally ignorant race which had been in servitude to them, and which was being organized and led by a few whites, who were even more odious to them. Here was a state of affairs, it is now plain to see, as

perfectly arranged to breed trouble as the juxtaposition of fire and powder. No race on the face of the earth would have accepted such moral and political subjugation to another race regarded as of a lower type, and which had just been transported from barbarism, or recently reared out of it. Probably the nearest approach to such moral and political servitude observable to-day, is the ease with which the native intelligence of some of our Northern cities is ruled by a horde of ignorant foreign-born liquor-dealers, and their more ignorant foreign-born clients. We certainly favor a reform of this anomaly, but not by bloodshed. There are stronger agencies for social and political regeneration than mob violence; and a mob of the higher elements of society is worse than a mob of the ignorant and of the dregs, because its example is more pernicious and lasting.

So, when we are told that many members of the Ku Klux were originally in search of amusement, and did not premeditate outrage, terrorism, and murder in giving wide-spread organization to the Klan, we cannot help thinking that they might have stilled the evil power they had raised if their hearts had not been fired by a general purpose to subjugate the blacks, who, by the operation of the law of the land, had become their political masters. What was an overmastering wish with some was a lawless determination with others, and with all it meant revolution at any cost. The ordinarily peaceable men in the Klan had helped to fashion it into an effective instrument, and the rebellious spirits of that unsettled time seized the weapon, some to wage private warfare, and all to vent their hatred of the political situation. It was the worst kind of mob violence; and, as in every deviation from legal methods, the worst elements came to the top.

In estimating the minor provocations which, it is claimed, led the Ku Klux into the rôle of "regulators," and in weighing the tone of injury and innocence which pervades the manifestoes of the Klan, we must not forget who, in the eyes of the law, were the aggressors. It is not uncommon for an aggressor, of whatever kind, to view with alarm and abhorrence a natural act of self-defense or retaliation. The Government, which placed the blacks in their strange position, in the end left them to defend themselves. Naturally, they were made to yield to the whites the power they had not the physical courage and the mental ability to hold. They are entitled to the fullest sympathy, for they were politically without blame and were grievously sinned against. And perhaps we should also regard their trials and the place they have accepted as necessary feat-

ures of the discipline which is to make intelligent freemen of a once barbarous and ignorant race of bondmen.

On the other hand, there is a growing sympathy with the whites of the South, and a willingness to admit that on the ground of human sentiment — that great changeable force which now seems to differentiate human law and the law of heaven, and again seems to override both — the whites had great provocation. In the same spirit men are beginning to accept the success of the Ku Klux revolution as being *in the result* the inevitable solution of an anomalous political situation. Peace and happiness never could come to the South so long as the political lines were co-existent with the color lines, with the blacks in the ascendancy. Every well-wisher of the blacks will counsel them to accept the foot of the political ladder, and it is not without fitness that they should begin at the bottom rung and work up, because they were the last to be apprenticed to citizenship. Already the whites, as in Charleston, are giving them a share of the public employment, by making them street-cleaners, firemen, and policemen. This is not sharing according to numerical importance, but it is a beginning, and the education which is being placed within their reach will fit them for better things to come.

But let us not be misunderstood. If it was a questionable device to place the power of the ballot, suddenly and without limitations, in the hands of an emancipated and uneducated race, none the less immoral, unjustifiable, and brutalizing were the means adopted by the whites to rid themselves of an intolerable rule. And because the blacks are still restrained from the free exercise of their legal rights, the situation at the South is to-day morally unsound. For it is for ever true, as a Southern orator has said, that "the political devil is no more to be fought with fire, without terrible consequences to the best interest of the community, than is the devil of avarice, or of envy, or of ambition, or any other of the numerous devils which infest society."

The lessons to be drawn from the Ku Klux period are mainly for statesmen, but they also teach the individual citizen, in a new way, that mob force is a barbarous and dangerous remedy for real or fancied wrongs. When, in the *April CENTURY*, we discussed one phase of the subject under the heading, "Mob or Magistrate," we did not know we should be able to broaden its application by publishing so important a study of violence as the paper we print in the present number on the Ku Klux Klan.

On the Advertising Power of a Good Name.

