

## THE COLOR LINE FOUND NECESSARY

WE might have anticipated that many colored people would be deeply interested in THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION. But it did not impress itself upon us until gradually their number increased to about twenty-five per cent. of the whole audience. Of course, we were glad to see them, glad that they were interested in the DRAMA. We had the same feeling respecting them as others; but it was quickly discerned that it was not a case of feeling, but that, whereas the colored people of New York City are about five per cent. of the population, in our audiences they are about twenty-five per cent. and the number increasing. What shall we do? As the attendance of the colored people would increase, proportionately the number of the whites would decrease; for explain it how we will, a majority of whites prefer not to intermingle closely with other races.

Recognizing that it meant either the success or the failure of the enterprise of the DRAMA as respects the whites, we have been compelled to assign the colored friends to the gallery, which, however, is *just as good* for seeing and hearing as any other part of The Temple. Some were offended at this arrangement.

We have received numerous letters from the colored friends, some claiming that it is not right to make a difference, others indignantly and bitterly denouncing us as enemies of the colored people. Some, confident that Brother Russell had never sanctioned such a discrimination, told that they believe it would be duty to stand up for equal rights and always to help the oppressed, etc. We were obliged to explain the facts, assuring all of our loving interest in the colored people, and of our desire to do them good, and not injury. We again suggested that if a suitable place could be found in which the DRAMA could be presented for the benefit of the colored people

alone, we would be glad to make such arrangements, or to cooperate with any others in doing so.

Our explanations were apparently entirely satisfactory to all of the fully consecrated. To these we explained that it is a question of putting either the interests of God's Cause first, or else the interests of the race first. We believed it our duty to put *God* first and the *Truth* first – at any cost to others or to ourself! We explained that we thought that all the colored brethren should know our attitude toward them – they should know that we love to serve them in any way possible and to give them the very best we have to give of the Gospel Message; and that it is only a question of whether our giving to them in one way would deprive us of giving the Truth to others. [R5434 : page 111]

Some who were still tenacious and quarrelsome we merely reminded of our Lord's declaration that in inviting visitors into the house it is the place of the host to say where they shall sit, and then we showed them the parable of the man who chose the chief seat of honor and was given a lower one.

In answer to the query as to how our course of conduct squared with the Golden Rule, we replied that it squares exactly. We would wish others to put *God first*. If our personal interests are or ever have been in conflict with the real and apparently best interests of the Lord's Cause, it is a part of our consecration vow to ignore our interests in favor of the interests of the Lord's Cause. This is what we mean by the declaration that we are dead to self and alive to our God as New Creatures.

We reminded one dear sister that the Lord enjoins humility, and assures us that unless we humble ourselves we shall not be exalted. If nature favors the colored brethren and sisters in the exercise of humility it is that much to their advantage, if they are rightly exercised by it. A little while, and our humility will work out for our good. A little while, and those who shall have been faithful to their

Covenant of Sacrifice will be granted new bodies, spiritual, beyond the veil, where color and sex distinctions will be no more. A little while, and the Millennial Kingdom will be inaugurated, which will bring Restitution to all mankind – restitution to the perfection of mind and body, feature and color, to the grand original standard, which God declared "very good," and which was lost for a time through sin, but which is soon to be restored by the powerful Kingdom of Messiah.

