

NEGROES IN PROTEST MARCH IN FIFTH AV.

8,000 Men, Women, and Children Demand That Discrimination and Oppression End.

TELL WOES ON BANNERS

Parade In Silence While Thousands of Their Race Look On with Never a Cheer.

To the beat of muffled drums 8,000 negro men, women and children marched down Fifth Avenue yesterday in a parade of "silent protest against acts of discrimination and oppression" inflicted upon them in this country, and in other parts of the world. Without a shout or a cheer they made their cause known through many banners which they carried, calling attention to "Jim Crowism," segregation, disfranchisement, and the race of Waco, Memphis, and East St. Louis.

Among the banners was one which immediately attracted the notice of the police. It displayed a picture of a negro woman kneeling before President Wilson, and appealing to him to bring democracy to America before carrying it to Europe. The police declared the banner to be objectionable, and the committee in charge of the parade readily withdrew it.

Excepting for this incident, the parade was in all respects one of the most quiet and orderly demonstrations ever witnessed in Fifth Avenue. True to their word, the negroes made it a "parade of silent protest." It was not until they reached Twenty-third Street, where they dispersed, that they permitted themselves a few outbursts of cheers, these being occasioned by the waving of some of their more elaborately inscribed banners calling for justice and equal rights for the negro.

The negroes assembled at Fifty-ninth Street and Fifth Avenue. Some 800 or more children led the parade, followed by several thousand negro women in white. The men made up the third section. Although there were not more than 8,000 in the parade itself, according to police estimates, fully 20,000 negroes lined Fifth Avenue and gave silent approval of the demonstration.

During the progress of the march circulars were distributed among the crowds telling of the purpose which brought the negroes together. Under the caption, "Why Do We March?" the circular read, in part, as follows:

"We march because by the grace of God and the force of truth the dangerous, hampering walls of prejudice and inhuman injustices must fall.

"We march because we want to make impossible a repetition of Waco, Memphis, and East St. Louis by arousing the conscience of the country, and to bring the murderers of our brothers, sisters and innocent children to justice.

"We march because we deem it a crime to be silent in the face of such barbaric acts.

"We march because we are thoroughly opposed to Jim Crow cars, &c., segregation, discrimination, disfranchisement, lynching, and the host of evils that are forced on us. It is time that the spirit of Christ should be manifested in the making and execution of laws.

"We march because we want our children to live in a better land and enjoy fairer conditions than have fallen to our lot.

"We march in memory of our butchered dead, the massacre of honest toilers who were removing the reproach of laziness and thriftlessness hurled at the entire race. They died to prove our worthiness to live. We live in spite of death shadowing us and ours. We prosper in the face of the most unwarranted and illegal oppression.

"We march because the growing consciousness and solidarity of race, coupled with sorrow and discrimination, have made us one; a union that may never be dissolved in spite of shallow-brained agitators, scheming pundits and political tricksters who secure a fleeting popularity and uncertain financial support by promoting the disunion of a people who ought to consider themselves as one."

Although the Wilson banner displeased the police, they raised no objection to these:

"Make America Safe for Democracy," "India is Abolishing Caste, America Is Adopting It," and "Memphis and Waco, Centres of American Culture."

One banner carried near the head of the procession read, "Your Hands Are Full of Blood." Bearing on East St. Louis riots, there were banners which read: "Pray for the Lady Macbeths" of St. Louis," "Thou Shalt Not Kill?" "We are Maligned as Lazy, and Murdered When We Work," "Cain, Where Is Abel, Thy Brother?"

Those in the parade represented every negro organization and church in the city. They marched, however, not as organizations, but as a people of one race, united by ties of blood and color, and working for a common cause. The Grand Marshal was Captain W. H. Jackson. Directly behind him marched the Executive Committee, composed of the Rev. H. C. Bishop, the Rev. F. A. Cullen, James W. Johnson, the Rev. Charles D. Martin, Fitz W. Mottley, and John E. Nail.