

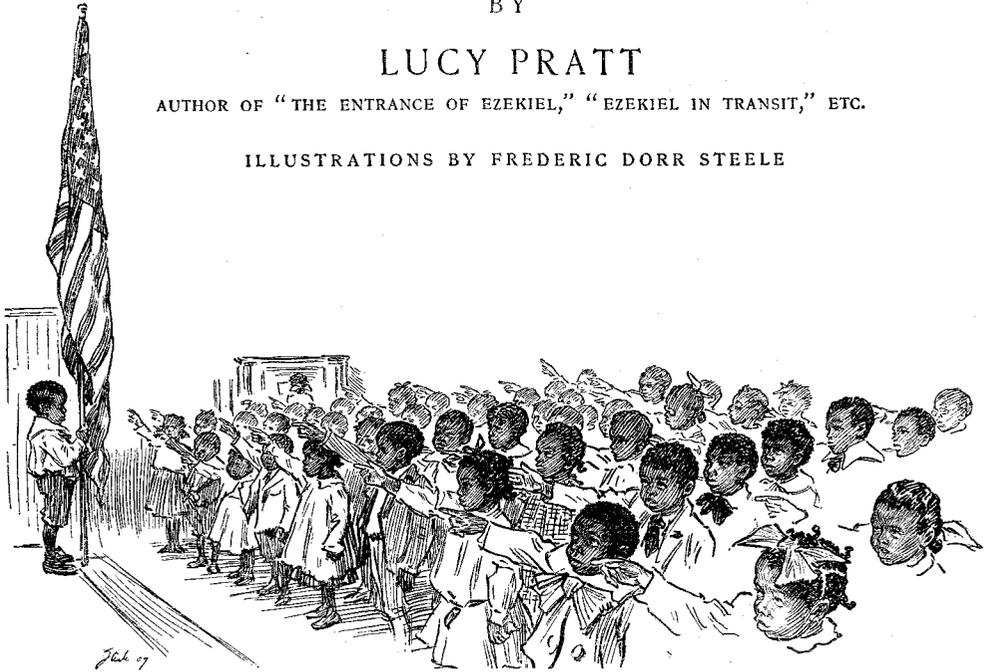
THE COLOR-BEARER

BY

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EZEKIEL looked down the long, straight road which led to the Whittier School, and traveled on slowly. It was still early, hardly eight o'clock; but, for the hundredth time, he recalled those last words which he had heard from Miss Doane the afternoon before:

"If you are here on time to-morrow morning, Ezekiel, I am going to let you hold the flag during morning exercises; be the flag-bearer. You would like that, I suppose?"

The flag-bearer! It was something which he could still think of only with bated breath. The flag-bearer! That he should have lived to deserve this honor! If he were there on time? Would there be any *doubt* about his being there on time? He listened to a far-away clock as it measured out eight faint, even strokes. He

listened again, too, when the clock stopped, for he thought he heard something else. It was like — music, he thought, and he stopped a moment and looked back down the long, straight road which threw out even distant objects with distinctness. He saw the distant object plainly, too — a high wagon with two long side seats, the horses pulling on in front as the music came nearer, nearer — a band!

Ezekiel felt a hot thrill of pleasure as he stepped aside and looked up in the full blare of sound at the men sitting there on the long seats with puffing cheeks and bulging eyes. He wished they wouldn't go on! It made him dance all over, music like that! And he looked excitedly at the low steps which led up into the high wagon. They would soon be gone. He ran on, his blood still throbbing, dancing, in his veins, and caught at the low steps, while the men on the long seats still played on.

Oh, away down South in Dixie!
Away! Away!

He threw his head back, glowing ecstatically with the joyous thrill of sound, and away rattled the wagon with its two long seats of puffing men and its one small boy tucked in down below, invisible to them all. Past the Whittier School, around the corner, and then down another long, straight road —

Away! Away!

