

Africo-American Presbyterian

"AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE"—John 8:32

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42.

THE FIFTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF BIDDLEVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The services in connection with the 54th anniversary of the organization of the Biddleville church were brought to a close on Sunday night, October 21st. The celebration began on Monday night, October 15th.

The opening service was in charge of the churches in Catawba Presbytery. The Rev. A. H. Prince, the pastor of the wide awake Brooklyn church, presided, and the choir from his church, in their beautiful new robes, rendered the music. The Rev. A. W. Foster, Ph. D., pastor of the Wilson Street church in Shelby, N. C., preached a very timely and impressive sermon, based on the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles. The sermon gave a fine setting for the services which were to follow in observing the anniversary.

On Tuesday night there were reminiscences from the former pastors of the church. The Rev. Dr. L. B. West was to have presided at this service, but was called out of town, so he gave his message to the congregation on Monday night.

The choir from Seventh Street church rendered the music. We are happy to state that we had messages from all of the former pastors who are living. The following is the list of former pastors: Dr. H. L. McCrorey, President of Johnson C. Smith University; Rev. T. J. Smith, M. D., who is now a practicing physician in the city of New York; Rev. Z. A. Dockery, D. D., pastor of Broad Street church in Statesville, N. C.; Rev. A. A. Hector, of Richmond, Va., a member of Southern Virginia Presbytery; Dr. C. H. Shute, Dean of the Theological Seminary of Johnson C. Smith University; Rev. R. L. Moore, minister in charge of Caldwell and Huntersville rural churches; and Rev. L. B. West, D. D., Field Representative of the Board of National Missions. All of these former pastors brought or sent their greetings. It was a delight to sit and hear the different pastors tell of their experiences in connection with the church. Most especially was the message of President McCrorey rich in its contents. Even though 35 years have passed since he served as pastor he related his experiences as if they happened only a few days ago. Not only was he able to recall incidents but the names of the individuals in connection with the incidents.

The church was organized on October 17th, 1880, hence Wednesday night was known as Anniversary Night. The anniversary address was delivered by Dr. G. W. Long, President of Coulter Memorial School, Cheraw, S. C., and the special music was rendered by the famous Coulter Memorial School Quartet. Dr. Long told of some of his early experiences in connection with Biddleville Presbyterian church when he was a student at "Old Biddle" University. He spoke of the past accomplishments of the church, of its present work, and urged the church to take a forward look and in this forward look endeavor to actually minister to the needs of the people who dwell in the immediate community and get away from the traditional "Presbyterian Exclusiveness." At this same service the Mayor of the city, Mr. A. H. Wearn, brought official greetings from the city of Charlotte.

We had the pleasure on Thursday night of having the Charlotte Interdenominational Alliance to conduct the service. This was a very impressive service. Rev. J. W. Heritage, D. D., of St. Michael's Episcopal church, presided. Rev. J. L. Powell, of the Friendship Baptist church, preached the sermon and the vested choir from his church rendered most excellent music, and the Rev. Dr. B. W. Swain, Presiding Elder of the Charlotte district of the A. M. E. Zion Church, brought official greetings from the Alliance.

Friday night the program was in charge of the young people of the church. This program was quite unique, being in the form of a Radio Broadcast. Musical and dramatic talent had been selected from the various churches of the city and from Johnson C. Smith University. The program was arranged by Miss Ionia L. Shute, the Director of Young People's Work in the Biddleville church.

A reception and social was held in the Church Sunday school room on Saturday night. At this time the members of the church and their friends gathered for a social hour. Games were played, songs were sung and refreshments in abundance were served. The young people of the church directed these activities.

The highwater mark of the week's celebration was the service on Sunday morning, October 21st. This was the Annual Home-Coming Service. The sermon for this occasion was preached by Dr. B. F. Gordon, the Editor of the Sunday School Literature of the A. M. E. Zion Church. Dr. Gordon is an able pulpiteer and his message at this service was convincing and quite appropriate. The burden of his message was: "Back to the Church, Back to God." The choir of the Biddleville church rendered excellent music for this occasion.

All of the gifts and offerings during the week were applied to the Structural Improvement Fund of the Church. The Session and congregation take this opportunity to thank the many friends, both far and near, for the contributions they made to us during this week of celebration. Not only do we thank our friends for their contributions but we thank all who took part in the various services held during the week. Most especially do we note the beautiful act of the Brooklyn church on the opening night, when their pastor, Rev. A. H. Prince, presided. Not only were they present with their choir in full force, but a large number of their members were present; as a matter of fact, there were more present from Brooklyn church than from Biddleville itself, and, in keeping with the fine spirit of Brooklyn, the church contributed \$7.50 in the offering that night. We want to say it loud: Brooklyn, We Thank You!

