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

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THE FUNCTION OF THE CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL IN OUR MISSION PROGRAM

By Dr. G. C. Shaw

(Paper read at the recent Presbyterian Workers' Conference, held at Johnson C. Smith University, February 2-5.)

The spirit of inquiry has captured the modern mind. Reality commands our thinking and guides our actions. What are the facts? is the question with which we challenge and are challenged. If we have regard for moral reality and intellectual integrity we should not seek to evade this challenge. Old theories and even holy practices should be commanded to give the pass-word before they proceed. We should not be like Peter, who, when he was commanded to rise, slay and eat, deemed it a sufficient reply to say, "I've never done so." We are living in an ever-changing world—at a time when old machines are being scrapped for new and better ones. And outworn ideas and practices in industry, business, agriculture and education are being discarded for those that are more serviceable.

An idea of organization that has any chance of flourishing now, must have more than age to commend it. A practice must have more to support it than the assertion that "We've always done the thing in this way." It's a new America in which our mission program of today must function.

Before attempting to state the functions of co-educational schools in our mission program, let us consider for a moment what our mission program is. The missionary program of our Church, as defined a few years ago by our Home Mission Congress is:

First: To win men and women to discipleship of Jesus Christ, to unite them with other disciples in the fellowship of the Christian Church, and to educate them for worship and service at home and abroad, by helping them to discover and to accept for themselves and for society a large and full consequence of Christian discipleship.

Second: To make the Church available to those sections of America which lack its ministry.

Third: To apply adequate church leadership where the work of the present church is unsuccessful or inadequate.

Fourth: In the case of handicapped or retarded areas, or underprivileged groups, to assist in providing those institutions and services which are the necessary elements of a Christian standard of living, to the end that the Christian community life may be developed.

Fifth: To bring the Christian impulses to bear upon the broad social and civic question of our day.

With this full explanation and fine comprehension of the objective of our mission program as given by our Home Mission Congress I feel that we are prepared to discuss the function of co-educational schools in bringing about these objectives. We need not consider our subject as it relates to each of the five objectives stated by the Congress. Time will not permit us to do so. I shall consider it as it applies to the statement in the fifth objective stated by the Congress which says: "In the case of handicapped or retarded areas or underprivileged groups, to assist in providing those institutions and services which are the necessary elements of a Christian standard of living, to the end that the Christian community life may be developed." In considering our subject as it bears upon the above statement, we need not restrict it to any particular group or section of religious activities of our Church. As sin-

is universal and has the same effect upon all whom it masters, and as ignorance is blinding and depressing wherever it reigns, and as the human race is the same everywhere in sin, and the same when freed from sin, we are safe and right in thinking of our subject as being larger than race and broader than any section. The subject is inclusive and general rather than exclusive or particular.

We have lifted up education as king and have said he and he alone shall rule over us. We have erected to him altars on every hill and in every valley throughout this fair land of ours, and have graced our cities with his temples and have commanded that at the sound of the coronet, flute, harp, sack-but, psaltery and dulcimer the knee of every youth shall bow before him, and he who bows shall not be thrown into the fiery furnace of ignorance. Having enthroned education as the head of the Church and the king of nations, it is time that we consider plans and means of educating our king. In other words, we want to know how to educate our education.

The function, then, of co-education in our mission program is to educate our education. We have over-exerted ourselves in efforts to educate the brain and train the hands. But now the Church and State are called upon to awake to our fearful condition and to adopt and pursue an educational system that will educate our education. This king, education, that we have enthroned, like Saul of old, is making confectionaries of our daughters and reckless charioteers of our sons, sending them driving through life like Jehu of old. We do not desire to dethrone this king, but to educate him.

I have had the opportunity and pleasure of expressing myself before in your presence on this subject. I have not changed my mind in the least in regards to it. I believe co-education functions from the kindergarten to the university in training men and women for Christian leadership. I believe it is the only ideal kind of education. I believe this because God planned and perpetuates this kind of education for our home. The home that has several children all of one sex is the exception. The ideal home is a home with boys and girls. Show me a man unfortunate enough to have been born and brought up in a home where there was no sister, and attended a boys' elementary school, and a boys' high school, a college where there were no women, and an university for men only, and I will show you a monstrosity in society, an invalid in church work and a misfit in civic affairs. On the other hand, show me a man who was born in a home and brought up surrounded by loving sisters and who attended a primary, elementary and high school with them, and entered a co-educational college and university and you have in such a man the qualities for leadership in religious and civic affairs. Men and women studying together and working together are the hope of the world.

They are entering business and the professions together—why not the same schools? Studying together leads to a better understanding of men and women as well as different races and groups.

It has been my good fortune to have been at the head of a co-educational school for forty-two years. I have seen boys and

girls come and go. I have seen carelessness in dress and person, on the part of girls, disappear, as it were, over night, when brought in daily contact with young men. I have seen awkward, uncouth, and gawky boys transformed into gallant and courteous "Chesterfields," by daily contact with girls. I have seen table manners and politeness developed with an amazing rapidity, as I believe could not possibly have been developed so beautifully and so rapidly under any other conditions.