In the Old World, the advertising power of distinguished or titled names is thoroughly understood, and has, in fact, given rise to an enormous system. This system is especially noticeable in England, where the royalty, nobility, and gentry of the realm serve a highly useful purpose, not merely as promoters of all the various charities and benevolent movements of the day, but as excellent advertisements also of the better class of manufactures and general haberdashery of the realm. To be sure, the system has many absurd incidents, which the American abroad is sure to smile at; as, for instance, the list of patrons of a library which was about to be established in London, where, after the names of we know not how many titled per-

sons, occurred that of plain Mr. Robert Browning; while in Canada (as remarked in these pages several years ago), one could find "advertisements of bitters whose names share the advancing honors of their illustrious and titled namesakes." ("Original, D'Israeli's Tonic Bitters! *Now, Earl Beaconsfield's!*")

But, with all its ludicrousness to the republican mind, there is something in the English system of patronage that is better than in the American. To be sure, "patronage" in America does not often descend to the products of manufacture, except in the matter of musical instruments, medicines, and articles of the toilet. It is true that here distinguished performers lend their names to the various piano-makers; actresses and opera-singers praise the virtues of rouges and all beautifiers of the complexion; and clergymen are sometimes betrayed into advertising quack medicines, — or soap, for its moral qualities. But, as a rule, prominent names are reserved in their public advertising capacity for the worthy ends of charity, or for institutions of an educational or financial character.

In fact, patronage in America is not an acknowledged system, but, nevertheless, it exists very largely, and in a loose and unconsidered way. It is as well understood in America as abroad that every good name has a certain amount of advertising power; and the possessors of these good names, whether made or inherited by the owners, are constantly being importuned for their use by way of advertisement either of public benevolent, or private financial schemes. It is one of the faults of American good-nature that men of mark or of character are too easily induced to lend their names to their friends, or others, on request. A busy man is approached in behalf of some good cause, or some business enterprise, and is asked to help it along by doing little more than joining some committee or board of trustees, or permitting himself to be used as a "reference." He tries at first to be excused on the ground of other engrossing engagements, but finally yields to the plea that he need give none of his time whatever — "All we want is your name!" By and by the institution is involved in some scandal, or goes to wreck; the man with the good name may even find that this good name of his has been used as a decoy, and that, under its honorable shadow, foul deeds have been done.

For years we have watched the workings of this system of patronage — of advertisement by means of good names — here in the city of New York; and we must say that we have seen great harm come from it, in many directions. The persons are not as numerous as they should be who resolutely refuse the use of their names to every movement, to every institution, to every committee, to every board of management, to which they are unable to give the necessary time and attention, or in whose affairs they are not competent to deal with full intelligence and with fitness of taste and education. We say that such scrupulosity seems to be exceptional in New York, and yet events are constantly occurring to show the danger, even the immorality, of allowing the use of one's name where one's care and attention do not follow.

We have barely alluded above to the reprehensible course which some pursue of using their own good names as an investment, for profit, in connection with financial corporations, or schemes of various sorts, which they do not in reality control. Of the impro-

bonnet, she continued: "I don't s'pose it's done any good, talkin' to ye so; but it's kinder eased my mind. You and I hev met for the last time. I am an old woman, and it's time I was settin' my house in order, and I shall get on better for this clearin' out; and

I hope the Lord will reward ye, and I've got faith to believe he will."

Giving a tug to her bonnet-strings, she dragged her trunk out on the doorstep, and, closing the door behind her with a decisive bang, departed.

Julia D. Whiting.

TOPICS OF THE TIME.

New Light on the Ku Klux Klan.

IN the present number of *THE CENTURY* may be found a chapter of the inside history of the Ku Klux Klan, which is, in many respects, remarkable. It describes the somewhat trivial origin of the Klan out of circumstances which account for the mystery attending its rise and growth; it traces the causes which changed the Klan into a powerful organization called "the Invisible Empire"; and it leaves the history at the point where, in 1869, the "Grand Wizard" disbanded the Empire, though, for a long time after, bands of men calling themselves Ku Klux continued to "regulate" affairs in the South, on secret mob principles.

In its specific statements of fact, the narrative, we think, bears inherent marks of authenticity. It is proper to say that the writer of the paper is an active minister in the Southern Presbyterian Church. We may state also that he has no personal knowledge of the Ku Klux, although he has had abundant opportunity to know as much of the inside history of the Klan as if he had been a leading member; he has had access, besides, to authentic private documents.

