

THE WORKS OF FRANCIS J. GRIMKÉ

Edited by

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Letters

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and one would seldom see, must less feel the sting of a single mœquito or any pesting insect, so completely have they been exterminated from the Zone,—such is a vision of the Panama Canal Zone today. Such is the Herculean achievement of the Americans, such is the height, the depth, the breadth and length of the greatest wonder of the Age.

No American citizen comprehends the gigantic extent of this achievement but what he has a feeling of pride that he is an American and that the Stars and Stripes are his flag. If he stops here, if he keeps his eye riveted upon this glorious and other glorious achievements of his country, he will vow eternal allegiance to her honor and be ready to die for her cause. But when he sees this same country stooping to insult his manhood, by denying him the rights and privileges which belong to him by virtue of his being an American citizen, and which are denied simply because he is a Negro, if it were not for his faith in God, the Almighty Ruler of this vast universe, Who is no respecter of person, he would at once renounce his allegiance to his country and to his country's flag, but he has faith that

“Behind the dim unknown
Standeth God, within the shadow
Keeping watch above His own.”

He believes that at no distant future, the American nation will come to a realization of the fact that no group of her citizens are more loyal nor are there any doing more to develop her resources, than this same Negro, and when she comes to see this she will accord to him his every right and the dastardly discriminations and cruel treatment to the Negro will come to a sudden and rightful end.

Matthew Anderson to Francis J. Grimké

United Fruit Company, Steamship Service, Sept. 15th, 1921.

Dear Grimké & Friends:

Lest I may forget, I will try and sketch something of my experience since I last wrote, which was at the Canal Zone in Panama. We left the Zone on the 8th inst. for Cartagena, Colombia where we arrived the morning of the 9th. The city lies off from the landing quite 1½ miles. It has a population of 60,000. The city is a very old Spanish City, having many very old histori-

cal buildings. The things that impressed me most, 80 per cent of the people are colored, ranging from the bright mulatto to the pure Simon Pure Negro, and they are in every walk of life. There is absolutely no color line in the city, and more there is no color line in any one of the South American towns or cities we have visited thus far.

A black man has the same chance to make his way here in the Republic of Colombia as a white man.

Another thing that surprises us is the great number of nude children on the streets not because they haven't clothes but because of the great heat.

Last Monday Blanche and I went on an excursion with a number of the passengers to a city of about 50,000 inhabitants. On one of the best streets stood a bevy of some half dozen of nicely dressed girls of teen age. They stood curiously at seeing the Americans. One of them held by the hand her little eight year old brother, all of them looked as innocent and as prettily behaved as the girls in any of our best regulated families, utterly oblivious of the nudity of the little brother.

Yesterday we went on our excursion to one of the United Fruit's great reservations. Some twenty miles from Santa Marta, our third stop in the Republic Colombia.

There are 5641 acres of bananas in this reservation. A white fellow from Brooklyn and I with a guide rode on mules for more than an hour.

Matthew Anderson to Francis J. Grimké and Relatives

United Fruit Company, Steamship Service, Sept. 16th, 1921.

Dear Friends, Frank, Archie and Nana Grimké:

Lest I may forget I will try and sketch something of our experiences since I last wrote. We are now homeward bound. Our next stop will be Kingston, Jamaica, tomorrow morning.

It is one month today since we left New York for this cruise, and, with the exception of two weeks at the Canal Zone, we have been at sea, stopping a day here, a day and a half there, and two days at another place, and what an experience! We can never forget it, and we thank the Father over and over again for enabling us to take it. Our only regret is that you were not along to enjoy the cruise with us.