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JWJ MSS 49  
Box 9, Folder 197  
James Weldon Johnson and Grace Nail Johnson Papers  
Series I. Correspondence

James Weldon Johnson Correspondence  
Harrison, Hubert H. / 1915

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Many thanks for the editorial page of *The Age* which I received today. Concerning the editorial on "An Open Ric Lecture Course", Mr. Clark of the Urban League is working out the details of such an idea. Unfortunately the plans on foot considers only the establishment of certain relations between Negro customers and Negro tradesmen and business men. Your idea, as I see it, traverses a wider field and would really ~~to~~ develop into an institution capable of rendering <sup>a</sup> great social service. Whether either of them <sup>shall be</sup> taken up is a matter not yet dependent on me. (Of course, I note your diplomatic hint.)

While I am doing this, let me express at this late hour my cordial appreciation of the gift which you left at my house some time ago. I have not read it again; but I did read it so thoroughly the first time that I need be in no great hurry. I know that I will read it again - and soon.

I don't wonder that the critics regarded it as "a human document". So did I. It is so true, you see. Such a wide arc of our social and spiritual life is seen thru the window of one personality's experience, that the book might well serve as a ~~or~~ later and more ~~concret~~ detailed account of "Our Spiritual Strivings".

Then, too, I liked above all the style (in the broader sense of plan and treatment). I look at Mr. Ferris's

two volumes <sup>2-</sup> on, Mr Johnson's (Edw. S.) one, and so many others, and as a man of the 20<sup>th</sup> century I feel thoroughly disgusted at their seventeenth century mode of translating ideas. Books like yours and Daniells' help to take the bad taste out of my mouth.

I could say "lots more" about your book and the why of its pleasing me, but I recollect in time that I am writing a letter and not a review.

So ~~tho~~ I thank you again, and close with the hope that your next will be up to the level of your last.

Yours sincerely

Robert H. Harrison

May 12<sup>th</sup> 1915

P. S. Temptation mastered me. Since writing the above (at 1.45 a.m. Wednesday) I took down your book "just to take a look" and I have been following your young gentleman from the middle of Chapter Two with "Shiny" and "Red", and left him only as he was coming up New York Harbor. Perhaps, subconsciously, the lady on Bedloe's Island started unpleasant reminiscences of disillusion, etc. ~~Truly~~

H. H. H.

P. P. S. Hell, I'll be damned! For since writing the above I have read on to the murder of "The Widow" and the end of Chapter 8. "Some book!" as our boys say. What?