Many of the facts related by him will be as new, probably, to most readers at the South, who were personally acquainted with the "mission" and deeds of "the Invisible Empire," but not with its origin, as to those readers at the North who remember the name Ku Klux only as the synonym for midnight murder and political infamy. These are harsh terms, but they are none too harsh if one is to characterize frankly that unfortunate period in our history, which has come to be regarded at the South with solid, though softening, satisfaction, and at the North with lessening disapproval of the results, though with lasting abhorrence of the methods.

In its drift, the paper may be regarded as a moderate apology for the Ku Klux, on the score of unpremeditated "mission" and extenuating provocation. Its conclusions in this regard are partly unsound, because the writer does not properly bring into the premises the real impelling idea of "the Invisible Empire." Its members were a people who had sought by revolution to insure the perpetuity of a slave system, which was the corner-stone of their social and industrial life. The penalty of defeat required that they should be governed in large part by the politically unskilled and mentally ignorant race which had been in servitude to them, and which was being organized and led by a few whites, who were even more odious to them. Here was a state of affairs, it is now plain to see, as

perfectly arranged to breed trouble as the juxtaposition of fire and powder. No race on the face of the earth would have accepted such moral and political subjugation to another race regarded as of a lower type, and which had just been transported from barbarism, or recently reared out of it. Probably the nearest approach to such moral and political servitude observable to-day, is the ease with which the native intelligence of some of our Northern cities is ruled by a horde of ignorant foreign-born liquor-dealers, and their more ignorant foreign-born clients. We certainly favor a reform of this anomaly, but not by bloodshed. There are stronger agencies for social and political regeneration than mob violence; and a mob of the higher elements of society is worse than a mob of the ignorant and of the dregs, because its example is more pernicious and lasting.

So, when we are told that many members of the Ku Klux were originally in search of amusement, and did not premeditate outrage, terrorism, and murder in giving wide-spread organization to the Klan, we cannot help thinking that they might have stilled the evil power they had raised if their hearts had not been fired by a general purpose to subjugate the blacks, who, by the operation of the law of the land, had become their political masters. What was an overmastering wish with some was a lawless determination with others, and with all it meant revolution at any cost. The ordinarily peaceable men in the Klan had helped to fashion it into an effective instrument, and the rebellious spirits of that unsettled time seized the weapon, some to wage private warfare, and all to vent their hatred of the political situation. It was the worst kind of mob violence; and, as in every deviation from legal methods, the worst elements came to the top.

In estimating the minor provocations which, it is claimed, led the Ku Klux into the rôle of "regulators," and in weighing the tone of injury and innocence which pervades the manifestoes of the Klan, we must not forget who, in the eyes of the law, were the aggressors. It is not uncommon for an aggressor, of whatever kind, to view with alarm and abhorrence a natural act of self-defense or retaliation. The Government, which placed the blacks in their strange position, in the end left them to defend themselves. Naturally, they were made to yield to the whites the power they had not the physical courage and the mental ability to hold. They are entitled to the fullest sympathy, for they were politically without blame and were grievously sinned against. And perhaps we should also regard their trials and the place they have accepted as necessary feat-

ures of the discipline which is to make intelligent freemen of a once barbarous and ignorant race of bondmen.

On the other hand, there is a growing sympathy with the whites of the South, and a willingness to admit that on the ground of human sentiment — that great changeable force which now seems to differentiate human law and the law of heaven, and again seems to override both — the whites had great provocation. In the same spirit men are beginning to accept the success of the Ku Klux revolution as being *in the result* the inevitable solution of an anomalous political situation. Peace and happiness never could come to the South so long as the political lines were co-existent with the color lines, with the blacks in the ascendancy. Every well-wisher of the blacks will counsel them to accept the foot of the political ladder, and it is not without fitness that they should begin at the bottom rung and work up, because they were the last to be apprenticed to citizenship. Already the whites, as in Charleston, are giving them a share of the public employment, by making them street-cleaners, firemen, and policemen. This is not sharing according to numerical importance, but it is a beginning, and the education which is being placed within their reach will fit them for better things to come.

