THE SPECIAL NEED

AMONG THE HURDLES OF THE FREE MAN TO HIS EMANCIPATION

ATROCIOUS CRIMES OF THE STATE

Around for years, the newspaper was a constant reminder of the state's oppressive rule. It was a tabloid format, with front-page headlines like "THE SPECIAL NEED," "AMONG THE HURDLES OF THE FREE MAN TO HIS EMANCIPATION," and "ATROCIOUS CRIMES OF THE STATE." The paper was filled with articles calling for change, with a focus on individual rights and the struggle for freedom. The editorials were strong and unapologetic in their criticism of the oppressive regimes that were in power. The paper was a beacon of hope for those who were fighting against the status quo, a reminder that change was possible and necessary. It was a testament to the power of the written word in shaping the course of history.
Mr. Henry O. Tanner—A Young Afro-American who is Fast Scaling the Ladder of Fame—Key to his Success—"A Word to the Wise," etc.

Paris, France, June 30, 1899.

To the Editor:

Our race owes much to the family of the Right Reverend Benjamin T. Tanner. It is very seldom that the children of a prominent man make for themselves such a unique and valuable place in life as is true of Bishop Tanner’s children.

A few years ago, Mrs. Hallie T. Dillon, now Mrs. Hallie T. Johnson, the oldest daughter of the Bishop, graduated from the Woman’s Medical College of Philadelphia. After her graduation she came to the state of Alabama and passed the State Medical Board after a severe examination lasting ten days. She was not only the first colored woman who had done this but she was the first woman of any race. After holding the position of Resident Physician of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute for a number of years she became the wife of Rev. J. Q. Johnson, a successful minister now located in the city of Montgomery, Alabama.

But I began this article with a view of writing especially about Mr. Henry O. Tanner, the eldest son of the family, who now resides in the city of Paris and who has taken a high position here as an artist. Paris is today beyond question the headquarters of the world in Art. Thousands of artists come here from all parts of the world and many of them toil for years without their names ever becoming known to the public.

Mrs. Washington and I have seen...
much of Mr. Tanner and his work since
we have been in Paris. We have not
only seen him and his work but have
had an opportunity of hearing the
opinion of others regarding him. Mr.
Tanner is still a young man, being now
a little over forty years of age, yet in
the Art world and out of it, as well, his
accomplishments are well known. Until
we visited his studio in the Latin
Quarter where most of the artists reside
we did not get a full insight into the
life of this brilliant young American
artist. He has achieved his success by
hard study and persistent work. He
permits nothing to turn him aside from
his life ambition. Mr. Tanner is
determined that he shall not be known
merely a successful Negro artist but
that his work shall stand upon its merit
alone. Here in France no one judges a
man by his color; the color of the face
neither helps nor hinders. “A man’s a
man for a’ that and a’ that.”

There are two results for which almost
every artist in Paris, and in the world,
for that matter, strives: one is that he
may produce a painting that shall be of
such high merit as to be purchased by
the French Government and placed on
exhibition in the Luxembourg Palace;
the other is that the painting shall be so
valued that on the death of the artist, it
may be given a place in the palace
known as “The Louvre,” which is the
most remarkable palace in the world
for its vast extent and for the magnifi-
cence of its architecture and for the
priceless art treasures which it contains.
The first object Mr. Tanner, though
young as he is and with all the obstacles
he has had to overcome, has accom-
plished and has done it grandly.

A few evening ago when I remarked
to some of my American friends that I
was going to the Luxembourg Palace
to look at a painting of a young Ameri-
can colored man, they looked at me in
astonishment and remarked that I must
be mistaken. It hardly seemed possible
to get it through their heads that a
Negro had produced a painting that the
highest critics of Art would place in this palace, but when I finally convinced them of the truth of my statement they too were soon on their way to the palace, and were glad to claim Mr. Tanner as a fellow-countryman.

In this connection I would further remark that only two or three Americans have thus far been successful in getting their paintings in this Luxembourg Palace. The subject of Mr. Tanner's painting which hangs in the Palace is "The Raising of Lazarus." I think he considers this, so far, his masterpiece, but I feel sure that this is only a beginning of his great work. Other paintings of his which have attracted attention both in France and America are "Daniel in the Lion's Den," "The Annunciation," "The Jew's Wailing Place," "Flight into Egypt," and "The Still Hunt." Mr. Tanner works slowly and carefully, producing as a rule but one painting a year. In order to do the best work he has spent two winters in the Holy Land; and it was there that his "Jew's Wailing Place" and "Flight into Egypt" were conceived. I feel quite sure that our American friends would be glad to read some remarks made by the press with regard to the work of this young man. Le Temps, the most conservative paper in the city of Paris says of Mr. Tanner's "The Raising of Lazarus": "The artist is a young American who has perhaps not shown a deep religious sentiment but he has exhibited sufficiently the qualities of a rare artist. One whom you do not meet every day." La Fin de Jour says, "The Raising of Lazarus by Mr. Tanner is one of the best renderings in the salon."

There is another side to the efforts of Mr. Tanner to which he may not thank me for alluding. In his early struggles to get upon his feet I fear that the race has not given him that practical and substantial support which it might have done. An earnest effort was made in Philadelphia and elsewhere sometime ago to get our people to contribute sufficient money to purchase "The Bagpipe Lesson," an early work of the
artist, but with little or no practical success. Quite a number of excellent orations and speeches were made upon the subject, but an artist cannot live on fine oratory and speech making. This first work of Mr. Tanner's was finally, I believe, purchased by some Philadelphia white people. Few of the race are able individually to purchase Mr. Tanner's original paintings but hundreds are able to secure the photographs of these productions. Will they do it? This is the practical test in a large measure of our gratitude too, and admiration for Mr. Tanner. These photographs can be had for a small sum and they should adorn the homes of thousands of our people in America. Mr. Tanner's address is 51 Boulevard St. Jacques, Paris, France.

A man who has done the work which Mr. Tanner has done, and is still doing, should be placed in a position where his mind will not be concerned about the matter of bread and butter. Will we help do this or shall we leave it all to others to do?

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON.

STATE GRAND LODGE.

Indiana Knights of Pythias, Meet and Hold a Successful Session. The Election of Officers. Social Functions.

The Grand Lodge of the State of the order of Knights of Pythias convened in this city July 11 at Pride of the West Castle Hall, with Dr. Jos. H. Ward, Grand Chancellor, presiding. The annual reports of the Grand Chancellor, Keeper of Records and Seal and Grand Master of exchequer were encouraging features of the session, showing an increase of over 300 per cent in membership during the year and a prosperous financial condition.

The order embraces the leading class of citizens as members and is steadily increasing its membership. The election of officers for the ensuing term occurred Wednesday the 12th, much interest was manifested in the Grand