At Mary Potter our monthly socials are the most helpful and effective means of disciplining that we have. They carry with them their own rewards or punishments. We have a radio in our dining hall in the girls' dormitory. The boys are allowed to go over every Saturday evening from 7 to 8 o'clock. The girls come down, and there, under the supervision of teachers, they hear and enjoy the best music and lectures that are on the air. The boys also have a radio in their building that is equally as good as the one in the girls' dormitory, but they say the music is never so sweet, nor Lowell Thomas' talks so interesting as when heard over the girls' radio with the girls present. And I am sure, if modesty would not prevent it, the girls would say that of all the music that comes over the radio there is none so sweet to them as that that comes in Saturday evening from 7 to 8. This contact is educating their education, without which education is a liability to society instead of an asset.

But this polish and refinement which come to youth through co-education is not the only argument in its favor. Such schools function in our mission program as well as in public school programs, by cutting down expenses, and at the same time giving better equipment in the way of laboratories, buildings, libraries, shops, etc. We can have better teaching staffs, more teachers, and, therefore, better trained pupils. The economic advantages of co-education are beginning to appeal more and more to both public and private schools. Ninety-six per cent of all the pupils in the United States enrolled in elementary schools are in mixed schools. In public secondary schools ninety-five per cent are in mixed schools. The products of co-educational institutions equal, if they do not surpass those of segregated schools, as the Mission Congress says, "To carry out, or even in a small degree, to put in operation a force that will function in handicapped or retarded areas, by assisting underprivileged groups in providing institutions and services which are the necessary elements of a Christian standard of living, to the end that a Christian community life may be developed." If that, as it is stated by our Mission Congress, is the aim of our mission work, then, it is hard to conceive of attaining the end desired other than through co-education, but co-education will only become an effective weapon when it is thorough and Christian. The establishment, then, of co-educational schools, is a long stride towards our objective. It means, as has been said, fewer schools, but better schools. If two persons educated in segregated schools are engaged in doing the same educational job, and can do it better by laboring together, it stands to reason that they could do it better still if they were educated together. We are having better politics because women are entering politics along with the side of men. We are having better law-enforcement leagues because women are entering with men. There is not a phase of our religious or civic life

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THE POVERTY OF THE DEPRESSION NOT ALARMING

By Dr. Carter G. Woodson

"Few things in this world trouble people more than poverty, or the fear of poverty," says Hosea Ballou, "and indeed it is a sore affliction; but like all other ills that flesh is heir to, it has its antidote, its reliable remedy. The judicious application of industry, prudence and temperance is a certain cure." "The inevitable consequence of poverty is dependence," says Johnson; and Franklin believed that poverty often deprives a man of all spirit and virtue. Yet this was hardly true in the case of the latter, for few ever had less than Franklin in boyhood, and few later reached a higher position of comfort, ease and influence than he did.

"Wealth and poverty are seen for what they are," says Emerson. "It begins to be seen that the poor are only they who feel poor, and poverty consists in feeling poor. The rich, as we reckon them, and among them the very rich, in a true scale would be found very indigent and ragged." Franklin, then, was probably always rich, because although without worldly goods, he never felt poor.

In this philosophy of life the Negro may learn a great lesson. While we are poor and apparently becoming poorer we must not let the depression depress us. It may diminish our wardrobe and depreciate our property, but it must not conquer our spirit. This has always been one of the dangers facing our people; and we must be more diligent now than ever that the Negro may not lose his morale and give up the fight against odds.

Thinking of the large number of Negroes now reduced to charity because of being displaced by white employees pushed downward into the lower pursuits of labor, a friend of mine recently asserted that the Negroes in the United States will soon be re-enslaved or exterminated. This may sound alarming, but such an end is inevitable, if the Negroes do not develop their own way of thinking and abandon the popular standard of living for one determined by their indigent circumstances. With a reconstructed program there is a way out of poverty.

Some of us, of course, will suffer when we find it necessary to bring our minds down to our circumstances, for "not he who has little, but he who wishes for more is poor. The poor trying to imitate the powerful perish," says Paley. "The man is to be accounted poor of whatever rank he be, whose expenses exceed his resources; and no man is, properly speaking, poor, but he."

"It is not poverty so much as pretense that harasses a ruined man—the struggle between a proud mind and an empty purse—the keeping of a hollow show that must soon come to an end. Have the courage to appear poor and you disarm poverty of its sharpest sting." Do not be ashamed to walk while others ride in fine conveyances. Do not be ashamed to wear patched shoes and "slick" trousers when others display the most expensive attire.

"Poverty is relative and therefore, not ignoble, for as society advances the standard of poverty rises. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances," says Johnson. "It is often concealed in splendor, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest. They support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for

tomorrow." After all, then, poverty is more desirable than covetousness, for, as Shakespeare says, "'Tis not so well that I am poor; though many of the rich be damned." "There is nothing that keeps longer than a middling fortune," says another, "and nothing melts away sooner than a great one. Poverty treads upon the heels of great and expected riches."

