

Editorials

The Wind and the Whirlwind

THOSE that sow the wind must reap the whirlwind. We wonder if they like the harvest in Atlanta, Ga.

Those that sowed it were Hoke Smith and Clark Howell. Each wished to be Governor of Georgia, and each controlled a newspaper. A chief claim of their plea for support, which each made with strident tongue and screaming type, was his superior hatred of the negro. "If made Governor," said Hoke Smith, "I will have illiteracy laws past that will shut out every negro from the ballot and let in every white man." "No," said Clark Howell, "we can shut him out in a better way, with taxes; for your law will shut out white men. And did not Hoke Smith," Clark Howell continued, "when Secretary of the Interior under Cleveland, give a six-hundred dollar clerkship to a negro which ought to have gone to a white man?" And John Temple Graves, who had another paper, and would have liked to be Governor of Georgia, joined the chorus, in his own way, damning the negro, each of these three distinguished citizens of the capital city of the South vying with the others in cursing the negro, the freed negro, the negro that was trying to get education and wealth, the negro ambitious to rise and succeed, in the city famous not least for its negro seminaries and colleges.

And the negroes were angered. In one and another conference the cultured, self-respecting negroes of Georgia and the country expressed their indignation and made their demands for equal civil rights. The most peaceful among them, who had gone down from New York to Atlanta to praise the path of peace along which Booker Washington was leading them by the arts of industry and the acquisition of modest wealth, editors and bankers, came back incensed at the insults they had received, and ready to join with DuBois and Trotter in their Niagara movement. One of the best known of the negro bishops, leaving the train at Atlanta, passing out thru the main passageway of the station, was halted by a

policeman and told that niggers could not go that way, but must leave by a side door. If intelligent men, accustomed to self-restraint, were thus incensed, what would be the effect on the worthless, reckless negroes whom Atlanta had educated in its dives and saloons, and who had been told that their chief passion was to insult white women? Then came the reports of attempted assaults by black fiends, some true, some imaginary, and the Atlanta *News* called on the white men to rise in Ku-Klux Klans and exterminate the race; and Clark Howell's paper demanded that the laws against vagrancy be applied to every black man that loitered about a saloon, and that he be sent to a convict camp. Indeed, had not one of the other millionaire candidates for Governor got rich out of a negro convict camp?

Then came the whirlwind, well prepared, faithfully sown. Two negroes were arrested on the charge of attempted assault. One escaped; the other, who was certainly innocent, was seized by a mob from the officers and killed. But that was not enough. The passion so carefully incited by vicious journals and eloquent ranters burst forth. The crowd was ready to kill, as their yellow journals had bidden them, offering a thousand dollars reward. So they attacked any negro they could find, riding in his Jim Crow seat in a trolley car, or walking home from work. They even broke into a barber's shop and seized and killed two negroes quietly plying their trade. No one knows how many negroes were killed, a dozen at least, probably a good many more, and they were wounded by the hundred. It was as bad as a massacre of Jews in Russia, as senseless and as barbarous—and we ask our President to protest to the Russian Government against Kishinef, Bialystok and Siedlce!

And this is not the end of it. The disturbances and riots continue. Of course they do. They are provoked. A hundred negroes met Monday night in their lodge room to protest, and they talked bitterly. It was reported to the police, and they came to arrest them, and there

was shooting and killing on both sides. There had been the day before a meeting of white people to protest, and they had not been disturbed by the police ; but that negroes should meet and talk was "seditious," and that they should arm themselves in defense was dangerous, altho one shop has sold \$16,000 worth of arms and ammunition to white men.

What will be the end of it all? We cannot guess, but we know that to their latest day of life a pall of shame and horror ought to rest on Hoke Smith, Clark Howell, John Temple Graves, and every other man who has stirred up this race hatred, violence and crime, and brought this ringing curse on Atlanta and the disgraced State of Georgia.