

hood. It is not a shallow matter of getting married and being brothers-in-law. A pure-blooded Mongolian can be "American." A white man can be "American." It is not a color; it is a spirit.

We claim, therefore, that the most vital need in the country is to Americanize thoroughly our native-born. We must Americanize the laws and legislatures of the South. If we are ever to Americanize the foreign-born we must have something to do it with, and that something must be the native product. Those who come to us will tend to become what we are. Have we ever reflected that perhaps our failure to make the immigrant an American is due first of all to our failure in being American?

It happens to be that the negro is the most American group in the country, both in ancestry and in point of attitude of mind. His line reaches much further back than that of the average white man of the country. In spirit he is less arrogant, more liberal and democratic, and believes more sincerely that "all men are born free and equal." He does not believe that he is naturally entitled to more privileges than other breeds of men. That is of the very essence of the spirit that made America. The negro does not lynch, and does not act by virtue of the mob, except in self-defense against white mobs. He wants the case tried in court. He wants law and order to be supreme and as a group he does not ask any artificial advantage of any other group. That is of the essence of America.

The intelligent negro is therefore puzzled when he hears anybody talking about Americanizing the negro. He knows that the battle would be over if only we could Americanize the white man.

## The Negro and Americanization

An interesting and thoughtful letter has been written to the *Philadelphia Ledger* by William Pickens of Baltimore. He writes:

We hear so much in these days about Americanization, in conferences, schools, social programs and committees, that it is about time to stop and consider what it is to be American or Americanized. We hear much of teaching English and standards of living, systems of politics and government. These things are important, but they are not all there is to being an American; they are not the most fundamental elements of the American genius. For example, they speak English in Canada, in England and in some guise in the union of South Africa and in Georgia and Texas. But neither the union of South Africa, nor Georgia, nor Texas has anything like the American spirit.

The American spirit is, first of all, a spirit of liberty. It necessarily involves a spirit of equality and of brother-