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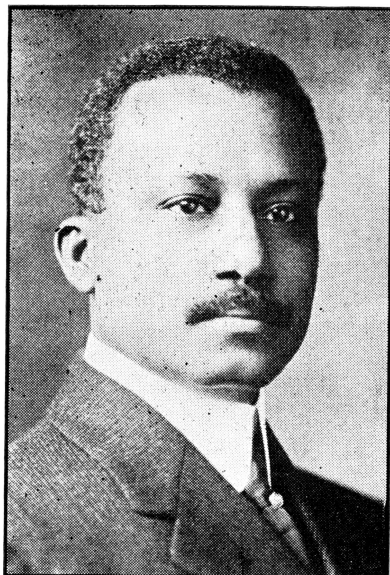
The Silence

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Prof. Charles S. Syphax, A. B., LL. M.

Vice Dean of the Academy, upon whose shoulders the mantle of Deanship is about to fall. He is an alumnus of the Academy and has spent twenty-two years as a teacher in its service.

His formation of the Academy Cabinet, composed of the Dean and students was so successful that it has given rise to similar organizations in other Departments. He is generally known as the man who is equal to all occasions.



The Silence

T was Commencement day,—an incomparable Spring day. The birds sang in the green sanctuaries of the trees in joyful chorus, pouring forth their Spring anthems with utter abandon, and with such largeness of gratitude that the nice ear of the sympathetic listener could not but detect a genuine simplicity underlying the motives, and directing the

notes of the Dryad—songsters. The winds moaned murmuringly among the trees, and lulled the tender-rippled reservoir, then glowing with the afternoon beams of a sloping sun, in calm repose. A delicate fragrance, the exclusive redolence of the vernal months, oozed from the chalices of a thousand blossoms, greeting the smell everywhere; hardly a cloud dotted the azure skies that arched condescendingly as they would embrace old earth.

On the campus a great and curious crowd had gathered to witness the crowning occasion in the scholastic career of successful issuing students. On the rostrum were the principal actors in the drama of the day,—The graduating classes, famous alumni of this and other institutions, the Faculty, the Board of Trustees and others directly or indirectly connected with the event. Busy chat went around; many a face betrayed the anxious look of expectancy; and over all was an atmosphere of tense anticipation.

Among the candidates for the degree of Doctor of Medicine was Pierce Mercer. He sat calm, and collected, yet with an almost absent look in his eyes, as if oblivious to the great buzzing crowd surrounding him. It was his way however; those who knew him best were aware of it, for Mercer was inclined to take nearly every thing seriously, even his pleasures. Few understood him, simply because few tried hard enough to do so. That he was exceptionally brilliant as a student, endowed with the faculty of the initiative rather than with the ability to imitate, was the opinion of his classmates; while his dignity of bearing and his taciturnity, if they

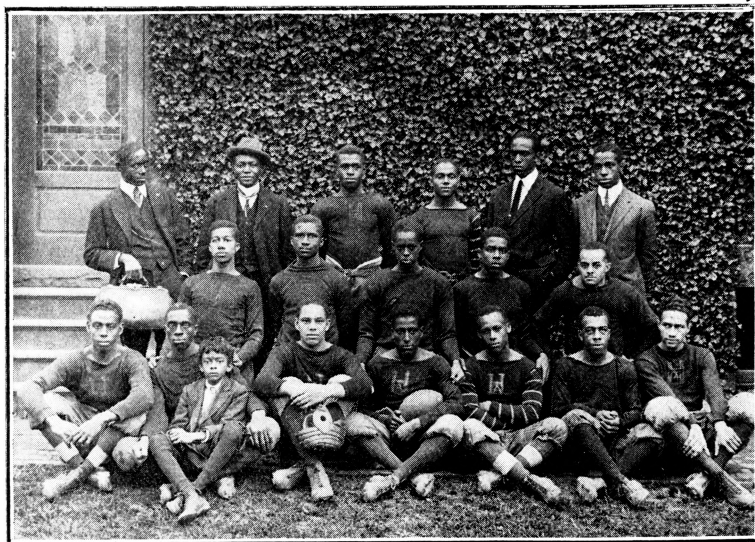
(Continued on Page 15)

The Silence

(Continued From Page 9)

did not win him friends, commanded the respect of the most envious. On the other hand, he was regarded too much of a moralist, and too deeply philosophical to make a "Safe" and pleasurable companion. Thus Mercer had few true friends.

notony of conventional society incomfortable with his larger nature, suddenly, as if by the mysterious force telepathic suggestion, he found his eyes looking into those of Louise. He started, slightly, almost imperceptibly, and a smile of recognition lit up both their faces. The moment, however, Mercer had withdrawn his gaze, reverting deliberately to his former mode; as



Our Crack Foot Ball Team

Left to right, Top Row—Johnson, *Trainer*, Prof. E. P. Davis, Stevens, Thompson, Gilmore, *Coach* and P. H. Davis, *Manager*. Middle Row—Stratton, Blackman, Johnson, *Green* and Avery. Bottom Row—Riley, Carter, Geo. Cook, Jr., Ross, Worde, Taylor, Bolling and Pannell.

As he sat there wrapped in thought musing in retrospection over the past six years of toil for success, over his uneventful life in the nervous atmosphere of the city where he had led the life practically of a recluse, preferring the retreats of his lodgings and the society of his little library to the distracting humdrum of parlour parties and the mo-

if he had not recognized her.

