Basket Ball

The Invincible Preps the Rightful Champions of the District

True Reformers Hall last Saturday night was the scene of the greatest game of Basket Ball in the history of the sport in the District, when the "Invincible Preps" met and defeated the Crescents, champions of the I. S. A. A. Basket Ball League, by a score of 9 to 7. The contest was a hot one from the time the sphere was tossed up in the center of the court to the sound of the time-keeper's whistle which indicated the end of the first half. For this period the score stood 5 to 3 in favor of the "Invincibles." The beginning of the second half looked like the Crescents' bacon. Two goals in rapid succession were shot by Howard and the Monk, which gave the "Champs" a lead of one point. The Howard rabble then commenced to cheer for the Invincibles, calling on them to uphold the honor of the school and the dignity of the team, to which they responded to the man. The score was tied at the seventh notch and about 10 minutes to play. At the end of the second half no satisfactory agreement had been reached and it was decided to play the tie off. About 5 minutes more of the fastest and cleverest manipulation ever witnessed on any court was put on with the final result of a pretty goal by Lewis, who was easily the star of the occasion. He registered six of the nine points for the "Invincibles." Final score: Preps, 9; Crescents, 7.

A subway or an elevated road is now being proposed for the use of young men passing from Clarke Hall to the Main Building.

Reflections on seeing "The Red Moon"

A surprisingly good performance of Cole and Johnson's sensational musical comedy was witnessed by quite a number of Howard University students (who had gone over to Baltimore to attend the debate between Howard and Lincoln) Friday matinee, April 23rd, at Holliday Street Theatre. In fact, from the standpoint of the company's vocal excellence, it was the equal of any performance I have ever heard not excepting the Metropolitan Grand Opera Co. And the only thing which marred the otherwise splendid presentation was the unequal orchestras.

While the plot surpassed the average musical comedy plot, it is not a particularly striking one; still it serves the purpose of musical comedy, and affords much pleasure for an evening's entertainment. This, in outline, is the plot. Minnehaha, the daughter of Lucretia Martin, a Negro woman; and John Low Dog, an old Indian Chief, on finishing from a government school falls in love with Plunk Green, a fake doctor. On the day of her graduation, her father comes to claim her and to take her back to the "Land of the Setting Sun." The rest of the story deals with her rescue by Slim Brown, the fake lawyer, and Plunk Green, and her restoration to her mother and her lover, Plunk Green.

The score of "The Red Moon" is full of all those beauties of melody and rich harmonic treatment for which Cole and Johnson stand. Every number in the score is a gem in itself. The music and orchestration of the "Bleeding Moon" reaches the high-water mark of musical comedy, and approaches grand opera as a limit. This number is indeed true comic opera in that it transcends in style and quality the excessively familiar "musical comedies" of our decadent day and beyond question, far and away surpasses the vulgar and garish and un-leavened concoction which have come within the last two decades to take the place of the delightful legitimate comic operas and musical comedies of yore. Messrs Cole and Johnson's music is not vulgar, nor blatant, nor crude, nor cheap; it displays skill, refinement.

(Continued on page 4, column 1)
Wilberforce Defeats Howard in Debate

The Kappa Sigma Debating Club of Howard University and the Debating Union, Wilberforce University, sent forth their representative teams to debate the question: “Resolved, That the closed shop was necessary for the preservation of the unions which in turn had been proved to be absolutely necessary to enable Labor to withstand the tyranny of Capital. (1) That the closed shops had raised wages, shortened hours, and secured better sanitary conditions for the wage earning classes. (2) That the closed shop system would tend to distill ideas of lawlessness and anarchy into the minds of the people and ultimately tend to undermine the social structure. (2) That it impeded the progress of the realization of the universal brotherhood of man. (3) That the closed shop system is selfish. (4) That it was the development of initiative and intelligence among wage earners. (5) That it destroys competition and fosters laziness and inefficiency. (6) That it destroys apprenticeship and thus limits the supply of proficient and skilled workmen. (7) That it rebounds to the disadvantage of the wage earning class by limiting production, thus raising the price on produce out of proportion to the rise in wages.

In rebuttal Wilberforce was very weak while Howard was very strong. Jackson, the last speaker for Howard, called for an analysis of the two arguments, holding up each of the negative’s points and showing that not a concrete case had been cited to maintain a single one of the opponents’ propositions and that their argument had been entirely in the abstract, while he tore Howard’s argument to pieces and pointed out that in every instance evidence and authority had been brought forth to establish the propositions of the affirmative.