Then, suddenly, the music stopped, and immediately there were only the harsh, metallic sounds of the rattling wagon, varied by a few unmusical voices coming down from above.

“Oh, shuh!” breathed Ezekiel, in disgust.

But the unmusical voices were evidently discussing musical possibilities, and presently, with a few preliminary puffs, something else came down from above — something different, unexpected, too. A rare, sweet, gentle flow it was, perhaps from only a few instruments. But as it flowed on delicately, alluringly, Ezekiel’s face softened dreamily, and he gazed back over the road, which was growing longer behind them, unconscious of it, unconscious of everything except gently rolling on upon a sweet, rare drift of sound. How long it continued he didn’t know, but occasionally he felt dimly conscious of a swaying curve, of a new direction, of still rolling on, but always on the sweet, rare drift of sound.

Then it stopped again, and he waked from his dream to another joyous rhythm of reality, and again he danced to the “Tum-te-tum-te-tum! Tum-te-tum! Tum-te-tum!” of the band.

A red-clover field at one side seemed to nod delicately, rhythmically, with the music, too; but even that was left behind, nodding finally only faintly in the distance.

Oh, say, can you see,
By the dawn’s early light!

It came like a loud, sudden call of danger, and Ezekiel started up on his seat and looked around him.

What so proudly we hail —

He jumped from the step and stood in the middle of the road, looking confusedly around him with a frightened face. Where was he? What were they playing? What were they singing? No, what were they *playing*? They *sang* it at the Whittier! They sang it just after *saluting the flag!* The flag? He was to hold the flag — he was to be the flag-bearer! This morning! If — he were there — on — time! Oh, where was he? They were probably singing it *now!* *Some one else was holding the*

flag! He stood there, still looking around miserably, helplessly. From farther on down the road a faint and mocking strain came back to him:

The star-spangled banner,
Oh, long may it wave
O’er the land of the free —

He turned sharply and began to run — back over the strange, hopeless-looking road, past the red-clover field, still nodding delicately at one side, past other fields not noticed before. He must be right. There was only one road!

The star! spang! gl-led! ban-ner!
Oh, lo-ong ma-ay i-it wa-ave!

Oh, how could he have forgotten?

The Whittier School stood up straight and still by the road, and a small, tired-looking boy with dusty shoes came shuffling into the yard. The sound of the children’s voices singing came out to him through the open windows, and he shuffled on and threw himself down on the grass close to the building. There were two chords from the piano, a slight shifting of feet, and then the children’s voices came out to him again:

“*I pledge allegiance to my flag, and to the republic for which it stands — one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.*”

He looked wearily around the yard. He thought he wouldn’t go into school at all that morning; he would just wait outside for a little while until he found out — there was one thing which he wanted to find out. It was comfortable lying there in the sun, too, beside the violet-bed, and it may have been an hour later when he looked up again, to see a small boy traveling across the yard to the pump. Slowly Ezekiel pulled himself up from the sunny grass and traveled across the yard to the pump, too.

“Oh, w’at you out yere fer, boy?” he began in agreeably skeptical tones. “Miss Doane’ll git after yer!”

The boy looked agreeable, too, to even that contingency, and Ezekiel regarded him again.

“Who’s de flag-bea’r dis mawnin’?” he questioned casually.

“Er — a — doan’t yer know? Dat li’l Number One chile,” ruminated the boy. “L’renzo! L’renzo Cam’ell.”

Ezekiel looked incredulous.

“*He ain’t big enough fer no flag-bea’r!*” he commented, “an’ I’se gwine be ter-morrer mawnin’, anyhow. Miss Doane tole me I kin.”

But when it came, that to-morrow morning,



“ ‘WHO’S DE FLAG-BEA’R DIS MAWNIN’?’ ”

Ezekiel stood modestly down in one of the long rows where he had always stood before, and Lorenzo once more marched proudly to the platform. His chest rose high as he grasped the long pole which rested on the floor, his small heels came together, and he felt very straight and large. Ezekiel looked at him sadly from his modest position, and regarded him as a small but presumptuous rival.

