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FOR BARBERS BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

(Special to Washington Tribune)

By Anna T. Cooper

There are more ways to kill a dog than by choking him to death with butter. One way, approved and much in demand is to have him go before a duly appointed board of examiners and "pass" the examinations. At least this seems a satisfactory solution of both Negro unemployment problems as settled in the minds of leading tonsorial artists in U.S.A.

According to The Nation the organized white barbers of the country are gradually securing the adoption of bills in the various states, (always in the interest of the health of the public, of course) setting up boards of barber examiners to pass on the qualifications of applicants and issue or revoke licenses. Twenty-six states including Maryland have already passed such laws. The Virginia legislature was the last to make a try out, with the State Federation of Labor, the four railway brotherhoods and the National Women's Trade Union League backing the measure, and the Virginia Commission on Interracial Relations opposing. The bill failed at this session. A few sample questions quoted by The Nation will show how eager these "protectors of the public health are to secure competent, clean and intelligent hands to wash and trim the public hair:

"1. How many hairs are there to the square inch on the average scalp?

"2. Where is the arrector pili muscle located and what is its

function

"3. Describe the function and location of the sebaceous glands, etc., etc., etc."

While it is loudly proclaiming that the object of these examinations is "to protect the public against diseased and incompetent barbers," it is freely admitted among those pushing these bills that they desire their enactment in order to run the Negroes out of business and raise the tariffs in their own shops. Similar legislation is being offered at almost every session of every state legislature in the Union. In Virginia the plumbers, realtors, and embalmers have come forward with schemes setting up stiff requirements for would-be practitioners, with boards of examiners to say who shall be licensed. In this way all professions and trades will be able to set up monopolies against competition by legalizing their various boards of examiners.

We learn that a bill to make the Virginia Bar Association an agency of the state was defeated at this year's session. Members of the Senate having shown that lawyers who supported it aimed to prevent many deserving persons from practicing in Virginia. Undoubtedly, those who offered it claimed that it was "solely for the protection of the public."

Thirty years ago those who foolishly opposed Booker T. Washington's plan of Industrial Education, thought they were fighting for the rights to higher culture through avenues of advanced studies; today the struggle is on for man's chance to earn an honest living by the sweat of his brow. The competition is absolutely sagacious, terribly relentless, horribly ruthless.

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fights against unemployment