Louise was somewhat astonished. She could not understand his action. In fact, although one of the very few to whom he at times revealed himself, she still found him somewhat of a mystery. She, herself was a very modest girl, not strikingly handsome, and extremely reserved, yet enveloped in a certain winsomeness that

drew all to her. Mercer practically worshipped her. She knew it, knew that of all her many admirers he, only, loved her with a love, as pure and true and honorable as it was deep and lasting,—yet since women, because of our conventional code,—a matter of sentiment merely—may not propose, their affection for each other was unconfessed; Mercer had never told her of his great love for her; he had never even hinted at it. He asked her often to the theatre, although she seldom accepted. Whenever he was with her, she found him very thoughtful and considerate for her comfort, and although the subjects of conversation were at some times widely different from those she was accustomed to hear discussed by her other suitors, she was always greatly interested and never bored. Yet, why had he never breathed one word of that which she knew consumed his very soul—that which his eyes spoke with an eloquence more forceable than even his words could do,—she often wondered and she herself loved him dearly; even this he might have guessed.

But little as he knew it, the fault lay greatly with her. Louise was too non-committal, and although Mercer prided himself upon his astuteness as a student of human nature, yet he could not get a single glance from her decided indicative that his affections were requited. Then too, being very sensitive himself, he thought it imprudent to question Louise concerning the matter.

Affairs between them had continued like this for four years, each denying the moisture of expression to their already germinated love which longed to burst above the surface of silence; each

having the same burning desire to know and to be claimed.

II

The Medical Candidates were the last in order to receive their degree, and Mercer was the last of these to be called up for his; with proud stately steps, he ascended and descended the rostrum—a Doctor of Medicine. Little as he knew it, that moment was the proudest of Louise's life.

"At last," she whispered, "at last!"

The exercises concluded as the gray shades of evening began to settle over the scene. The westering sun had well nigh sank under the sea of Sunset, and one belated crow was cawing his way homeward: when the crowd began to disperse. "Pierce is not come for me to congratulate him," Louise thought with a pang as her eyes followed his tall figure threading its way through the besetting crowd. "Well," mused his wondering Louise, since you seem to prefer it so always, it shall be so," and as Mercer disappeared through the South gate, she joined her friends and went silently home.

But if Louise could have heard with spirit ear she would have known that at the very moment she had given him up—almost—Mercer had made this resolution: "Louise now or never!"

That night Louise wept herself to sleep—a very unusual thing for her to do. She had tried to find some justification of Pierce's action, but found the task too much for her throbbing brain; she almost refused to listen to the voice of her better nature: love driven to despair can be as blind to reason as when love is transformed into its converse, hate. "He had willfully evaded

her" she urged. "O how she was mistaken in her belief that he loved her!" "Pierce can not love" she thought, "he is too serious, too cold—she should have known that long ago." "O my heart is aching!" She cried in the conflict of emotions, of love pleading against reason, of justice against an overpowering desire to arraign the one she loved. Pride won at last, and overcome by the strain she fell asleep.

* * * *

It was the night of the third day after Commencement exercises. On the balcony of her guardian's home Louise was sitting. The moon shone wanly through the grape vine pouring a flood of mellow moon-light upon her white, quiet figure. A light breeze fanned the few straggling locks of her hair with wistful suggestiveness, while with thoughtful longing eyes she looked out into the night with a far away look.

"Louise"—it was Mercer.

"Pierce," she replied softly, quickly glancing up at his face, then letting her eyes fall.

There was a vacant chair beside her. He seated himself in it silent and thoughtful as Louise.

Thus long they set, each divining the soul secret of the other. The clock on the mantel piece inside struck ten. At its first stroke they both started. Instructively their eyes met in their search of one another.

"Louise" he whispered, taking her hands.

"Pierce" she replied softly.

Then they became silent once more, silent with an unexpressible feeling of joy and calm dread. Their love now lay trembling for exposure beneath the soil of four long fruitless years.

Louise trembled softly, and

Mercer was looking down at her with an expression of calm, intense application, wistfully impatient, longing for ownership, for he seemed to have divined through some far seeing powers, that fate had designed to bind them, the one to the other, soul to soul for all time, and for all eternity.

Slowly they awake from their dream. Mercer rose trembling, Louise rose too, with the moonbeams illuminating her whole figure, her eyes speaking the emotion her lips failed to express.

"Louise tell me, will you come," said Mercer tenderly, anxiously as he looked down at her. How could he exist without his dear little Louise as a part of him!

"Come with you, where Pierce?" softly questioned Louise whose hands he held in his.

"Anywhere," he said. Their eyes met. Passionately Pierce stretched out his arms.

"Louise, Louise, Come to me." he cried, "Say you love me, O my dearest, this silence kills; why is it that we both die for our soul's expression? O Love, Love! I need you, come."

And into his arms, with a sigh of complete resignation, Louise slipped: her lips met Pierce's and together they stood in the moonlight, soul to soul, each wise in the long locked secret of the other. It was their first kiss.

As he turned to go, Pierce said wonderingly:

"And you loved me all this time little girl."

"All this time Pierce," replied Louise.

* * * *

In Gratitude

THE HERALD wishes to express its gratitude and appreciation to all those students, subscribers, advertisers and friends, who have helped to make it a success during this school year.