

F. L. CARDOZO'S FAME HERE AND ELSEWHERE.

The Radical State Treasurer's Name Perpetuated By a Public School For Negro Children in the National Capital.

The State Bureau,
1417 G Street, N. W.,
Washington, March 17.

It may or may not be significant; in either event it is interesting that at the very time "The Clansman," which attempts to portray the evils of Reconstruction and has its setting in South Carolina, was being produced in Washington, the alumni of the M Street high school for negroes in this city met and passed the following resolutions, of course without any thought of the play at the Columbia theatre on F street:

"The new school building for colored children, which is located in the thirteenth division on I between First and South Capitol streets, southwest, has been designated by the commissioners of the district as the Cardozo school.

"We, therefore, tender our thanks to the board of commissioners, and that at the earliest practicable time we will place in that building a bust of the late Prof. Cardozo as a permanent testimonial of our esteem for his noble life and of our grateful indorsement of the act of the commissioners in naming the building after him."

The Evening Star in its report of the meeting says

"Attorney W. L. Pollard paid a tribute to the memory of Prof. Cardozo. Mrs. A. J. Cooper, principal of the M Street school, was present. Subscriptions were opened at the close of the programme for the Cardozo bust fund."

Who was this Cardozo? The very same that was the negro State treasurer in the Chamberlain government, was charged by the Radical legislature itself of fraud, and was afterwards convicted.

When the United States troops were withdrawn from Columbia in 1877 and the Radical government, the props thus removed, completely collapsed, the variegated collection of negroes, scoundrels, carpet-baggers, grafters—commonly known as thieves—and now and then an honest fanatic waked up from his hypnotic spell, all took up what little they had saved from the years of good stealing and scattered to the four winds of heaven. The Honorable Francis L. Cardozo came to Washington, where he received an appointment as a clerk in the auditing department of the treasury. Besides having been State treasurer under Chamberlain, he had been also secretary of state under Scott.

Cardozo was an educated negro. About the time of the war, perhaps during it, he worked at ship carpentering, in which trade he saved up some money. When he was 21 years old he went to Scotland and entered the University of Edinburgh. Here he graduated with such distinction that he won a scholarship which allowed him two years' university work in any institution he might select in Europe. He chose some theological school in London, where he went and became a "Reverend" He

then entered the ministry of the Congregational church, receiving a call to a church in New Haven, Conn. Soon afterwards, however, he was sent by the American mission board to Charleston as principal of the Avery Institute. And from there, as his sons, who are here in Washington, tell me, "he went into politics." And we know the rest—Reynolds' History of Reconstruction tells us a few interesting items.

In 1877 Cardozo took his flight with the rest, as said above, and secured a job in the treasury department in Washington, his salary being \$1,500 a year. He remained in this position until 1884, when through his old friend, "Dr. Purvis," he was elected to the position of principal of the school for negroes, now known as the M Street high school. H. W. Purvis is another character in Reynolds' history whose whereabouts the author of that interesting Rogue's catalogue says he is unfamiliar. If he is "Dr. Purvis" he is right here in Washington. Mr. Reynolds, and he holds down the job of some kind of physician or surgeon or instructor in therapeutics or some such thing in one of these hospitals or something of the sort. Anyway, Uncle Sam has been looking after him for some good little while, I understand.

But Cardozo, he remained principal of the high school until he died, about two years ago. He has a son, Francis L. Cardozo, who is supervisory principal of the Lincoln school for negro children in southeast Washington. Another son is a druggist here.

I have made careful inquiries about the ex-State treasurer, likewise ex-convict, for whom the district commissioners have decided to name a school building. They say he bore a good character here, and while looked upon with some suspicion perhaps, because they say he was "a politician," there is nothing that I can learn of which would indicate that he ever managed to get hold of any public moneys or sell any State or national bonds, appropriating the proceeds to his private uses, as in the good old days of yore.

About naming the school after him, one negro with whom I talked seemed to think that it was rather an unusual proceeding and hardly a proper one. It seems in no wise a universal or even a general wish on the part of the negroes of the district to name the building "Cardozo." It is thought to be merely the result of the scheming of his sons, who have quietly circulated a petition to have the school named for their "extinguished" father. The commissioners, not knowing, not particularly caring, just complied.

"You know how these things are done," said a bright, educated negro of high standing, who also says that he was not born yesterday. "Cardozo was highly respected and he did his duty fairly well, but he never did anything to entitle him to this distinction, that I can see."

Zach McGhee