After Jackson had finished his analysis every one felt quite satisfied that the decision would come to the affirmative side for all their propositions had been maintained while Wilberforce team had only stated their points without going to the trouble of proving a single one. Furthermore, the Howard team had divided its subject so that each man established several points while the Wilberforce men simply re-echoed each one what the one before had said. No one was more satisfied that Howard had won than was the Wilberforce Contingency and while all How-

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ard’s rooters were preparing for a demonstration they who followed the flag of the opponents had resigned themselves to defeat and when the judges came forth and announced the decision the Howard contingency sank limp into their seats while the rooters for the opponents were too dumb-founded to cheer and there was a deathlike silence throughout the building for several seconds when the Wilberforce contingency, regaining consciousness leaped from their seats with great cheers and demon strations.

"She Stoops to Conquer" Cast Entertained

On last Friday evening, Prof. E. E. Just and Mr. William Gilbert, Director and Manager of the "She Stoops to Conquer" Company, entertained the Caste, together with the Ushers, in the parlors of the Annex of Miner Hall. At 7:30 the guests began to assemble and by 8:30 all were present. The first part of the evening was spent in music and conversation. The guests were received in the front parlor, while the back parlor had been artistically arranged as a dining hall. At about 9:30 the folding doors between the two rooms were thrown open and the guests were invited into the back room, where the remainder of the evening was spent, and a most elaborate menu was served. At about 11:30 the guests departed, every one having spent a most enjoyable evening.

The reception was given on the event of the departure of one of the main men of the caste, Mr. J. A. Mitchell, who so successfully took the part of Squire Hardcastle on the evening of April 16. Mr. Mitchell left on Saturday for his home in Gallipolis, Ohio.

It is the intention of the company, not to stop with this small beginning, but to go onward, for such entertainments as "She Stoops to Conquer" proved to be, always serve as no mean factor in raising the school in the estimation of the best thinking men and women in the community. Next year the company expects to produce at least two of the classic plays. The use to which the proceeds from the "She Stoops to Conquer" are to be put will be made known publicly within a few days, at the regular chapel exercises.

Mr. Benson again Visits His Alma Mater

Mr. W. E. Benson, an alumnus of the College Department, and head of Kowaliga Institute, was present at chapel exercises Tuesday and addressed the student body. He spoke of the loss of their buildings by fire and imparted the welcome information that enough money had been subscribed by friends of the school not only to replace the buildings but to construct the new ones of stone and assure an endowment fund of ten thousand dollars to maintain them. He also complimented very highly the work of his teachers, pupils, and neighbors during and following the fire, which occurred in his absence. Through their loyal efforts accommodations were provided so readily that only one school day of actual work was lost and the classes will graduate this year as usual.

In introducing Mr. Benson, Dr. Thirkield spoke of Kowaliga as Howard University extension and praised very highly the work of Mr. Benson, advising that Howard students ought to assist in such work. He said that as Tuskegee is the glory of Hampton, and the work of Cornelia Bowen the glory of Tuskegee, so is Kowaliga the glory of Howard.

A certain young lady in the sophomore college class was heard to mumble out the following sentence in her sleep: "Well, Ella, whether I pass this year or not, I have the sweet consolation in knowing that next year I will be a 'Junior' any way."
much vivacity, and considerable grace. Its rhythms are vigorous, and engaging and it is put upon the orchestra with dexterity, taste, and nicely calculated effect.

Under the direction of Mr. James R. Europe, the score was given a smooth and exceptionally brilliant reading.

Much credit is also due to Mr. Cole, who, aside from his excellent acting, staged the production, and also to Mr. Charles A. Hunter, their excellent stage director.

Every member of the company from the chorus up is an artist in his or her line and each one works with as much energy as the stars to make the show a success. Never has there been better team work on any stage. The chorus, for their beauty and singing, is superior to any on the stage. I wish it were permitted me to single out each member of the company for some word of praise for they deserve it, but I must content myself at this time with a hasty review of the work of the principles.

I often wonder if those who go to see Cole and Johnson stop to think how great they really are. They are not only finished artists so far as their line of acting is concerned, but like Williams and Walker, who compose a great number of their works; Wm. Gillette, dramatist and actor; and Geo. M. Cohan, wrote the book, lyrics and music themselves, and at no time have they been guilty of turning out such things as "Fifty Miles from Boston," "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway" "Nearly a Hero," "The Soul Kiss," "Queen of the Moulin Rouge," "The Girl from Rector," "Miss Innocence," and many others representing the class of entertainment which white managers choose to provide for the theatre-going public. The Negro race ought to be very proud of Cole and Johnson, and Williams and Walker, and the class of entertainment they provide. And, if there is not a great change on the part of white managers in producing musical comedies, the future clean and singable musical comedies will depend on the Negro singers and actors, for at present one can find neither singing nor acting in the white musical comedies, and they are becoming too suggestive for decent people to attend. Of course this does not apply to such productions as "The Red Mill," "Floradora," "Havana," "The Beauty Spot," or "Babies in Toyland." But these are in the minority now.

