

Africo-American Presbyterian

"AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—John, viii, 32.

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OUR FINEST PIECE OF PUBLIC SERVICE

By Dr. Frank D. Adams In Christian Work.

Several weeks ago we announced a prize contest inviting our readers to write accounts of "the best public service accomplished by any church without regard to denominational lines." Scores of manuscripts came in describing almost as many different types of projects. In the opinion of the judges the following article by Dr. Adams, pastor of the Church of Our Father of Detroit, Michigan, deserves the first prize and it has been forwarded to him. Many other manuscripts proved of such unusual interest that we propose to publish them in the near future.—The Editors, Christian Work.

When it was conceived and carried through, the bit of service I am about to describe did not seem particularly significant. But, in view of what it accomplished, it stands out as perhaps the best piece of social work ever done by our church. And the expense involved, both of time and money, was but a fraction of that incurred in many another less fruitful effort.

An active worker in our Young People's Christian Union is employed in a studio where a young colored woman is also one of the office force. Both girls are high type, truly representative of the best of their respective races. Naturally they became friends. The colored girl is the leader of a large group of young people in her own church. Being of unusual intelligence, culture and high moral character, she exerts a powerful influence among them. One day she suggested to our young worker an exchange of visits between their two young people's organizations. That her group could possibly be of any help to ours she never dreamed. But she was eager to enlarge the vision of her own group. She wanted them to meet white young people under the proper auspices that they might understand each other better and perhaps allay some of the unhappy prejudice between the races.

Our union adopted the suggestion with alacrity. Truth to tell, most of them thought of it only as a "lark." Some liked the novelty of it, never having visited a Negro church. Maybe a few understood its actual significance. It was decided that our society should pay the first visit, going, on an agreed Sunday afternoon, to be the guests of the colored people.

Our churches are only a mile apart; but every city-dweller knows what a difference only a block or two can make in a place like Detroit. The church we were to visit stands in the heart of a thickly populated Negro district. On the appointed day some fifty of our young people, ranging in years from fifteen to thirty-five, arrived at the colored church. No royal embassy was ever more graciously received, in spite of the evident nervousness on the part of our hosts. We were conducted to the auditorium on the second floor of the old, weather-beaten, frame building; and, after a simple address of welcome, our party gave an appropriate program of songs, readings and instrumental music. Then all adjourned to the "parlors" on the lower floor, where light refreshments were served, and the colored people put on a delightful little impromptu program. The spirit of friendly good-fellowship was a revelation to everybody. Some of our young people realized for the first time that Negroes were really "folks." Yet everything was in perfect decorum, without a suggestion of unbecoming familiarity.

Just a month later the colored society paid us a return visit. They came more than a hundred strong, ranging in age from four to sixty years,—many of them with mixed motives, no doubt! Remembering the pathetically barren rooms in which our guests worked and worshipped, we were almost ashamed to receive them into our big, roomy, comfortable hall and parish

house. However, everybody was soon perfectly at ease.

On this day the order was reversed. The colored people gave the formal program, then all repaired to the church parlors where refreshments were served and an impromptu program furnished by our Unioners. And such happiness I have rarely witnessed as beamed upon those chocolate and ebony faces. Of course we were just as happy as they: for were we not making them happy?

Scores of our guests were eager to inspect our splendid church plant. In the midst of the enjoyment our big-hearted organist came in, caught the spirit of the occasion, and offered to play a short recital if all would come into the church auditorium. With every mark of reverence, even awe, those scores of young people filed in and listened to a half-hour of music from the great organ. The effect of it was well voiced by one young man, who said, "This is the first time I ever heard a wonderful organ like that. I'll never pass this church again without thinking of it and being uplifted."

They were loath to go. It was three hours after the time of arrival when the last guest took his reluctant departure.

I say again that this stands out as our best piece of public service for a long period. It was not merely "giving" something, for we actually received more than we gave. It was cooperative, all meeting on a common level. The effect upon our young people was marked. They do not use the word "nigger" in the usual contemptuous fashion any more. And they want to do it again!

And the colored people of that other church are our friends in a new and enduring sense. They would defend us against any peril, danger, slander or vicious misunderstanding. All white people stand higher in their opinion because of us.

