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"AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—John viii, 35.

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SKETCHES OF SOME FORMER RICHARDSON SCHOOL STUDENTS

By Rev. G. T. Dillard, D. D.

Article V.

(Note:—I wrote a part of my life and a friend wrote the other part.)

With this number the curtain falls upon the historical narratives of the Fairfield Normal Institute. I am sending the Africo-American Presbyterian newspaper every week to Miss Clara Richardson Pierce, who lives in Milford, Delaware. She is very anxious to read every one of these sketches. She is the last of the teachers of our school.

I am very grateful to everybody who helped to get the facts and events which made it possible for me to prepare and publish in our paper, the Africo, these historical sketches. My thanks are due and extended to the editors, Dr. H. L. McCrorey and Mr. W. E. Hill, of the Africo-American Presbyterian newspaper, for giving ample room and time to these sketches and for courtesies shown me along all lines.

And now unto Him who loved us and gave himself for us be all the honor and glory forever. Amen.)

SKETCH OF THE LIFE, ETC., OF G. T. DILLARD.

I was born several years ago near Winnsboro, S. C. My parents were Thomas and Julia Dillard, whose mental vigor and self-respect were of a good grade. Just set free from slavery my parents had nothing on which to live. My father rented a land and I was his main plow boy for years. Of course the children had little or nothing to wear or to eat. Shoes for children were not in fashion, and the only method for warming my feet when I was plowing was to walk in the trench which the plow made in the ground. My father's rule was that we should not stop to warm feet or anything else, and we knew that we must keep his rule.

As time went and came I found myself loving music, writing, reading and preaching. Rev. Edwards, the first Negro preacher I ever saw and heard preach, came to Winnsboro and started an A. M. E. church and preached there for years. The next day after hearing this man preach I did all I could to repeat his sermon and to sing the songs the church folks sang. Many times I would be plowing up the corn or cotton in those days, and did not know it because I was trying to preach like the man I heard preach Sunday. But when I saw the corn or cotton lying flat on the ground I planted every bit of it back in the ground; for if my father had come upon the scene I would not have been able to preach any more. But the passion to preach, the desire for knowledge and singing or music never left me but grew back there when my big yellow feet were naked and flat on the ground. My call to the ministry was when I was plowing back yonder.

I used to carry a small dictionary with me to the field. When I got to the end of the row and while turning the mule round to plow back the other way I would get a word from the dictionary and repeat it meaning again and again until I stayed put. I have always liked words and they like me. In fact I do much of that now. But a better, brighter day came. Trying conditions and mental darkness and ignorance began to be moved, and the light of benediction of Christian education became the slogan for Negro youth in and about

Winnsboro, S. C. Rev. Willard Richardson and family from Houston, Delaware, was the man under God who lifted the dark clouds of distressing moral and religious ignorance which hung over our folks like the blackness of night, but very soon conditions began to change for the better and the colored people felt that the time had come which they had long prayed for when freedom of body and education of the mind were really in their reach. Mr. Richardson began work first at Chester, S. C. but for good reasons he soon left Chester and went to Winnsboro, leaving Rev. Loomis, another missionary from the North, in charge at Chester. There were three teachers in Mr. Richardson's family: himself, his daughter, Miss Clara, and his son, Oscar W. Richardson, Mrs. Harriet Richardson, his wife, taught some time. The school began about 1868 and was known as the Fairfield Institute. A suitable school building was erected, furnished with all necessary things with which to do good work: blackboards, seats, lights, etc. The teachers had a nice home on Main Street and the boys and girls had suitable quarters to live in on the school grounds. The Normal Institute grew from the beginning. The Negro children in town and country crowded the school until no room was left. Everybody was eager for an education. The Institute did thorough work. The subjects that were used or taught in high grade Normal Institutes were taught in Mr. Richardson's school. The pupils were drilled and drilled in everything until they made it a part of them. Take mental arithmetic, for example. The boys and girls, most of them, would do problems in that science so quick and exact that it would make your head swim. They had to do it and did it. The Richardson students in the world who have made good are clear, logical thinkers. They think the thing through, and think on their feet, and know their stuff, and that is why. After the Normal Institute was established and doing good work Mr. Richardson began a hunt for choice young men who might desire to study the ministry. A goodly number responded or made it known that they wanted to preach the gospel, and I was among them. But there was one trouble in my way. I was my father's only plow hand; and he told Mr. Richardson that he could not do without me. My heart failed me that day when I heard my father say that to Mr. Richardson. I have not got over that fright yet. My father, M. G. Johnson and Mr. Richardson went off and talked so that I could not hear what they said. That made me feel worse. Very soon Mr. Richardson came to me and said, "George, your father says the only way he will let you go away and prepare for the ministry he must be paid \$400 for the years you are under age; and if this is not done you will have to go back and plow that mule. But I have agreed to pay him the money. So get your things ready and go with me." I got my stuff ready and off I went with Mr. Richardson, and soon was at Biddle University and later completed my theological work at Howard University. I was sold for \$400.00 to Mr. Richardson. I thank both my father and Mr. Richardson for this sale, for it took both of those

men to get me away to school. I am yet thanking Almighty God for what happened that day, for without His guiding hand that sale might never have taken place. But let me say to my friends that since the day of that sale I have never, no never, plowed that mule again.

