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ROBESON'S WIFE

by Hannen Swaffer

WRIITES A PLAY

FRIDAY, DAILY HERALD JUNE 3, 1932.

PAUL ROBESON'S wife has put all her long experience of negro life and character into a play which she calls "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It has been accepted by the Theatre Guild in New York, and it is now being read, for London, by C. B. Cochran.

Uncle Tom and His Cabin

NEGRO characters provide the best drama when they are seen in contrast with the white life around them. Mrs. Robeson, knowing this, has shown the effect of the tour of a coloured orchestra through Europe. Uncle Tom," as they call him, is the head of a coloured troupe of musicians. The "Cabin," I believe, is the Harlem cabaret where they start, and then, becoming successful, they travel to London, Paris, Berlin and Moscow, ending in the Harlem from which they came.

High Spots of Drama

All around them, during their tour, there have been high spots of drama. Romance has surrounded them. Tragedy has been on the fringe of their lives. But they seem utterly indifferent to it all. They are a band of coloured musicians, who go out on tour, and return again, not conscious that anything unusual has happened.

There is a great motive in this, as anyone knows, as I do, the effect of all these negro companies on the different civilisations around them.

Paul's Baby Son

RECENTLY, Mrs. Robeson has been living in Vienna. She found it easier for her small son, who, although popular on the banks where he played— I remember that when the Robesons lived at Hampstead, people would touch the child's head for luck—might have found it embarrassing when he grew a little older.

Paul Robeson and his wife have, in England, more than once been rudely treated by people who do not understand that the colour line is something created by white people when they enslave coloured races.

"Vienna behoves us naturally," says Mrs. Robeson. "I was happy there."

Silly Stories

WHEN Paul Robeson's life was published a year or so ago, Mrs. Robeson was the author. The book was well-written and a proof that she has a great sense of underlying character. I hope her play will be done in London.

By the way, I must deny the silly stories that have been going round about Paul Robeson. stories as malicious as they are sensational. They started in New York. Paul is a man entitled to all our respect. His friends, at any rate, remember this.