

**NATIONAL AFRO-AMERICAN COUNCIL.**

ORGANIZED FOR THE AMELIORATION OF THE NEGRO RACE.

Pursuant to a call of 150 prominent representatives of the Negro race in the United States, a conference was held yesterday in the common council chambers to consider the advisability of reviving the old Afro-American League, which was first organized in Chicago early in 1892, but which afterward went out of existence. Two sessions were held yesterday. After thoroughly discussing the need of organization in order to fight everything that is antagonistic to the race, it was decided not to re-organize the old league, but to form a new one under the name of the National Afro-American Council. Rochester, then, has the distinction of being the birthplace of what may prove a potent factor in the great social problems of the country.

T. Thomas Fortune, having been president of the old league, called the conference to order. Mr. Thompson introduced Mayor Warner, who delivered the address of welcome as follows:

"It is to be hoped that the time may soon arrive when the colored people will be able to cease their battle against race prejudice, and concentrate all their efforts for the full development of all the abilities of the race. The events of recent years show that time is the main element required to make a good citizen of every colored man in the country.

"Not only in the arts of peace, but in those of war also the colored citizen has proven his worth. It was true American honesty which gave the colored troops before Santiago their full share of the glory. There is not a citizen of the country who is not proud of their record."

C. J. Perry, of the Philadelphia *Tribune*, responded to the Mayor's address.

Mr. Fortune then took the opportunity of stating the objects of calling the conference. He himself was opposed to it, stating that he had lost confidence in the race, and he did not believe the time was ripe for its organization. Continuing:

"The race as a whole is not in condition yet to combat the prejudice against the race, but Bishop Walters, Collector Dancy and others here think that even a handful can sow the seed. I am almost persuaded that we can not accomplish our object any more than we could the abolition of slavery unless the white men and the black men, the white women and the black women, join in the movement. Three States, South Carolina, Mississippi and Louisiana, have disfranchised us as entirely as we were before the war. Alabama is to do the same thing. Where it is not done by constitutional enactment, it is done by scheme and fraud. The Southern sentiment that has been carried into the new possessions will result in a revolution in ten years, unless care is taken. If you rule the black and yellow people in Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines as the South has been and is being ruled, you will have revolution upon revolution and you ought to have it. If you expect to lift up the South by putting only the white men forward, you are going to have trouble right along. You have made 26,000 black teachers in the South and have taught our people freedom, but in the South the people are teaching out of text books fifty years old. You cannot put the two classes together without a clash. Mob law prevails in the South, and mob law leads to revolution.

"Revise your laws regarding the intermarriage of the races," continued Mr. Fortune, "if you wish to conduce to morality. If a white woman falls in love with a black man and they are not allowed to marry they will live together illegally. The trouble is in your laws. Go South and you will see the yellow color of the people. Whose fault is it? Twenty-four States in this Union have laws prohibiting the intermarriage of

the races. These laws should be wiped out. Surely we have sufficient provocation to have an association for the uplifting of the race."

Upon motion of Bishop Walters, Mr. Fortune was made chairman, and Mrs. Barnett, secretary of the meeting. All who wished to become members of the conference were asked to step within the railing, there being no restriction as to color. A brief address was made by Miss Susan B. Anthony, after which the chair appointed the following committees:

Organization—Bishop A. Walters, Charles R. Douglass, John W. Thompson, Mrs. Jeffrey, Rev. W. E. Bowen.

Resolutions—John C. Dancy, Mrs. Sprague, C. J. Perry, Mrs. Ida Wells Barnett, F. S. Cunningham.

Ex-Minister Smyth asked to become a member of the conference, but stated that he was opposed to mixed marriages and mixed schools though seeking the moral and intellectual improvement of the colored children in the entire South.

The chair held that Mr. Smyth was not eligible to membership, as his views were not in accord with the majority at the conference. This question was unsettled when recess was taken until afternoon.

The committee on organization then presented its report, and ex-Minister Smyth arose to take part in the discussion. The chair refused to recognize Mr. Smyth, holding that as he had expressed views antagonistic to those of the conferees, he was not a member of the conference.

He again addressed the chair. Mr. Fortune refused to recognize him, ruling him not a member. He appealed from the decision of the chair and was sustained in his appeal. Mr. Fortune then left the platform, refusing to preside where a member was in favor of separate schools and separate marriage laws, "not even if he were as white as snow or as black as ink."

