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ALABAMA WARMLY RECEIVES BISHOP B. G. SHAW.

Henry W. Ruffingood

A one day's conference of the Eighth Episcopal District is closing a most interesting meeting with Bishop B. G. Shaw presiding. The meeting is well attended with nearly a hundred pastors and laymen present. The feature of the conference is the gala reception given Bishop Shaw and the pleasing and inspiring address of the bishop. Men shouted, they yelled, they stamped approval as the bishop moved about in the pulpit in his dramatic manner, talking the possibilities of the Church, its wonderful strides in human society, its future possibilities, the sacrifices made by himself and the sacrifices of his humble co-workers in the faith, and his sworn pledge for the future.

The work of Lomax-Hannon High School at Greenville, Ala., entertained the conferences no doubt more than any other matter affecting the Eighth Episcopal District. The trustees were asked to report conditions and the Principal was also asked to express what he thought was necessary to be done at this time. They reported. Bishop Shaw emphasized the fact that the institution must take higher ground in Alabama and that competent men and women must be found to operate the work at Greenville and funds must be raised to retire certain burdensome debts and a plan was put on to raise three thousand dollars within the next sixty days. The pastors and presiding elders accepted the assessments and pledged themselves to raise the money within that time. Many speeches were made by ministers and laymen, stimulating the cause in Alabama and the Church generally. Some criticisms were made on the plan of operation of the school. It was finally agreed that the work had been kept in tact about as well as could be expected with the money in hand for operation. A special committee headed by Prof. J. R. Wingfield was appointed to investigate certain expenditures and some negotiations that did not seem clear or profitable to the conference. The conference voted to increase the Trustee Board, perhaps doubling the charter number. Persons were nominated from every conference in the Eighth Episcopal District and their election is to be confirmed at the regular Trustee Board in August. Bishop B. G. Shaw Delivers Address.

In his opening address Bishop B. G. Shaw spoke fervently and plainly about the work of the Eighth Episcopal District and his relation to the church, members, and ministers.

"I am glad to meet you, my brethren," he said. "I am happy because of faithful Alabama and because I believe that God's plans are fastly ripening. He met us at the General Conference He is with us here. He will remain with us if we keep the faith, trust Him, serve Him and follow His plans. I know we are going to have a wonderful success in Alabama. I am an Alabamian now. I am a citizen of this state. I have bought property in this State. The head of the Episcopal district for this quadrennium will be in Birmingham. I have bought my home there and when I leave the conference I will go straight to Washington to pack my things, ship them to Birmingham and on the Fourth Day of July, 1924, my brother who desires may meet me and take dinner with me at 700 Eighth Avenue, Birmingham, Ala. (Long and continuous applause.)

"There will be no graft in Alabama," the Bishop continued. "I am going to preside over the meetings, interesting myself in protecting the Church. I will collect no money. I will have no money; I will not graft on the Church. I will not permit it to be done, if I know it. Brethren, don't

tempt me. Let me be God's man. We are going to be friends and brethren as long as the cause of Christ and the Church are protected. I believe that my coming to this honor and this high station in God's army was of divine origin. We are going to play fair now. Everything must be done on a clean sheet and I will be able to report my conduct to the Church and that without flinching or remorse of conscience.

"The Church has provided for me and I will not make criminals of my ministers, my good laymen, nor a thief and criminal of myself. We ought to be able to tell about every dollar of the money we raise, what we have done with it, and we should not stand for its use for anything save for the purpose for which it is raised. I am talking much today and

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AN OPEN LETTER TO BISHOP J. W. WOOD, D. D.

Bishop J. W. Wood, D. D. Indianapolis, Ind.

My Dear Bishop Wood:

In fairness to yourself and your good reputation and for the general welfare and progress of the A. M. E. Zion Church especially in the Seventh Episcopal District over which you presided, I am asking for following information:

1. What have you done with the money collected for delegates' expenses to the General Conference for the past three years? As a matter of fact, you know that the delegates of the Alabama Conference, South Alabama, South East Alabama, Central Alabama, and the Cahaba Alabama Conference were given nothing for their traveling expenses to the General Conference except in two of these conferences where they received about \$3.50 each from what little funds you tried to collect in your mid-year conferences. These men as you know had to pay their own way to the General Conference and back out of their own pockets to work for the Church after they had collected this money from year to year for this purpose.