In order to help the Fairfield Normal Institute to do the work better Mr. Richardson organized a band of singers known as the "Carolina Singers." Every fall and winter for three years these singers sang throughout the States of New York, New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania. This troupe was composed of five women and three men. These were all young folks and had been trained to sing by Miss Clara Richardson and others. Of course the Negro spirituals were the songs the troupe sang principally. These singers were in demand everywhere. The Fisk Singers, of Nashville, Tenn., had the ears of the country in those days and they deserved all the praise and popularity that went their way. I was a member of the Carolina Singers and sang bass for the troupe for three years, and have heard very nearly every group of Negro singers in the U. S. A., but have never seen the original Fisk Singers take second place. They were great.

The Carolina Singers made good. Mr. Richardson had charge of them and large sums of money were sung from the pockets of Northern people for our work. Just two of our singers are alive. The others have crossed the bar. Peace be to their ashes. One night in Brooklyn, N. Y., a white man hunted me up after our concert was over and said, "Is your name Dillard?" I told him yes. He said, "I have heard the Carolina Singers two or three nights and have been interested in your bass voice. I am collecting a troupe of Negro singers who will be trained and prepared in every way to sing their own spirituals as well or better than the Carolina Singers do. I have heard your voice several times, and have not heard its equal anywhere. If you will go with my troupe to England I will give you any amount of money you want." I thanked him but refused to go with him because I was the only bass voice in our troupe and did not care to leave Mr. Richardson or venture to cross the Atlantic Ocean.

George T. Dillard completed the entire course required by the Fairfield Normal Institute and was among the best of the students in all things relative to knowledge and human advancement. As stated elsewhere Mr. Richardson secured a number of young men who felt that they were called to preach whom he sent to Biddle and Howard Universities to prepare themselves fully for the ministry. Dillard was one among these men and attended both of these schools named. He completed the theological course at Howard in 1880 with a class of bright men and was rated second best in the class. Dillard was always studious and forward looking and clean in life both private and public. The teachers liked him and everybody else. You knew where to find him. His address in the graduating class took high ground and was delightfully eloquent and outstanding. It was a gem.

The same year of his graduation Dillard returned to his home town where he met his folks and the teachers of Mr. Richardson's school. It was a great blessing to get back and see each others' face—teachers and everybody.

Very soon Dillard appeared before Fairfield Presbytery at Chester, S. C., and after a satis-

factory examination in all the subjects he was ordained to preach the gospel wherever God in His Providence should direct him. Two of the principal ministers who took part in the examination were Rev. Samuel Loomis, in charge of Brainerd Institute and Carmel church of Chester, S. C., and Mr. Richardson. Dillard was not asked leading questions or questions which suggested the answers. No. The questions were asked and Dillard answered them or failed to answer them without help.

In June of 1880 Dillard took charge of our church in Laurens, S. C., and for nine years held the church and conducted a church school. Of course Dillard was young and undertaking a church for the first time he was greatly concerned and somewhat fearful as to the future of his work and himself. But the work grew and God was with him. He depended upon God. With Him you cannot fail. The members of the church got together. Prayer meetings were revived and new life was injected in every department of the church and everybody felt better and worked harder. For several years Dillard had three other churches beside the Laurens church. Four churches for one man ought to be enough for him.

Our preachers were few in number in those days when time was young and Presbyterian schools for training men for the gospel ministry were few and far between. It was while Dr. Dillard was still preaching at Laurens, S. C., that he was selected by the Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work of our Church to be a Sun. School Missionary in South Carolina. Many Sunday schools in desolate sections of the State were organized; poor, ignorant families visited, taught and prayed for. He was the only Sunday School Missionary in the State, but he was active, always on the go and many of the schools he organized grew into Presbyterian mission stations and churches in many places in the State. We could name many of our best churches which developed from these schools; and also Baptist and Methodist churches which came from these schools. In after years other men were appointed Sunday school missionaries by the Board and of course larger results came about and the kingdom widened in every direction.

The Sunday school work grew to such an extent that the Board commissioned Dr. Dillard Synodical missionary for the Synod of Atlantic with the understanding that he was to continue to do the work of a Sunday school missionary in the State and to visit and help the missionaries throughout the bounds of the Synod. This new venture of the Board, judging from the fruit it bore in the way of popular esteem of the Synod and the unreached masses, was most timely and profitable and made its own appeal. God really set His approval upon it, and upon the man that had been appointed to help make it go or to report the reason why.

Facts and figures of the work done by the Sunday school men throughout the Synod were published in several of our home newspapers and in the literature of the Board. Very soon many calls were sent to the Board for Sunday school missionaries to be employed in all the Presbyteries and Synods made up of Negroes of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The Board granted the request and sent suitable men fired by the Holy Spirit who have done and are still doing a splendid service for the degraded young Negroes and others.