Bishop Walters held that as Mr. Smyth had not become a member at the morning session he could not now gain a membership without a vote of the conference. Mr. Fortune again took the chair and put the question, "Is Mr. Smyth a member of this convention?" A number of conferees jumped upon their feet immediately, all attempting to talk at once. Bishop Walters' towering form arose, however, and by a single sentence he calmed the troubled sea of heated argument. "If Mr. Smyth," he said, "desires to become a member of this conference for the good he can do the race, I am for him; but if he is here simply to stir up dissension, I am against him. At all events, let us be fair." The vote on the question was then taken and Mr. Smith declared not a member.

The report of the organization committee, as finally adopted, was to the effect that the new organization should be called the National Afro-American Council; that its objects should be the amelioration of the colored race, as set forth in the address of the committee, to be presented later; that the officers should consist of president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, with an executive committee of seven; that the national council should consist of five representatives from each State, two of whom should be women; that

wherever ten or more persons should be found in sympathy with the objects of the council, they could organize a State council; that the annual fees should be no less than \$5.

The chair appointed as a committee on nominations, Bishop A. Walters, W. E. Bowen and Mrs. Jeffreys. They reported in favor of T. Thomas Fortune for president, but Mr. Fortune acknowledged that he had not confidence enough in the race to carry the council on to success, and consequently his name was withdrawn. The officers as finally agreed upon were:

President, Bishop Alexander Walters, Jersey City, N. J.

Vice-President, J. C. Dancy, of Wilmington, N. C.

Secretary, Mrs. Ida B. W. Barnett, Chicago.

Treasurer, John W. Thompson, Rochester.

Executive committee, J. C. Dancy, Mrs. I. B. W. Barnett, John W. Thompson, Bishop B. W. Arnett, Joseph P. Peaker, Chris Perry, H. T. Kealing.—*Rochester (N. Y.) Democrat.*

**AFRO-AMERICAN COUNCIL.**

After the election of the officers Mr. Fortune secured the floor and denounced the race in the bitterest language possible. The onslaught was so unexpected and out of harmony with the purposes of the assembly, that an acrimonious discussion followed and much antagonism was aroused among the members of the Conference. Mr. Fortune said he had lost confidence in the race and did not want to lead any race movement requiring general support; whereupon he was asked by several why he submitted to an election if he thought so meanly of his brethren that he did not wish to assume the duties of the presidency. In the midst of the confusion he resigned, and Bishop Walters was elected in his stead.

For reasons privately stated some months ago, the Bishop deemed it inexpedient to be considered in this connection, but it being represented to him that he was now the only man who could unify the elements and save the organization from failure, he consented to serve and do his best to accomplish something practical for the race. The Conference adjourned amid good feeling and hopeful anticipations.

Bishop Walters states that he will, at an early date, call a meeting in some central locality where all can attend who desire to do so, and where the freest discussion can be had, to finish the work simply begun at Rochester. A cordial invitation is extended to the Bishops of the several denominations, ministers, public officials, journalists and professional men and women generally, and to all who signed the call, to become members of the Council.—*Washington Colored American.*

Presiding Elder E. Graham is quite a worker in the Texas Conference.

Bishop C. R. Harris says that Rev. W. T. Biddle is Zion's poet.

Bishop J. B. Small, D. D., is a ripe scholar and deep theologian and is an author of considerable note. He is now making his Episcopal visits in the North Alabama Conference preparatory to the annual Conference which meets in Selma, Ala., next December.—*Tuscaloosa (Ala.) Chronicle.*

**CAPE FEAR DISTRICT.**

GOOD, SENSIBLE TALK.

BY REV. S. B. HUNTER, P. E.

Dear Pastors and Members of the Cape Fear District: Whilst it is a duty, I feel it a pleasure to meet you here in this my third session as presiding officer. When I say presiding officer I mean to preside with impartiality. What our difference of opinion may have been I have not allowed it to come in contact with our business as ministers. I feel that I have had each of your interest at heart, for I have not failed in each quarter to labor in the interest of your salary, and have been the first one to put money in the Sunday's collection, even when I was not settled with on Saturday as per law. And I have refused to accept of Sabbath collection even when pastors failed to collect enough to pay me on Saturday. By this I have paid to the support of pastors six to seven dollars; to the secretaries of the quarterly conferences about \$1.50; paid into every poor's collection from three to five cents every Sunday. This you see was my attempt to boom each circuit financially.

**THE DISTRICT.**

I am pleased to say that the district is in fine condition and peace reigns with one exception between P. E. and pastor. Whilst some few have built themselves up in the estimation of the Bishop along the line of duty, others have not done so well, but I am in hopes that those behind will catch up by Conference.