No sensible person, white or black, advocates the kind of social equality which involves inter-marriage and racial amalgamation. But whites and blacks have got to live side by side in America whether we like it or not. Is it not better to live as friends? And how shall we be friends if we do not know each other?

It was an investment in good will, the highest form of public service. And such investments always pay heavy dividends.

PINE STREET CHURCH, DURHAM—DR. AVANT INSTALLED.

Mrs. L. D. Twine was a visitor to our church last Sunday. All were glad to see her and hope she will come again soon.

Mr. B. C. Allison, of Hillsboro, worshipped with us last Sunday afternoon.

The installation of Rev. W. George Avant was conducted here Sunday afternoon. Rev. J. Lee White officiating. The choir rendered beautiful music and Miss Dorothy Greene sang a solo before the sermon. Rev. White delivered a splendid sermon, having for his theme, "Progress," his text being taken from Job 1st chapter, 6th and 7th verses. The discourse was divided into three sub-topics, namely, motion, movement and transportation, and was presented to the audience in a very unique way. The charge to the pastor-elect was given by Rev. White and the charge to the congregation was delivered by Mr. James Patterson. Another feature of the program that deserves mention was the number rendered by the quartet from Groveland Presbyterian church of this city.

Mothers' Day will be observed here Sunday night by a program under the auspices of the Ladies' Home and Foreign Missionary Society.

Dr. L. H. Russell was out of the city last Sunday and could not be present at the installation.

A REPORTER.

THE LABOR SITUATION IN THE U. S. MAY 4.

Negro Labor—Industrial Notes. Splendid Workmanship Marks K. of P. Structure.

Chicago.—Commissioner of Conciliation Morris Lewis, in the Chicago District, reports that the foundation work for the monumental Knights of Pythias structure at 37th Place and South State Street is about completed. The contractors are planning to rush the super-structure to completion, now that the summer weather is near at hand. Skilled Negro workmen to perform the remainder of the work are already on the job and promise to finish a structure that will exhibit as high a type of workmanship as has been produced anywhere in the country.

SPECIAL LAW AND WELFARE WORKERS APPOINTED IN COLUMBUS.

Columbus.—N. B. Allen, Executive Secretary of the local Urban League, reports that Safety Director J. P. McCune and Chief of Police Harry E. French have appointed Mr. Leslie M. Shaw, a man who has made an enviable record as a traffic officer in this city, to a municipal position as special law officer and welfare worker. This appointment was made to meet this spring's expected influx of new-comers into Columbus, to which it is expected many will be drawn by the anticipated industrial activity and prosperity. The recommendation came from a committee of citizens, composed of professors from the Department of Sociology of Ohio State University and representative colored citizens, who presented a plan to Safety Director McCune and Chief of Police French, asking for the assignment of a colored officer, to serve primarily as a social worker, who would represent the city authority as a guide rather than an enforcer of law. Problems of employment, housing, recreation, and association will form the basis of the work of this friendly officer, who will promote connections with helpful agencies and thereby build up groups of friendly citizens in each local community. In this way great emphasis will be placed upon securing employment for incoming Negro immigrants.

CONSTRUCTION WORK UNDER WAY IN MINNEAPOLIS.

St. Paul.—Fred D. McCracken, realtor of this city, reports that considerable construction work is under way in St. Paul, Minneapolis and Duluth, which has absorbed an appreciable quota of Negro labor, thereby somewhat relieving the unemployment situation in those cities.

COLORED WORKERS OF COSTA RICA.

Washington.—Of the total work force of 9,000 employes of Costa Rica, 75 per cent of 4,000 working on farms, 60 per cent of 2,000 working for independent planters, 50 per cent of 600 working in fruit growing occupations, 30 per cent of 1,650 working in railway occupations, 20 per cent of 450 working for tradesmen and merchants, and 5 per cent of 300 working in unclassified occupations are Negro workers.

NEGRO WORKERS FIND EMPLOYMENT IN STRAWBERRY FIELDS.

Washington.—The State Public Employment Service of North Carolina, in co-operation with the U. S. Employment Service has successfully shifted many Negro agricultural workers to the strawberry fields of the State, where they will find ample employment during the present season.

WORKING FORCES NORMAL IN DETROIT.

