

People Unwittingly Foil Efforts Of Historians Through Inability To Know Worth Of Documents They Possess

WASHINGTON, D. C.— With the observance of Negro History Week set for February 11, 1934, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, director of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, which is sponsoring the national celebration, comes forth with several definite suggestions which might be carried out as projects during the week.

Of particular value are the suggestions here given because they lead to the realization of the ultimate goal of the association sponsoring the annual observance—the popularizing of the history of the Negro American in the nation for the enlightenment of both Negroes and whites.

It is urged that the public take certain definite steps forward. In the first place, the community must be aroused to the point of appreciating the Negro as it appreciates others. In every community the board of education should be approached to secure the adoption of supplementary works and textbooks of Negro history and literature, not to decay on the shelves of some storeroom but to be placed in the hands of children as working manuals in penetrating the background of their of their people.

Seek Aid of Libraries

These authorities are to be asked also to place in the public libraries adequate collections or at least shelves of scientific works dealing with the Negro in ancient, mediaeval and modern times and to hang upon the walls of these buildings

portraits of Negroes who have achieved well in spite of handicaps.

It is requested, moreover, that interest be manifested in saving the records of the Negro that the race may not become a negligible factor in the thought of the world. In the homes of Negroes and of their friends are valuable manuscripts like letters, diaries, wills, deeds, bills of sale, manumission papers and the like in which are hidden the facts of Negro history not mentioned in the books, newspapers, and magazines of our day.

Data to Help Investigation

To have these data on hand to pass them on to the fair-minded investigators of tomorrow that they may tell the story of the race when this generation is no more—this is the challenge that comes to every Negro and to every friend of the race who has any regard for the future of this people.

Going further, the Negro in America must manifest more interest not only in the collection of such materials but in supporting teachers and investigators who are equipping themselves for such efforts and are giving their lives unselfishly to the production of treatises therefrom.

These are men who are making it impossible for the world to forget what the Negro has thought and felt and attempted and accomplished. All promoters of the truth, then, may join wholeheartedly in the exultation from the results already achieved and the success which must come to crown their future efforts.