

TO LIFT UP THE AFRICAN.

CHICAGO COLORED MEN WILL ORGANIZE THE "CIVIC LEAGUE."

Body Will Make War on Crime and Degradation with the Especial Object of Improving Socially and Politically the Black Race—Forum Club of St. Louis Suggests the Foundation Lines—Dr. George C. Hall on a Meeting for Sunday.

Representative colored men of Chicago are banding together for a war on crime and for the advancement, in all legitimate ways, of reputable representatives of the negro race. The organization, which will be formed next Sunday at No. 2718 State street, will be known as "The Civic League." Its President will be Dr. George C. Hall of No. 533 State street.

Interested with Dr. Hall in the new organization are T. W. Jones, W. W. Lytle, George Allen, Hannibal Carter, Dr. G. M. Crissup, Dr. A. M. Curtis, Dr. E. E. Barr, W. F. Taylor, and others. These met recently at No. 2718 State street and entered into a full and elaborate discussion of the negro problem. As a step in the direction of settling it it was decided to form "The Civic League." Dr. George Allen, T. W. Jones, W. W. Lytle, and T. J. Eowers were appointed a Committee on Constitution and By-Laws, and will report next Sunday.

Dr. Hall Talks of the League.

Discussing the aims and purposes of the proposed league, Dr. Hall said last night:

"To the fact that the American negro has entered upon the second quarter of a century of his emancipation without having attained the full measure of American citizenship decreed to him by the Constitution it is unnecessary to give more than passing attention. Self-evident truths need no argumentative demonstration. What we mean to do is simply this: To take a survey of the relative position and importance of the negro citizen as compared with the other citizens of his community in which he lives; and when we find two classes of citizens, under the same auspices, with equal civil advantages, the one rising to a degree of almost unexampled power and eminence and the other sinking into a state of comparative obscurity, it is our determination to trace out the causes which have led to the elevation of one class and the depression of the other, and to use our most earnest endeavors to utterly extirpate whatever opposes the progress and prosperity of any class of citizens in this country.

Survey Casually Made.

"This survey we have casually made. We do not complain that our liberties are few, but that in this land of boasted freedom, where ability and good citizenship are the standards by which all the competitions of life are governed, the negro's tenure of almost every public right is somewhat mutilated by arbitrary discriminations against him. In fact in every race in which he enters he is first declared an inferior competitor and then handicapped and hobbled by an unjust race prejudice.

"It must be recognized that the better the negro citizen can be, the better it will be for all classes of citizens. The negro's grievance is that the better public citizen he tries to be these discriminations that are made against him are the more unbearable from the fact that they act as impediments not to his lower nature but to the aspirations of his higher nature.

"As long as the negro is content to be a ragamuffin and a bootblack, frequent the vilest and lowest places of amusement, hang about the streets, shun all public places designed for the intellectual and moral welfare of the citizens, shun schools and colleges, keep out of professions and trades, no white man on earth could be much more free than he finds himself. But the moment he attempts to rise above such a life as this he is galled and tormented with ignominious discriminations against him as a public citizen, both by custom and (in some States) by law; and finally his mother, his wife, his sister, and his daughter are encouraged to lead ignoble and discouraged to lead nobler lives.

Attitude of the White Man.

"Many white men have had the honesty and boldness to step forward and proclaim the truth, while others have willfully traduced the negro, who proposes to stay in this country and is eager to be a citizen without any special rights or restrictions.

"The Civic League is going to help the negro if it can, but not by pulling down the white man. It will make a feature of suppressing crime, and will act in full harmony with any existing organization which has for its objects the betterment of the whole people. Only by these means can the standard be raised.

"We shall not demand anything, while we may respectfully request a number of things. We would like representation where labor of all kinds is employed, but we will leave it optional with the employer whom he hires, contenting ourselves with giving the indorsement of the league to a man we may decide is worthy to represent our race.

"The Civic League will stand for good citizenship, and be based somewhat on the Forum club of St. Louis. Its officers will be business-men who can live without politics. If we cannot stop crime we can locate the blame and fight that."