With this calendar year the Biddleville church is completing the first year of its ten year objectives, and in January will enter upon the second year program. The first year called for completing a basement to house the Sunday school and give a place for holding week day activities. We are happy

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NATIONAL NEGRO NON-PARTIZAN LEAGUE

By Dr. Kelly Miller

"What has become of the National Negro Non-Partizan League which sprang up with such flare of trumpets three years ago?" is a reasonable and expected query. But to make the inquiry complete another query should be yoked with it: "What has become of the once flourishing Negro Republican League?"

The Non-Partizan League was organized in December 1931 under the inspiration and leadership of Congressman Oscar DePriest. Its main object was to wean the Negro voter from his one-sided traditional dependence and point out the wisdom of voting for men, measures and movements best calculated to serve the race and the nation. Overtures were made to Republican and Democratic National Committees through their chief representatives, Senator Simeon Fess, of Ohio, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, and Mr. J. J. Shouse, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Democratic National Committee. Senator Fess' response was equivocal and unconvincing. Mr. Shouse was more direct and forthright and professed his good offices in bringing our request to the full committee. Political exigencies of an embarrassing character arose in the meantime so that the matter was never adequately presented to either committee during the national conventions.

When the national campaign got under way, Congressman DePriest resigned from the Presidency of the League to devote his chief political energies to his own reelection and to the cause of the Republican organization. The League was thus bereft of its founder and dynamic leader. I was impressed into acceptance of the Presidency ad interim. Mr. DePriest left his political children at my doorsteps. As foster father I did the best I could. Members of the Executive Committee deserted the movement and reverted to their first political love. The organization was left on my hands with no funds, political experience, and no enthusiastic colleagues on the official staff. I carried on as best I could in the spirit of the aim and ideal of the movement. My efforts were confined wholly to the press. I contributed a weekly column to most of the leading Negro publications on the issues of the campaign. The tenor of my articles led to the support of the Democratic rather than the Republican candidate on the patriotic and race loyal grounds that the Democratic candidate and platform seemed better calculated to benefit the race and the nation. How influential my preachments were I am unable to say. However, the voters acted in harmony with their principles. It is generally conceded that the colored vote split in two comparable parts in the last election. In the approaching election it now appears that the larger portion by far will follow the fortunes of the party in power. Roughly speaking, one would say that those over fifty voted for past glory that was the G. O. P. Those under fifty followed the gleam of the new light. Who can quarrel with the older generation for adhering to the party which gave the race freedom, citizenship and the franchise? But the younger issue that gained its political experience under Taft, Harding, Coolidge and

Hoover will not be guided by the traditions which captivated their elders. Since the older half of the generation must decrease while the younger half must increase, it is easy to predict our racial affiliation of the future.

While the National Non-Partizan League has ceased to function as an organization, yet the residuum of its impulse still moves forward. The resolutions adopted setting forth fundamental principles will stand out as perhaps the most important political document which has ever been issued from any organization of colored men. It stands out as the declaration of political emancipation. It sets forth the doctrines that must furnish the guiding principle of political action. Henceforth the Negro must not look for whatever political salvation there may be in store for him to the North, South, East or West, Republican or Democratic party, but like the kingdom of heaven his salvation lies within himself. Partizan political division is only skin deep—never race deep. Relativity of number constitutes the political discriminant. Where the Negro's numbers are small, his political privileges are unrestricted, but where they are large his restriction grows severe. The Democrats of the North are every whit as favorable to the political rights of the race as are the Republicans of that section. On the other hand, the white Republicans of the South (Lily Whites, all) are just as intolerant as the Southern Democrats. If the race gains its constitutional prerogatives under the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, it will be through propitiation of local sentiment, and not by outside compulsion. A politically solid minority in a democracy not only places itself in a dangerous position but is a standing menace to the whole people. This applies to the solid Negro as well as to the solid South. Such are the doctrines laid down by the National Negro Non-Partizan League which were valid not only for the campaign for 1932, but equally so for 1934, 1936, and for many a campaign yet to come.

I know that comparisons are odious, but it will heighten one's appreciation of this organization to contrast it with the harum-scarum harangues of its then rival, the National Negro Republican League. Who among its upholders would not now willingly forget the knuckle close faith in a decadent party which it tried to inculcate. It would have the Negro place his sole dependence on a prop which has since given way.

AFRICANS NOT SAVAGES

Philadelphia, October — Speaking here tonight at a mass meeting of 12,000 people which crowded Convention Hall, celebrating the 71st Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and Negro Progress sponsored by Major R. R. Wright, Dr. George Edmund Haynes, Executive Secretary, Department of Race Relations, Federal Council of Churches, brought "A Message from Native Africans to Negro Americans." He said in part: "A native woman in South Africa said to me when I was there in 1930, 'You call us savages. We are no more savages than you are. We are

Bantu,' a word which means people.

