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## HUMAN BROTHERHOOD IS MISSION OF VANCOUVERITE

The Brotherhood of Man is still the dream of a few sincere optimists in a world in which most of their fellows remain indifferent, if not actually hostile. Many prominent men agree with the theory, but do nothing towards putting it into practice.

A notable exception is R. M. Millar, founder of M.M.A.R. & Coe, who has devoted much of his time for the past eight years to the shedding of light on what he calls the world's darkest problem: the inferior position of the coloured races. Recently his hobby has become practically a full-time job, and a fairly expensive one at that.

"Bob," as he is called by his host of friends, was president of Vancouver Rotary in 1922 and 1923.

Since he first became interested in inter-racial problems, Mr. Millar has developed into a public speaker of note on his one pet subject. A tour in the State of Washington gave him the opportunity of addressing service clubs there and most of these clubs asked for repeat visits. He is the kind of speaker an audience is quite willing to hear more than once.

In British Columbia Mr. Millar has spoken in most of the important cities, invariably meeting his own travelling expenses.

All told, he has spoken in Vancouver on more than a hundred occasions. He is as much at home in a church pulpit as on a public rostrum, and never says "no" when called upon in an emergency.

The plea for racial equality was carried as far east as Toronto by Mr. Millar in 1948, when a speaking tour was arranged by Ontario's minister of health, the Hon. Russell T. Kelley.

He is now in Ontario again where he is making an extensive speaking tour mostly to service clubs and churches. He was visiting last week with Mr. and Mrs. Vern Thompson at their farm at Union. Mrs. Millar and Mrs. Thompson are sisters. Mrs. Millar being the former Bertha E. Watson. Mr. Millar came from Guelph originally. They have lived in the west for over forty years. The speaking tour, sponsored by the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, will include Guelph and Brampton Rotary Clubs, as well as service clubs in Orangeville and Richmond Hill in this district.

A bluff, healthy, well-built man in his sixties, Mr. Millar speaks fluently without notes, but he is still a member of the Public Speakers' Club and a student of elocution. His first address on racial relations was made when a number of former presidents of the Rotary Club were called on for four and a half minute speeches, all of which, except Millar's, were lightly humorous. He received a real ovation.

Crammed full of meat and bristling with punchy sentences, Mr. Millar made every sentence count. It had taken him eight hours to prepare that 4½ minute talk! Today he averages 50 addresses a year, and is frequently heard over the western radio network.

Those who are working for betterment of the racial problems in Canada are concerned with such groups as our 25,000 Chinese, 23,000 Japanese, 22,000 Negroes and 2,000 East Indians. These people feel that they have been kept in a state of near vassalage and denied the opportunity for economic and cultural advancement, no matter what their qualifications might be, because their skin pigmentation is different from that of the white man.

One sign of enlightened progress is the recent granting of the franchise to East Indians. This has come to the Sikhs and the Hindus after more than 20 years of waiting, and is regarded as one of the most important advances in the struggle for racial equality in the Dominion.

Chinese in British Columbia have had the vote in provincial and in federal elections since the legislature amended the Election Act in 1947, and have already voted in two provincial and two federal by-elections, going to the polls in larger proportionate numbers than the whites. The theory held by some alarmists that the Oriental vote could be "delivered" by some political boss was shown to be unfounded.

In Victoria, Chinese property owners could vote on money by-laws but not for mayor or aldermen. That anomaly no longer exists. The Union of British Columbia Municipalities, at its annual convention at Harrison Lake in September, passed a resolution advocating the franchise to all qualified Chinese in municipal elections. The vote was almost unanimous, only two delegates opposing.

The three delegates from the Vancouver City Council supported the resolution, but as certain changes must first be made in the city charter Vancouver's 1200 eligible Chinese could not mark their ballots until this year.

Another 800 will vote in other parts of the province.

Many stout friends are still carrying on the fight for a better deal for the Japanese, who were deported from the coastal regions during the war, and who are now scattered far and wide across Canada. Most of them are firmly reestablished, and they may vote in any election if they so choose.

Mr. Millar is particularly conversant with the problems of our East Indians. He has many personal friends among the Sikhs and the Hindus, and attends their important social functions. He was in charge of arrangements for the birthday banquet held in honour of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, prime minister of the Dominion of India, when the guests included at the head table Mrs. Maude Field, the only Canadian negress who is a Christian Science practitioner, and representatives of enough countries to form a League of Nations in miniature.

