

## **The National Negro Business League**

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**The National Negro Business League** The fourteenth annual meeting of the National Negro Business League, recently held at Philadelphia, has served to call attention again to the steady progress which the Negro race in all parts of

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the country is making in farming, in business, and in the trades. Probably never in the history of this country has there come together so large an audience of respectable and substantial colored citizens as gathered in the Academy of Music, in Philadelphia, to listen to Dr. Booker T. Washington's annual address to the Business League and the colored citizens of Philadelphia. At this meeting and at all other sessions of the League this year special effort was made to emphasize the opportunities that are open to the Negro in the small towns and on the farms of the South. The number of Negro farmers who have risen to the position of plantation owners has measurably increased within recent years, and the stories of the successes which these men, starting with no capital and little education, have made can hardly fail to make an impression upon the younger generation, many of whom in our Northern cities are making a mean living as porters and window-washers or in some other dependent position. As indicating the progress which Negroes are making in the higher forms of commerce and corporate business, there was recorded at this meeting the completion, in the Negro town of Mound Bayou, Mississippi, of the first cottonseed oil mill erected and controlled by Negroes, and the establishment in Atlanta, Georgia, of the Standard Life Insurance Company, the first insurance company organized by Negroes and conducted under the safeguards and regulations of the old-line companies for whites. In order to complete this oil mill and establish this insurance company Negroes have had to bring together in each case a sum of money something over \$100,000. The fact that this has been successfully accomplished, together with the testimony that was offered as to the character of these enterprises and the men who are conducting them, is a very proper subject for congratulation not only to the black people in every part of the country but to the many white people who are watching with interest and sympathy the struggle of the race to rise. The National Business League, in bringing together every year representatives of the solid, substantial, and successful members of the race, is performing a service not merely to the colored people but to the whole country. It is well, as Mr. Wanamaker remarked in his speech to the League, and as every good merchant knows, "to show your goods," and there is no better answer to the attempts that are sometimes made to depreciate the

Negro race and limit its opportunities for advancement than the showing which the meetings of this League make from year to year of steady, silent progress of the masses of the people. There will be many attempts this year, when the Negro people are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of their emancipation, to show, in expositions and otherwise, the progress of the race; but the Negro Business League is an annual exposition of the progress of the race, and it has the advantage that it not only exhibits the progress but it shows the men who are making it.