

THE COLOR LINE.

There is nothing remarkable in the action of the hotelkeeper who refused to draw the absurd American color line in London. In England and on the Continent of Europe guests at public places like hotels are not treated according to their color, but according to their merits. A good many people black as a coal or yellow as saffron are not seldom seen among the guests of the most fashionable watering-places and other resorts in Europe. If the persons of color behave like gentlemen, nobody finds any fault. At a British court reception there are not seldom Asiatics of high rank of all shades of color. Years ago the negro vocalist, known as "the Black Swan," was among the invited guests at a levee of the Duchess of Sutherland, and men of all colors are among the graduates of Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

The leading physician and surgeon of Cape Town, Africa, some forty years ago, was the son of a Norfolk, Va., negro who had been permitted to buy his own freedom. Going to South Africa, this ex-slave grew rich in the coasting trade, sent his son to Eton College, then to the medical school of Guy's Hospital, and, returning to the Cape, this son of an ex-Virginia slave rose to distinction in his profession, became physician to the families of the Governor, the bishop of the colony and the leading English and Scotch merchants. The English society at Cape Town is well born and well bred, but no color line was drawn against this negro, because he had fairly earned the highest credentials of his profession in the first of English medical schools, which does not recklessly give a degree to a man who is not a scholar and a gentleman.

If Americans are wise they will not attempt to assert their absurd race antipathy in Europe. It has no basis of justice, and rests largely on affectation and snobbery. Southern men who were born and brought up with negro slaves before the war do not find any fault with hotels including a respectable negro among their guests, for the late Governor Hebert, of Louisiana, a graduate of West Point and an old-time slaveholder, once said that for weeks he and his wife dined at the same table in the Palais Royal restaurant, in Paris, with the Haytien Minister and his wife, both of whom were black as a coal. Governor Hebert said that the only Americans who expressed any surprise at his enduring the presence of the black couple were Northern born and bred.