

AFTERMATH OF MUSICAL FETE.

Mammoth Dramatic Performance For Walker Memorial Fund.

LIST OF THOSE WHO TOOK PART

New Howard Theater the Scene of a Most Brilliant Array of Noted Stage Folk, Educators and Leading Citizens, Who Plan to Erect Monument to the Late George Walker.

By OLIVER RANDOLPH.

Washington.—Strange as it may sound, yet it is true that one of the most stubborn obstacles that the Negro in music and drama has had to overcome was a strongly entrenched prejudice against Negro professional stage people that dominated the cultured and refined members of his own race. But the Negro artists in music and drama have now at last the "heart and hand" of the better class of their own people. A most striking illustration of this fact was demonstrated recently when the Hackley-Coleridge-Taylor-Dumas-Aldridge-Walker-Cole Dramatic club of this city presented for two nights at the new Howard theater a most remarkable and historic musical and dramatic entertainment which was participated in by some of the most celebrated colored artists.

The entertainment, which drew crowded houses both nights, was called "the George Walker memorial," and the proceeds are to be applied to a fund to erect a suitable monument to



AIDA OVERTON WALKER.

the late George Walker, "America's greatest straight comedian and most successful pioneer of the Negro profession." On the stage as participants were the leading colored professional artists in music and drama as well as leaders in education, in the professions and in other high walks of life. There was Aida Overton Walker, the foremost colored woman on the American stage today. There was Mrs. Mary Church Terrell, noted lecturer and educator, schooled in the best universities of America and Europe, and J. Rosamond Johnson, celebrated musical composer, partner in the well known Cole and Johnson team.

Mrs. A. M. Curtis, famed as the head directress of the exhibit at the Jamestown exposition, wife of Dr. A. M. Curtis, the noted surgeon, who is president of the National Medical association; Mrs. Robert H. Pelham, former director of music in Howard university, the wife of Robert H. Pelham, newspaper man and census official; Tutt and Whitney, clever comedians, who have starred together and won national fame; Clarence Cameron White, famous concert violinist, who has studied the "king of instruments" under masters in this country and abroad; Andrew Tribble, known far and wide as the Negro Julian Ettinge; Troy, the sweet tenor; Guy, who gives promise of being a tragedian, and many others.

Never before had such a brilliant array of professional amateur and non-professional talent been presented to an audience at the nation's capital. And the chief credit goes to young R. G. Doggett, a junior college student in Howard university. He is president of the club, under whose auspices the memorial was got up. It was his mind that conceived the mammoth project.

The program was indeed unique and intensely interesting. The progress of the Negro on the stage was emphasized not only in the remarks of the speakers, but by the splendid performances of the professional and amateur artists. The program in detail was as follows:

Remarks by the president of the club, R. G. Doggett; introduction of Mrs. Terrell by Mrs. Robert Pelham; "George Walker, the Man," Mrs. Mary Church Terrell.

Part 2.—One act playlet by R. G. Doggett, Aida O. Walker, Mrs. A. M. Curtis and Mrs. Robert Pelham, "Evolution of Negro Music;" cast: Hostess, Mrs. A. M. Curtis, president of the Johnson Study club. Mrs. Robert Pelham, Butler, W. Tedrington; guests: Mesdames Alfred Lewis, Charles West, Charles Pickett, Sadie Holly, Mary Church Terrell, Misses

Gereneada Bailey, Minnie Brown, Eleanor Curtis, Estelle Arnold, Beatrice Ridgley, Estelle Collier, Emma Kennedy, Marie Scott, Edna Gordon, Theresa Lee, Messrs. Jay Cox, John Williams, Maurice Clifford, R. G. Doggett, James Cowan and James Chestnut.

Incidental musical features:

"African Dances," Clarence Cameron White; reading, "O Black and Unknown Bard!" Mrs. Robert Pelham; "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child," Jeter String trio; plantation melodies, "Mama In De Cold Ground" and "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia," R. G. Doggett; folk song, "Let Us Cheer the Weary Traveler," Miss Edna T. Gordon; "Bonbon Buddy," Master Merrill Curtis; J. Rosamond Johnson, piano solos and vocal solos; "That's Why They Call Me Shine," Master Barrington Guy; prelude to "Dream Lovers," Miss Edna Gordon.

Part 3.—Dramatic reading, "Fra Giacomo," Nathaniel Guy; singing and dance; specialty, Misses Thompson and Gee; ten-



S. T. WHITNEY.

or solo, Henry Troy; imitations of Aida Overton Walker, little Aida Overton Walker Vaughn; specialty, Salem Whitney and Homer Tutt; specialty, Andrew Tribble; specialty, Aida Overton Walker, assisted by local belles and beaux. The Lyric orchestra was conducted for this special occasion by Mr. James Reese Europe, president and conductor of the famous Symphony orchestra of New York city.

With the funds they have already secured and with the funds that will come through the contribution of those interested this club not only proposes to erect a monument to the late comedian, but also to have two paintings of Walker made by a noted colored artist in Paris—one of the paintings to be of Walker in street dress, which will be hung in the new Carnegie library at Howard university; the other to be of Walker in his celebrated pose as "Bonbon Buddy, the Chocolate Drop," which will be presented to the Frogs' club, the famous meeting place of colored professional stage people in New York city.

Beginning of the Negro on the Stage.

What may be termed the renaissance of the Negro stage began with the phenomenal success of Williams and Walker in the production of "In Dahomey" about eight years ago. Since that remarkable company made decided "hits" playing to the aristocracy of this country and the king and queen and the royalty in general of England the Negro on the American stage has made great progress. "In Dahomey," "Abyssinia" and "Bandana Land" the great plays of the great Williams-Walker company are but milestones that mark the progress of the black artists.

Young Negroes of a high degree of intelligence, some of college training,



J. ROSAMOND JOHNSON.

have given serious thought and study to the stage, thereby producing first class performers as well as creditable dramatic writers. In music the professional Negro has also brought a large measure of intelligence and industry to his work. The leading professional Negro musicians have studied under celebrated masters, some of them having finished their musical education abroad under the direction of the old world masters.

Anniversary of Westminster Lodge.

The twenty-seventh anniversary celebration of Westminster lodge, No. 2408, Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, in Providence, R. I., on Thursday evening, June 22, was in every respect splendidly carried out. District Grand Master William H. James of Massachusetts was given a grand reception. District Grand Master Townsend D. Solomon was guest of honor.