One! Two!

Lorenzo’s little brown face flushed delicately with pride and pleasure.

“I pledge allegiance to my flag, and to the republic for which it stands— one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

He seemed to grow that week, the small flag-bearer; his back was always very straight, and each morning as he marched to the platform his chest rose high again, his heels came together, and with the chords from the piano his little brown face always flushed again with the same thrill of pride and pleasure. And so the mornings went on, and on Friday there was a row of visitors across the platform, who looked at him with amused smiles and, for the moment, felt nothing but gentleness toward the dark-skinned people for which he stood.

Ezekiel noticed, as he looked up at him that morning, that he wore a spandy clean turnover collar which glistened very white as the

sun fell on him through the window. Miss North noticed it too, as she stood behind her row of children, and half consciously wondered if his mother had ironed it for him that morning. She had reason, afterward, to notice it again.

Just why her children were late in passing out that noon she couldn’t have told, definitely. Perhaps it was because there had been a seemingly constant stream of visitors through her room all the morning. But she noticed, as she stepped back from the hall, that the Number One children were passing out behind her own — late too.

She sat down for a moment, tired of numbers and confusion, and wondered what it would be like to get away from it all and be quiet.

Her children passed out into the big yard which led out across the car-tracks, untroubled by numbers or confusion, and danced off into the road. The faint clang of a car-bell sounded in the distance, and on down the road the children went. Ezekiel turned a moment, at one side, and looked back at a few stragglers still on the track.

“Look out!” he called. “De cyar’s a-comin’!”

They scattered in confusion, and the car came swiftly on. Miss North was hurrying on through the yard, but he did not see her.

“L’renzo!” he shouted. It was only Lo-



“L'RENZO! DE CYAR!”

renzo who was left there, trotting unconsciously on between the tracks. He didn't know!

“*L'renzo! L'renzo! De cyar! Jump! Quick!*” Ezekiel jumped, himself, and caught wildly at his arm, and the great, rolling thing came on.

“*L'ren-zo!*” he called again, in a thick voice of terror, and something struck him.

“*L'ren-zo!*” And he lay at one side of the road, while suddenly there seemed to be a wild, clamoring confusion everywhere. All the children seemed to be back there again; Miss Doane was there, and Miss North was trying, with a white face, to lift him from the ground. The car had gone on, and the clamor of children's voices told shrilly of Lorenzo—told confused, hysterical things. They had taken him on in the car! Before Miss North could stop them!

Miss Doane looked at Miss North.

“I will take care of Ezekiel,” she began; “he isn't seriously hurt. But you—will you go on—and find out about Lorenzo?”

“Yes,” Miss North's voice came mechanically. “Where is his mother?”

She never forgot that walk to find her. She never forgot the sickening pallor that shot into the brown skin, so much like Lorenzo's, when she told her there had been—an accident. She never forgot half blindly following the woman as she bolted wildly from the house, and of being swept on in a strange contagion of excitement—she knew not where.

Finally, the crowd found itself focused, with the same contagion of excitement, around a small drug-store, and Miss North, still half blindly watching the woman with the sickening pallor in her brown cheeks, reached out and caught her arm.

“Don't—don't go in there,” she whispered. “Not yet! Let me go first.”

The woman pushed on, struggling with the crowd, heedless to sound, and two policemen stepped in front of her.

“Hold on! What's the hurry?” one of them began facetiously. “You can't go in there!”

He took her firmly by the arm, but with helpless, desperate movements she still tried to push on.

"I want my chile!" she began in a hoarse, shaking voice. "Turn me loose! I mus' get to my chile! Quick! Oh, turn me loose!"

She struggled hysterically with the grinning, joking policemen.

"Hold on, now, sister! Hold on, now! Don't get excited!"