Detroit.—John C. Dancy, Jr., Executive Secretary of the Detroit Urban League, while hopeful as to the general conditions of labor affecting Negro workers of Detroit and vicinity, expresses the opinion that it is hardly to be expected that Detroit will carry any larger working force this year than it carried during 1924.

MISSOURI INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION TO BE CONTINUED.

Washington.—Secretary Robert S. Cobb, of the Missouri Negro Industrial Commission, has announced the granting of a new appropriation by the Missouri Legislature for the continuation, during the current year, of the industrial work and employment surveys carried on under the auspices of the State; and Governor S. A. Baker, of Missouri, has made the appointment of twelve public-spirited citizens from important Missouri cities, who will comprise the commission personnel during the new term.

DEPARTMENT OF WELFARE APPOINTS SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR.

Philadelphia, Pa.—Mrs. Maud B. Coleman has been permanently appointed as a special investigator in the Department of Welfare of the State of Pennsylvania. Her duties, among other functions, involve a continuous investigation of conditions affecting colored people. She is thoroughly prepared for her position, having had a number of years' experience in social work of secretary of Y. W. C. A. work. Recently, Mrs. Coleman assisted Mr. Forrester B. Washington in the survey of the Negro population of Pennsylvania.

UNIQUE HOUSING EXPERIMENT IN PHILADELPHIA.

Philadelphia.—That it is possible to make some improvement even under the worst housing conditions, has been proven by a unique housing experiment which has been worked out by Mrs. Lena Trent Gordon for the Dept. of Public Welfare, and Forrester B. Washington, Executive Secretary of the Armstrong Association. On a little street in South Philadelphia, where the housing conditions are highly unfavorable, the landlords have been persuaded to make general repairs. The inducement for this was the promise to the landlords from the city that it would make special improvements in the street without raising the taxes.

Neighborhood Club.

The Armstrong Association has formed a neighborhood club of all the tenants in the street, and has taught them to beautify the interior of their humble apartments by the use of inexpensive curtains, flower boxes, and the like. A donation of plants has been obtained from the City Horticultural Department. Thus, for the first time, landlords, tenants, a municipal department, and a private agency have cooperated to improve housing conditions which at one time seemed almost hopeless. While this effort does not produce new houses, it does serve to check some of the evils growing out of conditions as they are.

SCHOOL AT WALTERBORO, S. C., CLOSES SUCCESSFUL YEAR.

The Hopewell-Baker School, Walterboro, S. C., Rev. S. J. Ellis, principal, Mrs. Maud Nelson, assistant, held its closing exercise in Hopewell Presbyterian church, April 16th.

The church was full to capacity. The school motto is "Deeds, Not Words," colors, "white and green." An excellent program was rendered, consisting of songs, recitations, dialogues and declamations. Miss Ruth Staten won the declamation prize, a beautiful pencil. Her delivery was excellent.

Rev. Ellis and Mrs. Nelson need to be commended for good school discipline and the work they have accomplished this school year. We hope for them future success. A FRIEND.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND NEGRO EDUCATION

Voorhees at Denmark, S. C., Has \$300,000 Plant.

The Voorhees Industrial Institute, a school for young Negro men and women at Denmark, S. C., with a plant valued at \$300,000, has been added to the educational institutions of the American Church Institute for Negroes. Including the Voorhees School, the American Church Institute now supervises ten well equipped and successful industrial and academic schools for Negroes in the South, representing an aggregate value of more than \$2,000,000 and practical educational equipment for 4,000 students.

The acquisition of Voorhees School has been made possible by the joint action of the American Church Institute and the Dioceses of South Carolina and Upper South Carolina. The former took final action January 28, 1925, accepting Voorhees. The Institute and these South Carolina dioceses jointly agree to provide buildings and equipment to meet the future needs of the school, in co-operation with its old friends.

Organized by Negro.

The Voorhees School was organized in 1894 by Elizabeth Evelyn Wright, a Negro woman of humble parentage, who worked her way through Tuskegee Institute night school, and by aid secured through the late Booker T. Washington and other friends founded the school at Denmark with fourteen students and two teachers. In the succeeding years it prospered to such an extent that it is today one of the most important industrial high schools for Negroes in the South, with an enrollment last year of 700 students in addition to giving instruction to more than eight hundred farmers in the annual farmers' conference conducted by the United States Demonstration agent located at the school.