But let us not be misunderstood. If it was a questionable device to place the power of the ballot, suddenly and without limitations, in the hands of an emancipated and uneducated race, none the less immoral, unjustifiable, and brutalizing were the means adopted by the whites to rid themselves of an intolerable rule. And because the blacks are still restrained from the free exercise of their legal rights, the situation at the South is to-day morally unsound. For it is for ever true, as a Southern orator has said, that "the political devil is no more to be fought with fire, without terrible consequences to the best interest of the community, than is the devil of avarice, or of envy, or of ambition, or any other of the numerous devils which infest society."

The lessons to be drawn from the Ku Klux period are mainly for statesmen, but they also teach the individual citizen, in a new way, that mob force is a barbarous and dangerous remedy for real or fancied wrongs. When, in the April CENTURY, we discussed one phase of the subject under the heading, "Mob or Magistrate," we did not know we should be able to broaden its application by publishing so important a study of violence as the paper we print in the present number on the Ku Klux Klan.

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sons, occurred that of plain Mr. Robert Browning; while in Canada (as remarked in these pages several years ago), one could find "advertisements of bitters whose names share the advancing honors of their illustrious and titled namesakes." ("Original, D'Israeli's Tonic Bitters! *Now, Earl Beaconsfield's!*")

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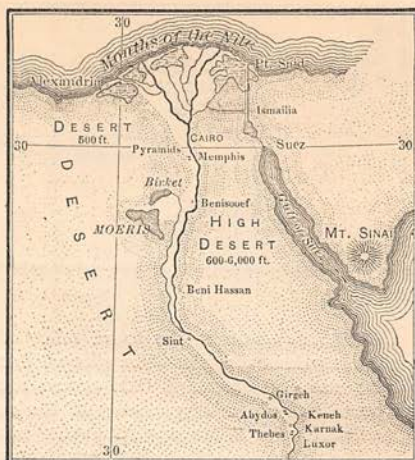
For years we have watched the workings of this system of patronage — of advertisement by means of good names — here in the city of New York; and we must say that we have seen great harm come from it, in many directions. The persons are not as numerous as they should be who resolutely refuse the use of their names to every movement, to every institution, to every committee, to every board of management, to which they are unable to give the necessary time and attention, or in whose affairs they are not competent to deal with full intelligence and with fitness of taste and education. We say that such scrupulosity seems to be exceptional in New York, and yet events are constantly occurring to show the danger, even the immorality, of allowing the use of one's name where one's care and attention do not follow.

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standing ponds, nor, by flowing too little, prejudice the fruits of the earth for want of water. To this end he cut a trench along from the river into the lake, fourscore furlongs in length and three hundred feet broad; into this he let the water of the river sometimes run, and at other times diverted it, and turned it over the fields of the husbandmen, at seasonable times, by means of sluices, which he sometimes opened, and at other times shut up, not without great labor and cost; for these sluices could not be opened or shut at a less charge than fifty talents."

Such, then, was the ancient solution of the problem of taking care of the excess of high Nile—a vast artificial lake, four hundred and fifty miles in circuit, with borders resembling a sea-beach, in extent a sea, and resembling the sea in the color of its waters; supporting, moreover, "two-and-twenty sorts of fish," of which so great a number was taken, says Diodorus Siculus, "that those who were employed continuously to salt them up (though they were multitudes of people) could hardly perform it." But this lake, as a beneficent factor in Egyptian life, disappeared, and the "father of history" became as the "father of lies." A shallow, brackish lake, the Birket el Qeroun, answering in no important particular to the supposed ancient lake, is all that now exists. Engineers—Egyptian and French—have visited the country in its vicinity, and established one or two points by accurate measurement and a thousand by guesses. Two or three important theories have been formed as to the possible site of the ancient lake, but none of them adequate to justify the story of Herodotus. Two years ago Mr. Whitehouse, suitably equipped, and having faith in the ancient historian,—a faith which he soon found he could not have in some modern geographers,—visited and explored "the entire area of the Fayoum and a large part of the contiguous desert," and, as Dr. Schweinfurth puts it, "was able to demonstrate by his personal observation the existence of physical conditions which had remained hitherto entirely unknown." That is, by his researches made in three visits and eight months of energetic labor, during which he pumped dry, not the bed of the Nile, but the Arab guides, the English travelers, the Khedive's officials and archives, the European archaeologists, with their cabinets and libraries, Mr. Whitehouse established a possible Lake Mœris, extending south of the Birket el Qeroun into a dry valley of the Wadi Reian, sufficiently large in area to contain the excess of waters of the "father of rivers." He ascertained depths and elevations, circumferences and islands, and verified the measurements of antiquity with sufficient accuracy to make a sound foundation for his theory. "His hypothesis," says Dr. Schweinfurth (who is pronounced the "first authority in Egyptian geography, whether ancient or modern"), "satisfies every reasonable requirement of searching criticism." Some of the highest authorities have accepted both theory and facts, and published long articles on the value of the lake depression in modern engineering. The Egyptian Government has shown a strong interest in the scheme of utilizing the new discovery.