There were appreciative guffaws from the crowd.

"Oh, turn me loose!" she shrieked. "My baby chile!"

To a philosopher, watching unemotionally, it might have been a scene to awaken a long train of thought—this sudden vivid picture of the startled, agonized mother instinct, rushing blindly ahead to save its young. In a dog it would have been looked on with a thrill of admiration; but in this quivering woman, with her sensitive brown face pallid and agonized, with the drops of perspiration standing out on her forehead, it was a joke!

As Miss North thought of it afterward, the

most hideous thing about it was that at the time it had all seemed so natural.

But she stood by the policemen herself.

"Won't you let her go in, please?"

They stopped joking and looked at her politely, respectfully, and the woman passed on, Miss North behind her. She, with not a thousandth part of the other's immediate portion out of the grand lot of human misery—she was treated with kindness, consideration.

And yet, at the time, that had seemed natural, too!

They went on into the little store, and through to the back. It was a sickening fulfillment of all the unhappy suspense. There on the floor lay the little figure that had stood so proudly by the flag that morning—the small limbs lifeless, the piteously babyish face turned upward, the cruel gash on the temple which had already been bathed, perhaps by kind hands, the red spots on the white collar which had shone so clean in the sun earlier in the morning. There was a faint cry from a hopeless woman, and Miss North reached out and felt for her, putting her, with hushed, gentle movements, into a chair. But the door opened, and a man



"SHE TOLD HER THERE HAD BEEN—AN ACCIDENT"

with a shocked, questioning face came in. They said he was one of the "road officials." But, with that afterward of remembering, Miss North felt very thankful that he did come — that she had seen his face. He knelt down gently beside the child. He had a coarse physique, but he also had the fineness of feeling.

"Ain't it a shame?" he said simply, and his eyes were moist.

He passed over to the limp, moaning woman, and put his hand kindly on her arm.

"Now, you just try to be quiet and wait here a few minutes," he began, "and I'm going to get you taken right home." His voice was full of simple human kindness.

And this was natural, too.

Miss North found herself clinging to it as her mind flashed back to the policemen, to — to the man at the wheel of the car. She saw him again, coming swiftly on, indifferent to the small things scattering confusedly before him, or to the one small thing still trotting unconsciously along; she saw — would she always see it? — that one small thing struggling helplessly on the fender while the man at the wheel still drove on!

She looked into the kind face, still warm with feeling. That sort of thing *could not continue*. She said so, repeating it many times to herself, as she traveled back over the same road again that noon. There would be enough simple human kindness, natural human justice, found for that.

The day wore away and gradually went out, and a new one somewhere in the background waited to take its place. And with the new one came back, persistently, relentlessly, those deep-dyed, vivid scenes of the old one. Again Miss North traveled down the same road and back again, watching them flash and repeat themselves — and still again, when the new day had worn old, the road stretched out before her, and a small boy with a bandaged head walked slowly by her side.

"Does it tire you very much to walk so far, Ezekiel?" she inquired, looking down at him as his feet moved on wearily.

"No'm. 'Tain' much furrer, is it, Miss No'th?"

"No, not much further, and then you can go home and rest — can't you?"

"Yas'm. W'at's dey gwine ax us 'bout, w'en we does git dere?"

"About — why, I don't know exactly, of course, but they want to find out if — if it was any one's fault that — you were hurt yesterday, that Lorenzo — that there should have been such an accident. Of course, if the man could have stopped his car — and *didn't*, why, of

course they wouldn't want such a man *running* a car, would they?"

"No'm, wouldn' want no sech a man's dat," agreed Ezekiel; "w'y *didn'* he stop de cyar, Miss No'th?"

"I — don't know; but, you see, they want us to tell them what we saw. It is what they call a 'hearing.' They want to hear all about it."

"Yas'm," and they stopped before a low building standing close to the road.

"Now, Ezekiel," said Miss North, turning squarely, "whatever else you do, tell the plain truth and *nothing more*."