2. Your reported, it would be misleading to call it a report, but stated on a piece of paper that you had raised \$9000 Tercentenary money and sent \$4000 to the Central Committee and left \$5000 in the conferences. We are anxious to know what conferences you left this Tercentenary money and to whom it was given and for what purpose? The General Church should know why Alabama fell so far behind in the collection of this much needed funds. There is a psychological reason for this failure.

3. When I went to you like a man and a friend and told you what was being circulated about you taking away all of the General Conference delegates' expenses money, and that the men were not inclined to turn any more over to you, did you not get up in the mid-year conference in the Old Ship church in the city of Montgomery and state that you had put the General Conference delegate expense funds in the hopper with the Tercentenary money as it was so small and sent it all into the Central Committee? But in making your final report at the General Conference at Indianapolis, Ind., you contradict this statement by saying you have left five thousand dollars in the home conferences. Please explain these inharmonious statements.

Your presiding elders and ministers of this District are questioning the correctness of your statement and therefore it is hoped that you will clear up the situation; otherwise the record you established in Alabama will forever stand against you.

Yours for truth, honesty and the maintenance of the fundamental principles of Zion Methodism.

J. R. Wingfield.

BISHOP JOHN W. WOOD REPLIES TO OPEN LETTER.

Dr. J. R. Wingfield:

In reply to your open letter in the Birmingham Reporter, will say that there is nothing which gives me more pleasure than to answer the questions that you have asked.

In reply to your first question (What have you done with the money collected for Delegates' expenses to the General Conference for three years?) Before making any attempt to answer this question I have turned to the Bishop's blanks to see just what was done. In giving out this statement, it is my purpose to be as accurate as I possibly can, because I am anxious that every man in Alabama who served under my administration should be treated fair and given credit for the full amount of money that he has collected for every purpose in the Church.

In summing up the amount of money collected for three years I had in my hands last November \$214.25. This is the total amount collected for delegates' traveling expenses to the General Conference. At our Connectional Council, which was held in Cincinnati last year, there was appropriated to the Mt. Zion church \$1,000.00. Dr. Bascom received a check for \$500.00 and I was to furnish the other \$500.00. On going to Montgomery, I arranged at one of the banks there with Dr. Bascom and Mr. J. E. Johnson for the other \$500.00, which made the \$1,000.00 given to Mt. Zion from the General Church. In November of last year, this note became due and I had it to pay. I tried to collect enough Tercentenary money to pay it, but failed. Therefore, with what little money I had collected as Tercentenary money I put it with the money I had collected for General Conference Delegates' expenses and paid off the note of \$514.00. I hold the cancelled note and if you would like to see it, I will send it to you. And again, my records show that there was very little General Conference Delegates' money collected and what little was collected, I would give the pastors credit for it on their benevolences. My record will also show that more than 80% of all the pastors who served under me in Alabama were behind on their benevolences. So when a man was behind, I would use everything in sight to help him get out on his claims. And at that, invariably they were behind, and my records will show that what I am saying to you is the truth and nothing else but the truth, so help me God.

Question Number two. "You stated on a piece of paper that you raised \$9,000 Ter-Centenary money, sent \$4,000 to the central committee and left \$5,000 in the conferences. We are anxious to know which conferences you left this Tercentenary money and to whom it was given and for what purpose?" I did not make my report on a piece of paper. My Quadrennial report is printed in pamphlet form. I am sorry that you did not get one. If you should happen to get hold of one, please turn to page 38 and you will find my report. I reported the money in bulk as I collected it. I regret very much that in that report, I did not give the annual conferences credits for the amounts raised, but at any rate here is the report.

\$548.25
830.00
1,040.00
1,350.00
22.44
25.50
5,226.00 Making a grand total of
5,226.00

You will note that \$612.50 was not printed in my report but only reported to the Central Committee. I want you and the entire Church to know the facts in the matter of handling the Tercentenary money. You will

see from the above figures that I turned into the Central Committee, \$5,469.19. Double this amount and we have \$11,938.38. I hope this statement is clear so far as it goes.