The conclusion of Mr. Whitehouse's labor, then, seems to be, that a basin exists of sufficient depth and other dimensions,—a basin worthless for all other purposes than those of storage,—situated near the



LAKE MÆRIS RESTORED.

Nile, and easily reconnected with it by a comparatively inexpensive canal, already once dug and still visible in parts, and utilized in long sections; that this must have formed the southern part of the ancient Lake Mœris in the time of Herodotus and Strabo; that, if this part only were restored, it would hold in storage, to be made useful in irrigation, if necessary, all the waste waters of the overgrown and much-dreaded Nile floods; that, if so used, the Birket el Qeroun, which, since the opening of the Ibrahimieh canal, has encroached on the tillable soil, could be reduced to one-half its present size, and thus many thousand acres of good land be restored to its borders; that, furthermore, engineers could easily drain the lower marshes at the several mouths of the Nile father or mother and all their crocodile brood, and thus recover for Egypt many hundred square miles of its best fields.

"In the present state of engineering," says the writer in the "Saturday Review" (Dec. 1, 1883), speaking of Lake Mareotis, "the question of drainage is merely one of calculation and steam-pumps, but it would hardly take more than two years; then the ground which is left bare must be planted for three years with rice crops, and worked with fresh water, in order to extract the nitre. The fresh water can be supplied in any quantity from the Mahmoudieh canal, which runs between dikes through part of the lake itself, and feeds Alexandria, and in a short time a vast tract of land close to the most important port in the country would be ready for cultivation. A successful prosecution of the enterprise would certainly lead to the draining of the other lakes which border the Mediterranean coast of Egypt."

James Herbert Morse.

The Ku Klux Klan.

COMMENTS.

AS an old and constant reader of THE CENTURY I beg permission to comment upon your editorial notice of Mr. Wilson's most interesting history of the Ku Klux: "If it was a questionable device to place the power of the ballot, suddenly and without limitations,

in the hands of an emancipated and uneducated race, none the less immoral, unjustifiable, and brutalizing were the means adopted by the whites to rid themselves of an intolerable rule." Was there anything in the device to place the whites of the South, their families, and their property, under the heels of their late slaves at all questionable? Was it not an unquestionable wrong and a political crime of the first magnitude? Was it not immoral, unjustifiable, and brutal, and in violation of all laws human and divine? Admitting such a rule was intolerable, have you suggested a remedy for it? Has a single Northern man, statesman or editor, found it possible to devise a legal remedy for the intolerable rule of brutal ignorance, numerically strong, over intelligence and refinement, numerically weak? Revolution is the remedy for oppression in all ages and by all peoples determined to be free. It was the remedy in England twice in the seventeenth century, of the American colonies and of France in the eighteenth, and of the United States in the nineteenth. I say in the United States, because her war measures to preserve the Union were in themselves revolutionary. To seize and imprison the Legislature of Maryland was a revolutionary act. To proclaim the slaves free was in direct violation of the Constitution, and only justifiable as a necessity of the war. Without compensation to the owners, the slaves of Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri, States not in rebellion, were set free. By violence the citizens of these States were robbed of millions of dollars' worth of property, and the nation justified the act. "Necessity knows no law," is a law of nations, of communities, and of individuals. An intolerable rule, for which there is no remedy at law, must find a remedy without law. In the Southern States, in which the negro voters outnumbered the white, and were organized by unprincipled leaders to possess and control the legislative and executive powers of those States, it is an historical fact that the rule was intolerable. Under the forms of law property was virtually confiscated, and utter ruin stared the property-holders in the face. The simple question was, By what measure of violence shall this intolerable rule be thrown off? Violence is not easily measured, or the higher law of self-preservation limited to its actual demands. The invariable law of revolution is excess. "Coalesced Europe makes war upon France, and as the gage of battle she hurls at its feet the head of a king," is the illustration of revolution among all peoples. The wonder of the century should rather be that a brave, proud people submitted for a single year to the intolerable rule of brutal ignorance, than that they resorted, after endurance became no longer possible, to violence as a remedy. I, too, would not be misunderstood. Without hesitation I justify that degree of violence necessary for the preservation of life, property, and just government. Beyond this I deprecate violence of any sort. In revolutions the difficulty always is to take the king's crown yet leave him his head.