(Continued on page 2)

125 YEARS OF NATIONAL MISSIONS

In thankfulness for what has been achieved during the past year, especially for the part played by every Synod and Presbytery in the raising of the million dollar debt, the Board of National Missions sends out its full message, inviting Synods, Presbyteries and churches to a joyous celebration of 125 years of organized Presbyterian missions in this country.

Information is coming in to National Missions headquarters intimating that in many places, by Presbyteries or in city groups there is being planned a week day afternoon and evening given over to a reminiscence of the past. This includes as a rule the meeting of the women in the afternoon, followed by a stereopticon lecture on facts of the mission field of special interest to the general group, followed by a supper for men and women. After the supper a group of young people present a pageant such as "Two Thousand Miles for a Book" which is full of romance, daring and a deep spirit of religion. This takes about half-an-hour and can be simple or moderately elaborate as desired. Another pageant which has just been issued is entitled, "Deep Unto Deep," a series of episodes covering the work from the Atlantic to the Pacific and a set of tableaux, Heroes of the March. Any of these can be had on application to the Department of Education and Publicity, Board of National Missions, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Following the pageant there are historical addresses on local and general work. A plan similar to this is also being arranged on the deputation idea so that the same presentation may be repeated in a number of churches. Churches Aim to Show Appreciation of the Work of National Missions.

With the lifting of the debt of National Missions has come a conviction that there should be no more debt. The securing of a balanced budget is always dependent upon two factors: 1st, the reduction of the budget of disbursements; 2nd, a legitimate increase of the budget of receipts. During the past three years the Board has very carefully pruned its work; in the last year, in many instances, to the serious injury of the required growth. The Board would like to invite all ministers to sit on its Budget Committee and witness the real economy by which the following reductions have been effected: 1926 to \$5,300,000; 1927 to \$4,700,000 and 1928 to \$4,300,000.

One difficulty to the Budget Committee, however, is this: the figure for the present Church year needed to be set before the full returns of the year 1926-'27 were available. Although the year ending March 31, 1927, was one of the best years the Church ever had in the lifting of debt and establishment of the Pension Plan, the current work of National Missions suffered a loss. The position the Board now finds itself in is that there must be an increase in the offerings of the churches of at least \$245,000 before March 31, 1928, in order to meet the estimated actual expenditure being made upon a budget already reduced twenty per cent in the last three years.

Churches and Sunday Schools Plan Generous Anniversary Year Offering Preferably for Some Sunday in November.

The full plan of the Board of National Missions is to request every church in the denomination and also every Sunday

school to arrange for a special Thank Offering. Instead of handing that took like an assessment, the Board is following the wiser plan of appealing to the church to set its own offering, and suggests, because of the anniversary, that this be some multiple of 125. Let the church or Sunday school set its goal for \$20.00, \$5.00, or \$1.00 or a fraction of a dollar for each of the 125 years. (The Sunday schools by reason of the Alaskan Anniversary might take multiples of 50.)

There are two outstanding reasons for pastors and Sunday school superintendents to emphasize the Thanksgiving privilege of gifts to National Missions. First, to the 2,000,000 Presbyterians considerably fewer than 900,000 make any contribution in the course of a year to Presbyterian benevolences; for the health of their souls an opportunity ought certainly to be given at the Thanksgiving season for a gift to the efficient work of National Missions. Second, under our plan of benevolences two recognized methods of securing the amount requested of us by the General Council are open: one, the Every Member Canvass, and the other, a special offering each for National Missions, Foreign Missions and Christian Education sometime during the year. All of these offerings count toward the quota requested of the Church and go to the current expenses of the Boards. Many a church that has never used the special offering plan before can readily utilize the anniversary idea and fittingly allow not only the 1,100,000 non-contributors to do something during November for this cause, but also make possible a special gift on the part of budgeted contributors who have a desire to do something for the National Missions interest.

The Specific Anniversary Fund Seeks Mainly Individual Gifts.

The Board of National Missions has made provision for a campaign seeking \$500,000 for a special Anniversary Fund. It is understood, however, that this \$500,000 is within the total allowed to the Board of National Missions by the General Council, so that credit for these gifts may also be allowed on the assessed benevolence quota.

The Outstanding Emphasis of the Board of National Missions for This Year is on Evangelism.

The Board of National Missions is advocating the holding of retreats by Presbyteries and by districts, asking the outpouring of God's grace upon all of our churches. In addition it is requesting churches and Presbyteries to adopt some specific plan of evangelism for the present church year. The Division of Evangelism, Dr. George G. Mahy, Secretary, has provided many suggestions and stands ready to help any given unit to the extent of his ability.

STUART (VA.) NEWS.

Rev. R. L. Hyde was at his best Sunday night, and he preached a very impressive sermon from Amos 7:7: "Thus he showed me, and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline with a plumbline in his hand."

We are pleased to report that the repair work on our church is finished. We have added ten feet to the church. We are thankful to Rev. and Mrs. Hyde for pushing the work to completion before cold weather. All the captains of the clubs worked hard.

Miss Allene Staples celebrated her 17th birthday October 8. She was a lovely hostess. After playing many games the guests

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