I also wonder how much longer senseless race hatred will keep such meritorious performances out of Washi-
cately organized genius with a wit that is full of genteel, overpowering surprise. He has a certain solemnity of bearing, a mock gravity which never leaves him even when he is as serious as Bob Cole can ever be.

On the other hand, J. Rosamond Johnson is a never fading joy to the eye and ear; he is inventive, talented, an excellent pianist and good to look at and wears clothes of extraordinary color and cut. J. R. Johnson as Plunk Green, “the doctor they don’t expect,” preserves a pleasant suggestion of his own personality. And to it is the best sort of acting, not under new methods, but the oldest and heartiest and only approved rules of dramatic art. He does not mimic but portrays; does not imitate but invents, and therein lies the secret of a success which seems to have been easily won. Instead of impressing as a master interpreter of a new school, he seems the most joyous and vigorous exponent of the true old school tempered by refinement of an elegant monde.

In the company is also the grand old man, Sam Lucas, who at one time essayed the role of Uncle Tom with such signal success that Mrs. H. B. Stowe wrote of him that he was nearer the character than any actor she had ever seen. And he is still doing good work.

All things considered, few will dispute that Abbie Mitchell stands now at the head of Negro singer and the equal of any leading woman star in light opera on the American stage. One feels an instinctive hesitation in putting her in the first place, however sure he may be that she is justly entitled to it. He anxiously seeks the country over for a possible rival. He feels that Abbie Mitchell has hardly been tested as yet, for this is the first time she has had a straight singing part; and is not yet at the head of her own company where I hope soon to see her, and only in the closing of the first act of the opera does she sing music which shows her voice up to its best advantage. Moreover, she is such a little thing—a child, it would seem—and yet what a magnetic personality she has and how full of the artistic temperament. These are the first impressions made by the fascinating young prima donna of Cole and Johnson’s “Red Moon” Company.

Of less than medium height, with a round pretty figure, she is even better looking off the stage than on, for seen closely, one can admire the beauty of her large, dark eyes, her exquisitely curved nose and the round oval of her face, the clear yellow complexion heightened by just a little pink powder, and the rapid changes of expression which pass over her mobile countenance, her dark hair done up in the latest Greek style brought rather low over her temples, but leaving her forehead bare. Abbie Mitchell’s costumes harmonize excellently with the character, youth and brilliant coloring of the prima donna.

Abbie Mitchell seems almost too human to be really great. She is too natural, too democratic, too free from conceit. One cannot help being charmed by this little woman who sings as if singing were the best fun in the world; who is so pleased when the audience likes her, singing and applauds her work; and who goes soaring up and away on the high notes, sounding clear and pure above chorus and orchestra, without the slightest apparent effort; and without a trace of affection or striving for effect.

Her voice, one appreciates at once,—its volume and its colorful brilliancy, its great range, and its rich sympathetic and musical qualities, and what one misses in her are the awe inspiring stage presence, the impressive posing and contortious vocalizations. The world is very apt to take one at his own estimate until it gets very well acquainted with him. Abbie Mitchell has never proclaimed herself a wonder, nor has any press agent proceeded with wonder tales of her beautiful voice and her competent acting, and the world has not yet fully made up its mind regarding her as an artist.

Fanny Wise, both as Truschina White and Nakomis, proved herself a singer and an actress of no mean ability, and she is very much in evidence in the unusually strong and brilliant cast. Fanny Wise is an artist whose histrionic and musical talent, remarkable beauty, winsome personality, and artistic temperament would seem to make comparatively safe a prophecy of an especially rosy future. One has only to see her on the stage to be convinced that she is a hard student, for it shows in her work. Her rendition of “Bleeding Moon” was a revelation. One is also convinced that she is not one that will be content to drift willingly with the tide on the calm sea of self-satisfaction and unambitious gratification.

Every Negro with any pride in his bosom ought to be proud of these two young men who within a comparatively brief space of time have reached the high-water mark in their profession, and have organized a theatrical company—all members of the Negro race—of such merit that I am sure when the show reaches Broadway it will attract not only members of their race but large audiences of white people into a first class Broadway theatre. Their play

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shows distinct types of Negroes, the influence of Negro association and culture over a little Indian girl, the power of this influence is so great, Minnehaha longing to be back among them and at last returns to become one of their happy number. It is also the first Negro show to successfully put on a play containing a love story. Taken all in all the influence is so great, Minnehaha over a little-Indian girl, the power of influence and Walker are doing on the stage to Washington with his great industrial movement—Cole and Johnson, and Williams and Walker are doing on the stage to show the possibilities of the Negro, and there is a line of work which offers a greater field to the stage of to-day. And for themselves at least they seem to have solved the Negro problem.

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