The next thing you want to know is what became of the \$5,469.19? In the first place the Seventh Episcopal District did not raise \$11,938.38. I gave them credit for what they did not do and in justice to myself and in all fairness to my brethren, they will testify that this amount of money as report was not raised. I gave the District credit for having raised as much money as we sent in, but all of the brethren know who attended the Mid-Year Conferences, that we did not raise the money in the sum as I have reported. Let's be fair to ourselves, let's be fair to all of our men with whom we have labored and struggled for the last four years. They know that our reports were so shameful and so little money raised, until they all agreed to turn over to the bishop the major part of the collection and gave to themselves the credit of raising an equal amount handed over to the Bishop for the Central Committee. And the brethren themselves know they handled all of the Tercentenary money. I did not handle it. In giving out this statement, I want this fact known, that had it not been for the strong support that I received from the West Alabama Conference and the South Mississippi Conference, our report on the Tercentenary money would have been the most disgraceful exhibition before the General Conference. If the men of Alabama can show by actual record that I have misappropriated one dime of their money, I will send them a cashier's check for \$500 as a donation to Lomax-Hannon Industrial College. Of course we helped many of our churches in the rural district with the Tercentenary money that remained in the annual conferences. All money left in the mid-year conferences was placed in the hands of the presiding elders to be appropriated to the most needful churches on the districts. I hope, Brother Wingfield, that this is clear.

Question 3. This question is answered under question number one. All delegates' money previously collected until I paid off the note of \$514.00 was designated as funds placed in the general hopper and certainly, I used the money as stated above. I hope also that you have discovered that there was not \$5,000 left in the home conferences. But the home conferences were given credit for raising that amount which was not raised. I think this is as clear as I can make it. And if there is anything else you would like to know, I would be pleased to have from you a personal letter and I will take pleasure in explaining or answering any question that you may ask.

I have come from the bottom to the top. My platform has been constructed with great care and precaution. And the reason why that I am standing at the top today, is because I have striven at all times to be honest and truthful and I have always stood for justice and equal rights to all men and for the maintenance of the fundamental principles of the great Church of which, I have the honor to represent. If it can be proven by your figures or the figures of any of my annual conferences that I have shown the spirit of graft and made any misappropriation of the Tercentenary money or any other kind of a money, I am willing to hand down a donation to charity, of \$500.00 in cash. All I ask you to do is, to produce a record and show from actual figures that I have misappropriated one dime of your money, and I will make good.

With every good wish, I am,

As ever yours,

John W. Wood.

Indianapolis, Ind.

NORTH CAROLINA AS SEEN BY KELLY MILLER.

Dean of Howard University.

For the past two weeks, I have been knee-deep in North Carolina. The Department of Education was good enough to invite me to lecture to the teachers attending the ten summer schools scattered throughout the State. There are about four thousand colored teachers in North Carolina. Over twenty-five hundred are registered in summer schools. It was indeed a pleasure and privilege to come in close contact with this eager body of educational co-workers representing every section of the State as well as varying levels of attainment and grades of work. The educational authorities in North Carolina are putting forth a sincere and determined effort to bring its teaching staff up to the required standard of efficiency. Every teacher in the State is encouraged to earn the standard certificate demanded by the grade sought for. Those who have followed the history of Negro Education are fully aware of the handicaps under which our schools have labored. At the start there was no provision for the adequate preparation of teachers to assume the important task of public instruction. Any woman who could read and write and had a little personal influence could secure an appointment as teacher. So that our public schools throughout the South were filled with teachers, ill prepared for the function of their office. This was necessarily so. The schools must be taught. The teachers must be filled. Qualified candidates were few. The compensation was so meager as not to prove attractive to those who could secure more remunerative occupation. As result there is found in the schools everywhere large numbers of teachers who still fall far below the standards of modern requirements. It is mainly to meet this deficiency that Summer schools are established throughout the state. These facilities are brought within the reach of every teacher so that in the future those who fail to measure up to the mark will be eliminated by exclusion.

The state of North Carolina maintains a department of Negro Education which is presided over by Mr. Newbold, a white man of understanding and sympathy with the educational problems of the Negro citizens of the State. He has acquired what Dr. Frissel used to call the instinct of race relationship. I found that the colored educators of the State have the highest confidence in his integrity and intention to do the best thing possible for the important branch of public instruction placed under his charge. The educational program of North Carolina for the Negro race is indeed most hopeful and encouraging. The State appropriated a budget of over a million dollars for Negro education. When this is compared with what many of the other states have done and are doing it sounds like a miracle of accomplishment. But we are told on every hand that there is still more to follow. North Carolina is a medium Southern State. It lacks the savage race rancor of the far southern group, and yet it follows the general formula of race relation prevailing in the South. We may expect that her example in the educational field will be contagious.

I was particularly impressed with the provision made for the State College at Greensboro. This institution has a plant valued at over a million dollars and is as well equipped for the work which it sets up to do as any school within the entire circle of Negro education. President Dudley assures me that there are still greater things in store. The state is reaching the point where it no longer asks what any requested facility may cost, but merely whether it can be well

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