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# 5,000 Fervent Followers of Father Divine in Newar

## March Far and Feverishly in Muggy Air, Pack Hall to Suffocation

Father Divine's dream children held an outing and demonstration yesterday, strong. Swarming around the old four-story factory building they have converted into their Newark Kingdom No. 1 at School and Wickliffe streets, they formed a small, triumphant army.

They marched several miles in the muggy air, shouting and demonstrating frenziedly at every glimpse of the stocky former Baltimore hedge clipper, who calls himself God. Later they completed the session within the stifling confines of the Kingdom.

It was an amazing scene. Not so amazing is Father Divine, a small man floundering in a morass of over-large but sticky words. What is amazing is the grip that has been held on these simple, naive folk.

They are a happy, skylarking, completely possessed family of dream children who have fallen under the sway of Father Divine. That is, all but the smattering of whites who have taken up the beliefs. For among those whites are the crippled and infirm and others who, burdened by troubles, look for surcease anywhere.

### Foolproof Religion.

Father Divine has a foolproof religion. You will not die, he promises, unless— Should you deviate from his rules death then will overtake you. And those followers who have departed this earth did so because of a violation. And since there is no returning to offer rebuttal, the dead man stands by his own act condemned.

And the father promises bounty for all. In the parade yesterday, behind his own Rollis Royce, and behind the Rollis Royce of his inner guard, both of them bearing on the radiators proud, stuffed doves of peace, were truckloads of vegetables, of corn, pumpkins and watermelons. In one truck were tables loaded down with candied hams and sweet potatoes.

All these come from the father who comes into his money from nobody knows where. A simple guess might be that the kingdoms provide the money. In the kingdoms live hundreds of his followers. Neither smoking nor drinking, caring nothing for material and costly pleasures, they follow their jobs during the day, return to the kingdoms at night. Here psalm singing and exhortations keep them busy until they are exhausted enough to sleep. Their money goes to the father who counsels them that in poverty of material things is the wealth of spirituality.

So the father is never in need of money.

### "Just Gets It and Gets It."

"Why," said Pearl Green, a tall, slender Negress of 30, who has not yet been inducted into a kingdom, "he just gets it and gets it. Strictly cash is his motto. Ain't it wonderful?"

"Peace," cried her companion, "it sure is wonderful!"

Pearl Green continued: "My lady when I first went to her was so sick she couldn't even raise a hand off her bed. She was sure to die, the doctors said. So I told her about Father Divine and his great message. I told her: 'Never give out a negative thought, never think negative thoughts.' And she did this and now she's as well as you and me."

"Glory, glory," punctuated two listeners, "ain't it wonderful?"

"Now," continued Pearl, "they're moving to Detroit and they want me to go along."

"Are you going?" asked some one.

"No," said Pearl, "Father has come to me in my sleep and he keeps telling me to go to Pittsburgh and pay some debts I owe. I'm going there. I owe some people and I intend to pay up."

### 10,000 in Newark.

The cult has grown to amazing proportions in New York. Here in Newark they have, according to claims, 10,000 members and in Essex County 15,000.

Accurate information about the Divine group is hard to obtain. Father Divine won't give it out. His loose and joyful followers frankly don't know. Those who do know probably are Nathan Kranzler of Irvington, a Newark lawyer, who represents Father Divine in this state and in New York, and Brother Lamb, a white college graduate, who is the father's personal secretary, follows him everywhere and takes stenographic notes every time the father opens his mouth.

But Kranzler, who said when asked if he is a Divine follower: "My ac-

tions and my presence here tonight indicate my beliefs," and Brother Lamb are close-mouthed when it comes to information about the internals of the organization.

Father Divine seemed startled and ill at ease as the picture was being taken. In front of him was a large plate of ripe fruit and alongside of him was a large Negress, decked out with colorful trappings and bearing golden "Father Divine is God" across her expansive front.

### Nips Interview.

The picture was taken. When the reporter sought to question the father Kranzler hastily interrupted and put a stop to it.

Before that the father had sought to answer a simple question and was staggered by "statistics." He couldn't get it to roll from his tongue and finally had to be satisfied with a sort of "stateestics."

Later he spoke to the overflow crowd in the meeting room of the kingdom. Here again he battled with words. He tried to announce that on the 10th of next month a demonstration will be held in New York to oppose raising of rents.

It was when he began to drift into his Gospel utterances when he whipped out such sentences as "I am here and you are there and ain't it grand" that he showed some signs of the tremendous power he is supposed to have with the spoken word.

### Strings of Emotion.

The crowd, after the long parade, packed into the suffocating limits of the auditorium, could not have understood much, even had it been expressed clearly. But when it went wild over declarations, the words were not doing it. Rather, it was the emotional strings that these sounds touched, the emotional strings of a group seeking something that defied their own capacity for expression.

The demonstration was not strictly a Newark performance. Places as far away as New Rochelle were represented. Bus loads came from New York.

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Five thousand followers of Father Divine came to Newark yesterday from four states and filled local streets with four hours of color and pageantry. Above view shows part of crowd on Wickliffe street with an inset of Father Divine.

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