"These people of the Bantu Tribes live all over Southern and Central Africa. They say, 'We have our chiefs and kings and our councils of wise men which make up our government which we had before the white man came. We have our family organization; we have our religious life; we believe that we are men and women; that black people are superior to other people.'

"In Angola, Portuguese West Africa, near the old fortress of San Salvador, where the Portuguese fought the Natives, where campaigns and battles raged for two or three generations before these people were conquered, and from which slaves were brought to America, I visited the present chief of one of the Ovimbundu tribes. He is now the vassal of the Portuguese government that controls the country. When I told him about some of the descendants of his ancestors who had been slaves in America, but who had become freedmen and were now advancing in education and wealth, and that we wanted to help them, he looked at me a long time and said, 'You say that our people in America who have education and wealth want to help their brethren back in Africa? Well, why have they waited so long?'"

LAY LEADERSHIP IN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES.

Protestant Churches have been failing to deal adequately with the new situation in American Protestantism that has arisen from the development, chiefly in the last half century, of efforts of laymen both men and women, to give leadership in social, moral, and religious activities of these churches, says Dr. Leo Vaughn Barker, in a book entitled Lay Leadership in Protestant Churches, published October 15th by Association Press (New York). On the whole the churches have failed to provide or develop the training processes necessary to equip a large number of laymen to share significantly in such leadership.

In this book Dr. Barker presents the results of an investigation of more than eighty churches of all sizes from seven denominations which he conducted under the auspices of the Department of Research and Education of the Federal Council of Churches. Dr. F. Ernest Johnson, its Executive Secretary, who writes the Foreword, states that this is the most thorough study available in the field of Protestant lay leadership, and the only study based on objective facts in regard to a large supply of lay leaders in representative local churches.

Dr. Barker holds that lay leadership is implicit in the view of the Protestant Church, and that its continued development is vital if Protestant churches are to meet the tasks that face them in society today. He reveals a series of facts that show in detail not only where training is needed for lay leadership in the social and religious program of the churches, but also what kinds of training and experience are most likely to develop the leadership that is needed. He shows that probably the most important single means is a vital and interesting program for youth of high school age, which will intrigue them into sharing responsibilities at this age. He shows also that, contrary to opinion, the more active and more significant leadership of the churches tends to come from the younger adult mem-

bers. Although participants with some college education are only slightly more active on the average than those without such training, they exhibit a marked superiority as a group in nearly all the more qualitative indices of leadership. He shows finally the superiority of lay leaders when they have taken advantage of the special courses, lectures, and supervision provided by some churches.

Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, General Secretary of the Federal Council of Churches, states in this connection that "Dr. Barker's conclusion as to the necessity for far greater attention to the training of laymen for the responsibilities which they should assume is one which the churches will ignore at their peril."

BY THE WAY

By Uncle Billie

The great events of the world, those that enrich the pages of sacred and profane history, germinate, spring forth, thrive for long seasons, perhaps for centuries, from evil intentions or sordid motives.

The motive of the Dutch in the slave traffic with the colonists at Jamestown, Va., 1619, was to increase the riches of their treasures to the bursting point of their coffers, while the purchasers were obsessed with a like ambition. There was no stipulation between sellers and buyers as to any advantages to be held out to human chattel that would lead such moveable property to real citizenry or to become an ignorant Christian—if these two terms do not contradict each other.

To take in the spirit of obedience to master as an everlasting fixity that cultivation of soil and harvesting of production might make this country—not a forest of glory divine, but glory divine, was the end of the means; but the motive was sordid beyond measure. Yet, today this once human chattel is allowed to move and sit in Pharaoh's court and with the privilege of matriculating in the University of Memphis to be trained in all the sciences of the Egyptians. He is accorded a place among churchmen of the first rank. In many instances his opinion is sought and is valid, even if not desired; but this was neither the intention nor the motive at the beginning.

When Joe Jenkin, the English aristocrat of Edisto Island, forced South Carolina to take the humiliating step of secession in 1861, in Meeting Street, Charleston, and thus ignited the flame of one of the world's most bitter, Godly-organizing conflicts, it was to perpetuate human slavery in a Christian, civilized country that won its freedom and left bloody footprints in the snow at Valley Forge, that wrote freedom in their wake as victors.

But the Southern Confederacy fell on its own sword; the Union was patched up in as many colors of opinions as those of Joseph's coat; while the Negro sang, "You may have all the world; gimme Jesus." For he, through some divine intuition, quickly realized what God had done for him as a whole race in this country, through the merits of Jesus Christ.

"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring it to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive."

"He leatheth me."