It is located on a tract of 400 acres of land in the black belt of South Carolina, and in addition to the regular scholastic course has special courses for men in the mechanical industries, including carpentry, masonry, steamfitting, plumbing, engineering, wheelwrighting, and blacksmithing, and women's courses in dressmaking, cooking, laundering and nursing, and the art of teaching. More than a quarter of a million Negroes live within a radius of eighty miles of the school.

Dr. Patton's Comment

Rev. Dr. Robert W. Patton, Director of the American Church Institute for Negroes, in a letter announcing the acquisition of Voorhees School says: "It marks a notable advance in recent years in the work of education among the Negroes of the South. With Voorhees, the American Church Institute will have a chain of schools for the practical education of Negroes, extending from St. Paul's School at Lawrenceville and the Bishop Payne Divinity School at Petersburg, in Virginia, through Raleigh, N. C., where St. Augustine is located, and Voorhees School in Denmark, S. C., to Hoffman-St. Mary's School, Keeling, Tennessee, through Fort Valley School, Fort Valley, Georgia, and St. Athanasius' School at Brunswick, Alabama, the Okolona School, Okolona, Mississippi, and finally at Gaudet School, New Orleans, Louisiana.

The Diocese of Mississippi has raised \$58,000 for the Okolona School, and the Tennessee Diocesan Convention, after an address by Dr. Patton on January 22, authorized and appointed a committee to raise \$100,000 for Hoffman-St. Mary's."

Doing Notable Work.

National Council of the Episcopal Church, by tuition fees from students, and from contributions made from all the various dioceses of the Church, as well as from gifts from individuals and corporations interested in Negro education, but not affiliated with any Church.

ATLANTIC PRESBYTERIAL.

The 22nd annual meeting of the Woman's Presbyterian Society of Atlantic Presbytery convened with Hebron church, John's Island, S. C., April 9th and 10th.

This is the first time a two days' session was held with the regular Popular Meeting on Friday evening. Though not very largely attended the meetings were extremely interesting and edifying.

The subjects for discussion were on the duties of the secretaries and the best means of getting the societies interested in the different departments of the organization.

Mrs. W. T. Frasier, Secretary of Literature, sent a very interesting paper to be read, not being able to get to the meeting on Thursday.

Mrs. M. A. Sanders represented the Secretary of Missionary Education; Mrs. J. L. Pearson, Associate Members. The Young Peoples' Work was represented by our energetic and efficient worker, Miss Theodora Percival. Each paper was followed by discussions which proved quite helpful.

The devotionals were led by Mrs. S. H. Richardson on Thursday and Mrs. J. L. Pearson on Friday.

On Friday quite a deal of business was transacted and many suggestions were brought before the society and accepted that will be beneficial to the growth of the Presbyterial and local societies.

Revs. Henderson and Ellis and Miss Percival were accorded seats as corresponding members.

A new move toward improvement was the holding of a two days' session; another was the adoption of unified report blanks.

This being the 2nd anniversary of Atlantic Presbyterial, it was suggested that Mrs. Gray and Mrs. Richardson make some remarks on its organization in Hebron church where the sessions are now being held. These were also two Presbyters present—Rev. W. L. Metz and Mr. Bert Crampton, of Walterboro, who were there 22 years ago. During the 22 years and 44 sessions our President has missed only two meetings.

The audience on Friday evening was small, owing to the inclement weather, but that did not deter us and everything was up to the standard. There was Scripture reading by Mrs. W. T. Frasier, followed by prayer by Rev. T. H. Ayers, D. D., of Orangeburg. Appropriate remarks were made by Mrs. Gray and Mrs. Richardson on the organization. Miss Percival made an appeal for the young folks of our church. Her address was full of food for thought and also caused us to realize more fully our responsibility toward the young.

Our other speaker for the evening was Rev. Geo. E. Henderson, of Zion church, Charleston, S. C. He took as his theme, "Health and Cleanliness," and urged us, as missionaries, to emphasize the importance of cleanliness as essential to good health wherever we can do so, as we go to our various homes. Such talks are quite helpful and very much needed in most of our communities.

Mrs. J. L. Pearson very beautifully sang, "The Beautiful Garden of Prayer."

Rev. Scott brought a chorus of 15 girls from his school to furnish music for the occasion. Rev. Scott deserves much credit.

(Continued on page 4)