One of the leading spirits in the Canadian Association for the Education of Coloured People, Mr. Millar has been largely instrumental in having this organization arrange luncheons in honour of outstanding visitors, including the popular radio entertainer, Rochester, for the Jack Benny program. It was one of the very few occasions when this famous negro has sat at the head table at a white man's public luncheon.

Mr. Millar is in deadly earnest in his campaign against racial prejudice. In his addresses he frequently quotes experts who have given the subject exhaustive study, including H. G. Wells, Pearl Buck, Paul Robeson, Abraham Lincoln, Professor Basil Matthews, and Andrew Hatcher, a leading American negro educator who made this challenging statement when addressing the students of Princeton University:

"If you discriminate against me because I am unclean, I can cleanse myself. If you segregate me because I lack knowledge, I can become educated. But, if you discriminate against me because of my colour, I can do nothing. God gave me that. I have no protection from race prejudice but to take refuge in cynicism, bitterness and hatred."

Two thousand years ago Cicero advised against getting slaves from Britain "because those people were so stupid they were incapable of being taught, and unfit to become part of the household of Athens."

In the light of the advance made by the proud Anglo-American people since their ancestors were considered unfit to share in the glory of Greece, who can say, asks Mr. Millar, what underprivileged coloured race of today may be the dominant



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world-power in the years to come? Mr. Millar uses few statistics in his appeals for tolerance, but these are striking enough to warrant repetition. The coloured people outnumber the whites three to one, and India has one-quarter of the world's population, estimated at 2,150,959,919 by the World's Almanac for 1948.

China is crowded with 600,000,000 souls, and lost 50,000,000 by Japanese aggression.

Although the great scientist Broca recognizes 34 shades of color in the human skin, there are only four main divisions: white, black, yellow and brown, all of which overlap to a considerable extent. Racially the Negroes are black, the American Indians are brown, the Mongols are yellow and the Caucasians are white, but the shadings range from the very light of the Scandinavians to the very dark of the Arabs and East Indians. The darker a man may be, the more likely he is to be the target for racial prejudice. In the opinion of the average man, the Sikh and the Hindu are coloured, not white.

In one address, "Light on the World's Darkest Problem," Mr. Millar lit his audience with this conclusion:

"Whatever we do to help the Asiatic and colored races of the world, we must do quickly. The hour glass is running low across the Far East. A wise radicalism now in extending the right hand of fellowship, not only to the millions of Asiatics and colored people across the highways of the world, but also to the thousands who claim Canada as their home, will be true conservatism in the days that are to be. He who hesitates is lost.

"We must evangelize Asia, or the white race is on the way out!"

### The Wood Thrush

At the close of the day comes an avian band,  
Approaching the pool he has claimed for his own;  
And he sings, as he comes, with the voice of a flute.  
A ballad that's known to the folk of the wild  
All the joy of his life is contained in that song.  
The music he makes holds the spell of the woods;  
And the language is beautiful, clean, and distinct.  
Though hidden the meaning, alas, from mankind.  
At the edge of the pool he has ended his song.  
He silently bathes in the gathering dusk.  
And refreshed, he ascends to the limb of the oak,  
To preen, for a moment, before taking flight.  
Elizabeth D. Simons,  
July, 1951.  
Charleston, S.C., U.S.A.

The foregoing poem was written by a nature-lover in Charleston, South Carolina. Elizabeth D. Simons holds an interesting position in the Charleston Museum.

On Saturday mornings, a number of school children assemble at the museum, where Miss Simons conducts a nature-study class. The Nature Trailers go for hikes to study birds, stars, seashells, etc. Miss Simons has an intimate friend, who was her predecessor. This friend has a house on the river. She gives some time every day to the study of birds. There is a nook, under a spreading live-oak tree, where is a little pool for them to bathe in.

One day when the two friends were spending the day together, they heard the very lovely song of a Wood Thrush. They hid themselves. At twilight, the little songster came to bathe in the pool. Miss Simons who belongs to a Poetry Club, wrote this poem to describe her experience and sent it to a Georgetown friend, Miss H. A. Staunton.

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