Now concerning the delegates elected to this body, they are sent here from the circuit or station to make known to this body the wants or wishes of their people concerning their pastor and not the presiding elder. If any such vote has been taken by the delegates we cannot hear it in this conference. The district conference votes for the presiding elder and not the people.

You will see a note in our program concerning the presiding elder being the Bishop's eye. I trust he may see all of you brethren in a way that you may get a good appointment next year, for the most of you have made improvements over last year. These he must see. I am sorry, however, to say that only a few of you have paid your Varick Memorial assessment laid upon you this year. I have notified each minister of his amount and have received from them the following: Magnolia, W. H. Wilder, pastor, \$1.75; Parkersburg, C. R. Conrad, pastor, \$1.00, due \$1.00; Garland, E. A. Carroll, pastor, \$2.25; Elizabethtown, W. J. F. Moore, pastor, \$2.50. Mt. Olive, H. W. Farnior, pastor, 75 cents, due 75. I am very sorry that more than half of the ministers of the district have not obeyed this call, but I trust this will be complied with before Conference. There was another collection this year for the same purpose, namely, the 4th Sunday in August. I trust you have an eye single to this, that you will report as to law at our next annual Conference, so that I can stand in your defense.

Now, in conclusion, allow me to say that some of you have stood by me and have given me your hearty co-operation. You, I shall not forget, for I know you. Oth-

ers who have not been so much interested in my welfare, I love you, too, and God forbid that I should do you any harm; but I am sorry to be impressed that some of you have done yourselves harm. Your church law requires that leaders' meeting be held once a month at stations and once every three months on circuits. I find in some places that not two meetings of this kind have been held. I find on one circuit, a local preacher held the general class and love-feast. This is an open violation of Church law, both on the part of the pastor and local preacher. This accounts for some local preachers allowing themselves to be called parsons, which means pastor.

Some pastors have left their charges in the hands of local preachers, and some of these local preachers think they ought to be paid as well as the pastor and tell the people so in the pastor's absence. This accounts sometimes for the failure of the pastor in getting his salary. He has sold out his rights to some local preacher. To be a successful pastor you must know our law and keep it. Some pastors call their local preachers "Rev." This gives them the big head. The "Rev." or minister are those who have been ordained and are in orders. Not even traveling preachers are ministers, but they can be called Rev.

My district assessment on general fund is \$735.00. There has been reported to have been raised to date \$125. Many have not raised half of their assessment, and the year is over half gone.

**SANCTIFICATION IN THE DISTRICT.**

This is a blessing in some parts of my district but not so in other parts. Sanctification is what you make it. The doctrine is alright. I have found that those who have fought it have had the most cause to complain, for "it is hard to kick against the pricks." But some preachers as well as people have made a mistake and have abused the doctrine of sanctification in many ways, namely, sinless—cannot commit it. This is not a blessing but a curse. I have found on this district where true sanctification is, the members are more loyal and the pastors get along better.

Now may the blessings of God rest upon each of you, and may you come to the annual Conference with a full report.

*Wilmington, N. C.*

**BISHOP HOOD'S APPOINTMENTS**

**OCTOBER.**

- 1st ..... St Paul's, "
- 2nd .. At 11 a m, Matthew's chapel, "
- 2nd .. At night, Gitson's Station, "
- 3rd ..... Goodman chapel, "
- 4th ..... At 11, Digg's chapel, "
- 5th ..... 11, Ashley, "
- 6th ..... Pleasant Grove, "
- 7th ..... Lethes, "
- 9th ..... Rockingham, "
- 10th ..... Night, Lillesville, "
- 11th ..... 11, Centinary, "
- 12th ..... Night, Morven, "
- 13th ..... 11, Gatewood station, "
- 14th ..... 11, Simfield, "
- 16th ..... 11, Morvin, "
- ..... At night ..... Hudson s h, "
- 18th .. Rook Hill, Cabarrus county, "
- 19th ..... Bethel, "
- 20th ..... Mount Pleasant, "
- 21st ..... Rives chapel, "
- 23rd ..... Concord, "
- 25th ..... Cedar Grove, "
- 26th .. Rock Hill, Union county, "
- 27th ..... Union Springs, "
- 28th ..... Monroe, "
- 29th ..... New Inland, "
- 30th ..... 11, Chestnut, "
- ..... At night, Jonesboro, "
- 31st ..... 11, Love Grove, "