R. C. Mackall.

ELKTON, MD.

In a paper on the Ku Klux Klan, in the July number of *THE CENTURY*, are these sentences: "Perhaps the most potent of all causes in this transformation,

[from a social club into "Regulators"] was the existence in the South of a spurious and perverted form of the 'Union League.' . . . It was composed of the disorderly elements of the negro population, and was led by white men of the meanest and basest type. They met frequently, went armed to the teeth, and literally 'breathed out threatening and slaughter.' . . . It was partly to resist this organization that the Ku Klux were transformed into a protective organization."

Perhaps it is not worth while to notice charges so utterly groundless as these. The writer of the article referred to could not, and, as the above quotations prove, did not know anything whatever concerning the organization which he condemns with such flippant incorrectness. The Union League is still in existence, with precisely the same object it had when the Ku Klux Klan was founded. Unlike that organization, it never underwent any "transformation." It was never other than a peaceful, lawful, useful society. It was called into existence among the Union men of the South by the instinct of self-preservation, at a time when nearly the whole population there had plunged into the madness of rebellion. It was kept alive by the bitterness and persecution which, in many localities, accompanied the return of the disbanded Confederate soldiers to their former homes. To their credit be it said, the bitterness did not emanate from them. It was fostered and cherished by those who took no active part in the war. If any ex-Confederate soldiers joined in hostile acts toward Union men, it was due to the bad example and encouragement of men who had been too cowardly to fight in real war.

The "Union League of America"* is a simple organization, having for its object the maintenance of unconditional devotion to the United States. It has as much secrecy as the Masons, or the Odd-fellows, or the Red Men—no more. Instead of being composed of "the disorderly elements of the negro population," its membership was and is confined to persons of good standing in the community. So far from being "armed to the teeth," its meetings were absolutely unguarded. No violence was ever proposed or used by it. The utmost it aimed at was to help to protect innocent and harmless men in their right to freedom and citizenship. It never invaded any one's liberty—never undertook, as the writer affirms the Ku Klux did, to play the rôle of regulators. In most places where chapters of the order existed, the proportion of Union men to secessionists was about one in ten. For people so situated to go about "armed to the teeth" and "breathing out threatening and slaughter" would be suicidal folly. It was only because they were in such a minority that they had a Union League at all. Without going further into the subject, it is enough to deny, absolutely, the truth of the charges above referred to.

As a bit of curious history, as well as a psychological study, the article in *THE CENTURY* is interesting. If the writer had confined himself to telling the story, there would be no need of criticism or refutation. But when he goes out of his way to speak of that Legislature of Tennessee which, among other things, reorganized the ruined State Government, brought

* Entirely distinct from the Union League Club of New York and from the club of the same name in Philadelphia.—Ed.

about the abolition of slavery in the State, made the colored man a citizen, and established a school system for the people, as "infamous," he betrays his inability to discuss historical matters with candor and impartiality. It is, perhaps, too early to expect such qualities in a section so recently enfranchised. The day is not far distant, it is to be hoped, when the "joke" out of which grew the inexpressible horrors perpetrated by the Ku Klux Klan will find a different mode of treatment from that indulged in by the writer in THE CENTURY.

An Ex-Member of the "Union League."

July 14, 1884.

Congregational Singing.