"Yas'm," and Ezekiel looked both weary and frightened.

"Come," she added gently, looking at him, "there's nothing to be afraid of"; and they went up the low steps together.

When they came out again the sun had moved on in the sky, and Ezekiel looked more weary and frightened than ever. Miss North looked down at him, and her breath came quickly.

"I am sorry that we should have had to wait — until the last," she began; "there, there, Ezekiel! Sh — sh! There's nothing to cry about!"

He caught sobbingly at her arm.

"He — he keep on axin' me — way I couldn' — jes understan'!" he choked.

"I know it," she went on soothingly; "he used long words — didn't he? — that you couldn't understand."

"Yas'm; he — he keep on sayin' is de cyar gwine — is de cyar gwine — sump'n' 'bout —"

"Was the car going at a 'low rate of speed'?" She smiled, though she looked weary, too, and spiritless, as her mind turned back.

"Yas'm; an' — an' I tole 'im, 'Y-yas, sir,' an' he — he jes laf an' say — he f-fought so!"

"Never mind! Never mind!" There were deep red spots on her cheeks, but she patted his hand soothingly. "He knew — it wasn't. I told him — exactly — how — it was."

Her last words came absently, and the red spots burned in still deeper.

"Never mind, Ezekiel, if we *were* the only ones — who told the truth. Oh, child," she broke out, "*always tell the truth!*"

Hot tears glistened in her eyes and dropped down before them.

"Y-yas'm," he answered in a faint, frightened voice, looking up at her in consternation, "y-yas'm; but I didn' mean ter tell 'im — 'twan' gwine fas' — Miss No'th! I — d-didn' mean ter tell 'im dat! Only — he — he keep on axin' me — way I couldn' — jes understan'! But I tole 'im — 'bout it — too! I — I tole 'im 'twuz



“‘HOLD ON, NOW, SISTER! ‘DON’T GET EXCITED!’”

—gwine tur’ble fas’—doan’t yer know, Miss No’t’h? I tole ‘im ‘twuz! An’—an’ I tole ‘im—I tries ter ketch ‘im—but—I couldn’—cuz—it come—ser fas’—I—I couldn’!”

His words caught in helpless, quivering sobs, and he looked up at her again from under the dry, hot bandage. Her heart smote her with a dull, hopeless pain.

“There, there, my child! I know you did, and—you told him *just* as it was! I know you did! There, there, my child! You *mustn’t* cry—you *mustn’t*!”

She stopped, and, kneeling down on the cool

grass by the road, loosened the bandage around the hot, throbbing forehead.

“You are very tired, aren’t you—little boy? Would you like to stop and rest a little, in the shade?”

“No’m, I ain’t ve’y tired, Miss No’t’h,” he whispered appreciatively.

“Shall we go on, then—slowly?” She smiled at him and brushed the dampness from her eyes, and they traveled on down the sunny road.

It was not until they passed the gate at the Whittier School that his weary little voice came

up to her again in a final haunting murmur: "Twuz gwine tur'ble — fas' — an' — he — he ain' nuver tried to stop. W'at's *dey gwine do* — 'bout it — Miss No'th? Cuz he *could* stop — ef he tried — but he — he — he ain' — nuver — tried."

It seemed a long time after when she stood before the gate again, Monday morning, and heard that "they would do" nothing about it.

Her mind flashed back to the hearing, and she understood. She watched the children flock through the gate in hundreds, and then, with the same dull, hopeless pain in her heart, she went on behind them. Where was the simple human kindness that she had depended upon to wipe the coarse, miserable cruelty away from this thing? Where was it? As if she were to be forever haunted, again she saw a struggling child on the fender of a car while the man at the wheel still drove on. She saw the tortured mother's face, the laughing, joking policemen, the limp little figure lying still with its babyish face turned upward, the red spots on the clean white collar, and the kind man who knelt gently by his side. She was glad that she could see him still.