"Poverty, labor and calamity," moreover, "are not without their luxuries, which the rich, the indolent and the fortunate in vain seek for." "Without frugality," says Johnson, "none can be rich, and with it very few would be poor. Nature makes us poor only when we want necessities, but custom gives the name of poverty to the want of superfluities."

"Not to be able to bear poverty is a shameful thing," said Pericles, "but not to know how to chase it away is a more shameful thing yet." "Poverty," as seen by Plutarch, "is dishonorable, not in itself, but when it is proof of laziness, intemperance, luxury and carelessness, whereas in a person that is temperate, just and valiant, and who uses all his virtues for the public good, it shows a great and lofty mind." According to Heine, poverty has sat by the cradle of all great men and rocked them up to manhood; "and this meager fostering mother remains their faithful companion throughout life."

I have never wanted wealth. I do not know what would become of me if I had to spend twenty-five thousand dollars a year on myself. I would rather have an allowance of twelve dollars and a half a week. The only need I have for money is to relieve the distress of others. It would take up too much of my valuable time to devise selfish schemes for throwing away a large fortune and I would not have time to help humanity. I would say, then, with Seneca, "All I desire is, that my poverty may not be a burden to myself, or make me so to others; and that is the best state of fortune that is neither directly necessitous nor far from it. A mediocrity of fortune with gentleness of mind, will preserve us from fear or envy; which is a desirable condition; for no man wants power to do mischief."

Our poverty should not hinder us from making progress. By co-operation we can devise some plan for earning a living honestly, and although every one of us can not have luxuries, we can do much to make ourselves and others happier by contributing the cultural and ennobling things of life. A poor man can write a more beautiful poem than one who is surfeited. The man in the hovel composes a more charming song than the one in the palace. The painter in the ghetto gets an inspiration for a more striking printing than his landlord can appreciate. The ill fed sculptor lives more abundantly than the millionaire who purchases the expression of thought in marble and bronze. For the Negro, then, the door of opportunity is wide open. Let him prepare himself to enter this field where competition is no handicap. In such a sphere we may learn to lead the world while keeping pace with it in the development of the material things of life.

His lamp am I,
To shine where He shall say,
And lamps are not for sunny
rooms,
Nor for the light of day,
But for the dark places of the
earth.

—Selected.

BY THE WAY

By "Uncle Billie"

Brother Editor:

These are dark days through which we are passing, like '66, '73 and '81. We are passing through deep water against a swift ebb tide and on a stranded wreck, assaying to land on an uninviting shore in quest of the least resistance for existence. Those of us who lose patience and force providence will become miserable and lose out in the conflict; while those who follow the star of hope, strengthened by opposition, failures, and loss of friends or the neglectful action of friends, have something to gain if only defeated manhood at an honest task.

Days of Pruning

These are days of pruning. Every wise group is getting rid of something that it feels will reduce the cost of operation. This is one of the principles by which great business enterprises and institutions keep their doors open and wheels turning; and the Church is no exception to this rule so often consulted in the business world.

Our Church, about twelve years ago, reduced the number of Boards from about nine to four—a little over fifty per cent—to save "overhead expenses;" and when this was accomplished quite a number of the colored group sent up a joyful shout and made the welkin ring from Dan to Beersheba, saying, "It will mean more to us." But on account of my stupidity I could not and hitherto do not see the "mean more to us;" but I feel very much satisfied that the shouting group, as one man, sees the less "more to us."

Overhead Expenses

There are yet overhead expenses so great at such a time as this that we are not able to strengthen the few things that remain. To reduce overhead expenses the administrative department of our Church is cutting down and cutting off and leaving the axe at the root of the tree that seems barren or unprofitable in production. The Negro group occupies a relation in this equation that does not seem to satisfy the equation; and this relation is so peculiar as it touches our great Church that elimination is now being consulted and—I hope with wisdom—applied. Many of our parochial schools have been eliminated and turned into community centers. Perhaps this is wisdom to apply this conclusion of the Church to all of our work in the South since the States provide amply for Negro education in every section of the South—say, South Carolina and Georgia—as amply as do North Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee; then you might include Maryland and Delaware. Then, too, we in South Carolina have a compulsory school law and very strict truant officers to see that you attend school at least eight months during the year under well-prepared teachers. Of course this is labeled white.

Negro Church Group Does Not Grow in the South

The colored group of our Church is accused of falling off in membership. The statisticians of our Church say so; and I should be unwise to place my knowledge against that of men who deal daily in statistics of our Church. Perhaps we are falling off. Perhaps our group is in the wrong Church to develop and grow in membership. One good white brother said in my presence that the colored group would do better if the Church would let it go where it naturally belongs, to the Baptist and to the Methodist Churches. Now, perhaps, he stated the truth. The colored group may be more adapted to

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