

of the U. S. Army in France has a better record.

What was the real animus back of this wholesale accusation? It was the fact that many Americans would rather have lost the war than to see a black soldier talking to a white woman. For instance, the Mayor of Bar-sur-Aube issued this Order, on June 26, 1918:

According to orders given by American Military authorities, it is strongly recommended that no French women receive visits from colored soldiers or talk with them on the streets.

On the other hand, what is the official American opinion of Negro troops?

General Pershing in his address to the Ninety-second Division at Le Mans, France, January 29, 1919, said:

"The Ninety-second Division has, without a doubt, been a success in its work at the front, and I desire to compliment the officers and men upon the discipline and morale which has existed in this command during its stay in France."

Brigadier-General Hay, 184th Brigade, Ninety-second Division, said:

"I have been with colored troops for twenty-five years, and I have never seen a better soldier."

Captain Willis, Supply Officer, 365th Infantry, said:

"The troops of the Ninety-second Division are the best disciplined and best saluting soldiers I have seen in France."

Brigadier-General Sherburne said:

"The Brigade Commander wishes to record in General Orders the entire satisfaction it has given him to have commanded the first brigade of Negro Artillery ever organized. This satisfaction is due to the excellent record the men have made."

Allen J. Greer, Colonel, General Staff, signs this order of General Ballou:

"Five months ago today the Ninety-second Division landed in France"

"After seven weeks of training it took over a Sector in the Front Line and since that time some portion of the Division has been practically continuously under fire."

"It participated in the last battle of the War with creditable success, continually pressing the attack against highly organized defensive works. It advanced successfully on the first day of the battle, attaining its objectives and capturing prisoners. This in the face of determined opposition by an alert enemy and against rifle, machine guns and artillery fire. The issue of the second day's battle was rendered indecisive by the order to cease firing at eleven a. m., when the Armistice became effective."

A report from the officer in charge of Leave Area, November 6, 1918, says:

"Nothing but the highest praise can be given the colored soldier for the manner in which he conducted himself while in France. He conducted himself in a gentlemanly manner in every sector in which the Division operated, and won for himself the love and commendation of the French people."

RETURNING SOLDIERS



WE are returning from war THE CRISIS and tens of thousands of black men were drafted into a great struggle. For bleeding France and what she means and has meant and will mean to us and humanity and against the threat of German race arrogance, we fought gladly and to the last drop of blood; for America and her highest ideals, we fought in far off hope; for the dominant southern oligarchy entrenched in Washington we fought in bitter resignation. For the America that represents and gloats in lynching, disfranchisement, caste, brutality and devilish insult—

for this, in the hateful upturning and mixing of things, we were forced by vindictive fate to fight, also.

But today we return! We return from the slavery of uniform which the world's madness demanded us to don to the freedom of civil garb. We stand again to look America squarely in the face and call a spade a spade. We sing: This country of ours, despite all its better souls have done and dreamed, is yet a shameful land.

It *lynches*.

And lynching is barbarism of a degree of contemptible nastiness unparalleled in human history. Yet for fifty years we have lynched two Negroes a week, and we have kept this up right through the war.

It *disfranchises* its own citizens.

Disfranchisement is the deliberate theft and robbery of the only protection of poor against rich and black against white. The land that disfranchises its citizens and calls itself a democracy lies and knows it lies.

It encourages *ignorance*.

It has never really tried to educate the Negro. A dominant minority does not want Negroes educated. It wants servants, dogs, whores and monkeys. And when this land allows a reactionary group by its stolen political power to force as many black folk into these categories as it possibly can, it cries in contemptible hypocrisy: "They threaten us with degeneracy; they cannot be educated."

It *steals* from us.

It organizes industry to cheat us. It cheats us out of our land; it cheats us out of our labor. It confiscates

our savings. It reduces our wages. It raises our rent. It steals our profit. It taxes us without representation. It keeps us consistently and universally poor, and then feeds us on charity and derides our poverty.

It *insults* us.

It has organized a nation-wide and latterly a world-wide propaganda of deliberate and continuous insult and defamation of black blood wherever found. It decrees that it shall not be possible in travel nor residence, work nor play, education nor instruction for a black man to exist without tacit or open acknowledgment of his inferiority to the dirtiest white dog. And it looks upon any attempt to question or even discuss this dogma as arrogance, unwarranted assumption and treason.

This is the country to which we Soldiers of Democracy return. This is the fatherland for which we fought! But it is *our* fatherland. It was right for us to fight. The faults of *our* country are *our* faults. Under similar circumstances, we would fight again. But by the God of Heaven, we are cowards and jackasses if now that that war is over, we do not marshal every ounce of our brain and brawn to fight a sterner, longer, more unbending battle against the forces of hell in our own land.

We *return*.

We *return from fighting*.

We *return fighting*.

Make way for Democracy! We saved it in France, and by the Great Jehovah, we will save it in the United States of America, or know the reason why.

PREJUDICE



GEORGIA DOUGLAS JOHNSON



THESE fell miasmic rings of mist, with
ghoulish menace bound,
Their noose-horizons tightening my little
world around,
They still the throbbing will to sing, to
dance, to speed away,

And fling the soul insurgent back into its
shell of clay:
Beneath these crusted silences a seething
Etna lies,
The fire of whose furnaces may sleep—but
never dies!



NEEDHAM ROBERTS, 369th U. S. INFANTRY, FORMERLY 15TH N. Y. N. G., DECORATED WITH THE CROIX DE GUERRE, WITH PALM, AND WEARING TWO SERVICE STRIPES AND TWO WOUND STRIPES.