She went into the school building, but still, like a panorama, the same scenes shifted one after another before her eyes. The bells sounded, the children marched into the assembly-room in long lines, like a dream; and like a dream she saw another little boy mount to the platform and support the flag.

A car sounded faintly in the distance and then came whirling on, and to the man at the wheel the sound of children's voices, singing, floated out through the open windows. But he whirled on, and two familiar chords came from the piano. Then the long rows of children shifted again and turned their gentle, dark little faces up to the flag-bearer. For a moment their eyes rested on him in a kind of troubled, patient acceptance, and one small face still partly hidden by a bandage was damp with tears.

But there came the chords again; unquestioningly the hands were lifted as they had always been before, the eyes rose to the flag, and once more came all the voices in an unbroken whole:

"I pledge allegiance to my flag, and to the republic for which it stands — one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."



"'TAIN' MUCH FURRER, IS IT, MISS NO'TH?"

HYPNOTISM AND CRIME

BY

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THOSE stubborn people who simply did not believe that such a thing as hypnotism existed have probably slowly died out; they might just as well have refused to believe that there are mental diseases. And those of the other extreme, those who saw in the hypnotic state a mystical revelation in which superhuman powers manifested themselves, have slowly lost their ground; they might just as well call sleep or hysteria or epilepsy a supernatural mystery. No; science understands to-day that the facts of hypnotism are in no way more mysterious than those of any other functions in the natural life of the mind. They are narrowly related to the experiences of absorbing attention, vivid imagination, and obedient will, and, on the other side, to sleep and dreams and mental aberration.

Of course, there is much that still remains under heated discussion. There is no real agreement yet as to where the limits of hypnotism lie and where it shades off into suggestion. There are various possible interpretations of the hypnotic brain process, various views also as to the special disposition for it, and even its symptoms still need careful inquiry; but every one may agree at least in this: that hypnotism is not without serious consequences, and is therefore certainly not a plaything; and, secondly, that hypnotism is for many nervous and mental disorders a highly effective remedy, when applied by the experienced physician. It has brought and will bring health and, through that, happiness to uncounted sufferers, and therefore it has come to stay.

But, if hypnotism is to be with us, it seems natural that the question should be asked, — often not without anxiety, — What is its relation to law and court, to crime and criminal procedure? The uncanny power therein which man has over man, will over will, may threaten

dangerous social entanglements; on the other hand, new energies may thereby be made available in the interest of the law. The imagination has here a free field. The dime novel and, alas! the dollar-and-a-half novel have made full use of this convenient instrument of criminal wonders; and the newspaper public reads, often without any realization of the difference, stories of hypnotic crime which might easily have taken place, by the side of others which are absolutely impossible. There is nowhere a standard, and it may, therefore, be worth while to take a bird's-eye view of the whole field in which hypnotism and crime come, really or supposedly, in contact with each other.

The popular imagination turns first, with preference, to the question whether the court may not apply hypnotism for the purpose of unveiling the hidden truth. Unsolicited letters concerning hypnotism turn up copiously in a psychologist's mail; and statistics show that it is just this proposition which disturbs the largest percentage of these amateur criminologists. They take a passionate interest in every murder case, and, too often, reach the torturing stage of not being able to decide who is really guilty, even when all the evidence and the verdict of the jury are in. Their scruple, they feel, could be removed only by the absolutely sure knowledge that this or that man speaks the truth. Hypnotism has the well-known power of breaking down the resistance of the will; if the hypnotized witness were ordered to speak the full truth, he would no longer have any choice. It looks so simple and promising.

From a purely psychological standpoint, such a method might be successful. It would not differ in principle from that by which hypnotic confessions are drawn from a patient against his will. The other day, a student whom I was curing of the cocaine habit assured me most vehemently that he had no cocaine in his room any more; and a few minutes later, when I had hypnotized him, he described