



A LITTLE LIGHT ALONG THE WAY Random THOUGHTS BY NAHUM DANIEL BRASCHER

ROBERT SENGSTACKE ABBOTT GROWS WITH TRAN-
 SITION. To have known him cordially, I regard as one
 of life's great privileges. To have talked with him infor-
 mally on numerous occasions across the years leaves mem-
 ories I shall ever cherish.

The Chicago Defender first came
 to the office of The Cleveland Jour-
 nal in Cleveland, Ohio, during 1905.
 I was editor of that Ohio publica-
 tion. I have made it a definite point
 during my newspaper career to al-
 ways read all exchanges, large and
 small. The six column, four page
 Defender had a tone of a spirit from
 the beginning that was different.
 The eight page Chicago Conservator,
 clean cut and clean appearing,
 founded by F. L. Barnett, father of
 Albert Barnett, was then oftener
 spoken of in Chicago. Then there
 was the Turner Illinois Idea, and the
 Taylor Broadaxe. In a few years
 The Chicago Defender passed all
 others in this city, and in time sur-
 passed all others in America.

The Indianapolis Freeman and
 the New York Age with the dimin-
 ishing Colored American of Wash-
 ington, founded by E. E. Cooper—
 also founder of The Indianapolis
 Freeman, later going to the Knox
 family—were most talked of na-
 tional in the early days of the twen-
 tieth century.

Charles W. Chestnutt, the author,
 asked me in Cleveland what I
 hoped to do in life. I said, twenty-
 one: "I wish to be a journalist." Mr.
 Chestnutt laughed good naturedly
 and replied: "It's a good field, but
 there's no money in it." Robert S.
 Abbott was the pioneer in showing
 the world there IS money in your
 journalism.

Met Abbott In Public

My first meeting with Mr. Abbott
 was in a Chicago gathering while I
 yet resided in Cleveland. He was in
 tuxedo, and I went up to him and
 made myself known. Mr. Abbott
 was always most gracious in meet-
 ing people. I remember his cordial
 manner that night. The last time I
 saw Mr. Abbott was in his room at
 his home, late in the afternoon, Sat-
 urday, December 2, 1939. More of
 this later.

All that is being said of Mr. Ab-
 bott at this time deals, for the most
 part with his rise and pre-eminent
 success; with his great contribution
 to the progress of our America, with
 employment of men and women, and
 the mighty institution he leaves to
 continue the DEFENDING AND IN-
 SPIRATIONAL service to all of
 us. That Robert Abbott raised the
 standard of our newspapers from
 the small sheet to the respected
 journals, none can deny. He
 pioneered in channels that others
 followed.

Hence, the time is passed when
 talented young men and women
 hesitate to choose newspaper work
 as a profession. Today in America
 some of the best prepared men and
 women in our country are in the
 field; men who formerly looked
 with condescension on our field are

eager to take part in production. If
 we do not ask them, they ask us.
 Remarkable Co-incidence

That indeed was a remarkable co-
 incidence; the Thursday morning
 passing of Mr. Abbott and on the
 same morning the open meeting of
 a nation-wide gathering of Negro
 Publishers under the initiative and
 general direction of Mr. Abbott's
 nephew, John H. Sengstacke, now
 general manager of The Chicago
 Defender. The late publisher said
 to me once, riding in his car, when
 John was a Hampton student: "This
 is my nephew, a student in Hamp-
 ton; I am preparing him to some
 day take over The Defender."

The first session adjourned out of
 respect to Mr. Abbott. A later
 meeting heard Arnett Murphy of
 the Afro-American—whose father
 founded that publication, and whom
 I knew well—paid tribute to Mr.
 Abbott and Mr. Sengstacke, and
 wished for the latter godspeed.

Chester Franklin, of the Kansas
 City Call said: "This is the greatest
 gathering of Negro publishers I have
 ever seen." Why were they in Chi-
 cago? To bring closer relationships
 between all our newspapers. To
 get over to the National Advertiser's
 of America that our newspapers
 with a field of 15,000,000 people
 must get more advertising copy for
 the respective and collective news-
 papers that represent an annual
 turnover of more than \$2,000,000,000
 —two billion dollars per year! Is
 that not a worthy motive at a
 worthy time? The answer is "yes,"
 by fifteen millions of us—and we
 say it long and loud.

With more and generous adver-
 tising we can make the national—
 and local—advertisers more money,
 and in consequence, our newspapers
 can go on to higher standards, which

we VERY MUST in this changing
 national and international periods
 of economic development.

WE MUST STAND UP; AND WE
 MUST BE HEARD—and we must
 have co-operation all along the line,
 AMERICA!

Dr. Bradley Visits

The last time I saw the "Boss"—
 I always fondly called him that and
 he liked it—(albeit I was never on
 the Defender payroll as such,
 though always working in harmony
 with its purposes, even when editor-
 in-chief of The Associated Negro
 Press)—the last time was that De-
 cember Saturday. Arrangements
 had been made through his personal
 secretary, Miss Westbrook, and
 Mrs. Abbott, to visit the publisher's
 sick room with Dr. Preston Bradley,
 of the Peoples Church, and his se-
 cretary, Mrs. May Harrison.

Mr. Abbott was cheerful and cor-
 dial. Dr. Bradley and Mr. Abbott
 were pleasant friends. Mr. Abbott
 told how he had been cheered by
 the great liberal preacher's radio
 services; and how, at last, he could
 not listen, but was told what took
 place by Mrs. Abbott.

The "Boss" was always witty
 when we would have these informal
 meets. He and Dr. Bradley talked
 for 15 minutes. He asked us to visit
 his den, and we each said a cheerful
 "Good-bye." Abbott lives on!