SHALL our church music be by the people or by choirs, or by both? This question of choirs or no choirs seems so largely one of taste that we could safely leave it to the individual choice of the churches, did not other considerations present themselves. I believe that we should by all means have a good chorus choir. Few churches will hesitate to avail themselves of the assistance of a good organ and organist, with or without a precentor; why not as well employ the much more effective help of a good chorus choir? If it is feared that the choir will sing for, and in place of, the congregation, let the choir be restricted to one anthem in each service, and the organ played so full in the hymn-tunes that the congregation will, practically, be forced to sing. If personal display be feared, it is to be said that there are no solos in the full or true anthem, and that it is only in the professional quartet where this unseemly ambition obtrudes itself for the pleasure or misery of the auditors.

In the unfortunately plain service of our American churches, the Roman Catholic and Episcopal of course excepted, there seems to be no way in which the people can take part except by the singing of hymns. And as the people evidently should take some part, they then must sing. As they cannot sing the elaborate music of the anthem or cantata, they must needs have hymns and plain tunes for their use; and this leads us to our theme of congregational singing.

First, what is congregational singing? Everybody is ready with a reply, yet few will give a correct one. In the many churches where congregational singing has been attempted, and alleged failure has been the result, the first essential has been lacking, namely, a congregation. A few worshipers scattered over an auditorium far too large for them do not constitute a congregation. A congregation is such a number of people as completely fills the edifice or room in which they are gathered. Five hundred people in some charming country church or chapel would at home make a congregation. The same persons in Dr. Hall's church in New York city would not be a congregation at all; and their singing in the latter place would be practically a failure, however fine and effective in a church which they filled. If a church seats five thousand people, there must be five thousand people in it to have any congregational singing in the true and proper sense of the word. Singers may be likened to gunpowder. Condensed in the pistol, the thimbleful of powder may produce marked effect; a barrelful scattered over the lawn will not

injure him who may apply a torch to it. Our singers, whether choir or congregation, must be compact and together if we would realize our just expectations. Therefore, let us not attempt congregational singing until we first have a congregation. This essential lacking, let us, with or without money, get a choir to do for us what we shall fail in attempting ourselves.

With our full congregation gathered, what else do we need? Many things. Next, a good organ. Now, a good organ is not simply a well-made instrument; it must be of proper size and specification. The size may be determined as follows: Given for example, an auditorium 50 x 80 feet, with a space of 4000 square feet. Divide by 4, and we have 1000 as the number of sittings. (This allows fully for aisles and other passages.) Divide 1000 sittings by 25, and we have 40 as the proper number of registers the organ should contain at the ordinary three-inch hydrostatic pressure. Suppose the auditorium to be twice this size, it would seem that the organ should have 80 registers. This does not follow. Sixty registers should be the absolute maximum and limit of the number of registers in any organ. If more power be needed, let it then be obtained by increased pressure. My own test is this: when any organ reaches the point where that impertinent abomination called the pneumatic action is needed, it is too large, and is sure to be a failure more or less complete. Having played nearly all the great organs in the world, I am able to affirm this with great positiveness. By the preceding formula the desirable size of the organ may be determined for any edifice. The organ should also be properly placed, preferably in the rear of the pulpit, in all except Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches, the organ-floor to be raised slightly, say five or six feet, above the floor of the house. Crowded into some tower or niche, the organ will take its ample revenge by a choked or sullen utterance, worthless alike for leading singers or devotions. If architects would only take a few music lessons!

Next, we must have a good organist. A good organist is not simply a good executant and master of the instrument, but a man of character and consecration. He who views himself as a hireling simply will most surely fail in reaching the highest powers of music in public worship. He should be a member of the church,—the Christian Church of some or any sect,—and interested in its work and welfare. Perhaps some of you may not agree with this latter proposition, but I tell you, brothers, to try it: it *may* help the church, and I *know* it will help us.

After the good organ well played, we should have a good precentor. Not simply a singer, but also a consecrated man who has voice as well as ability. The baritone voice is by far the best for this purpose when joined to the person indicated. We now seem to be fully armed and equipped, but not yet. Almost our chief necessity is yet lacking, namely, a good book of hymns and tunes.

It has been a part of my labors the past season to examine the leading books issued for congregational singing. What is a good congregational tune? I can best define it negatively. It must not lack rhythm, yet it must be free from all odd, strange, or complicated rhythm. It must not lack harmonic variety, yet strange, confused, or elaborate modulation and unusual