

Africo-American Presbyterian

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

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PROPOSAL TO MERGE BOARDS

Philadelphia, April 22.—A project for uniting two organizations with assets of \$41,000,000 and annual expenditures of more than \$5,000,000 will be one of the questions to be decided by the annual General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., opening at Cincinnati, May 23. The two bodies to be merged are the Church's Board of Christian Education, which has its headquarters in Philadelphia, and its Board of National Missions, with headquarters in New York. Between them the two Boards carry on all the educational and evangelistic activities of the Presbyterian Church except those in foreign lands.

The Educational Board controls \$4,000,000 in buildings, securities and other assets and spends about \$2,500,000 a year in its work. Of this yearly outlay about \$1,500,000 is for manufacturing, selling and other publishing costs of millions of copies of books and weekly and monthly periodicals. It has also a cooperative relationship with more than 50 Presbyterian colleges that have total assets of about \$100,000,000 of which \$50,000,000 is the value of plant and equipment, and \$50,000,000 is endowments. The assets of the National Missions Board total about \$43,000,000, and its annual expenditure is approximately \$3,200,000.

This Board merger, which has been under consideration for several years, if adopted by the thousand men and women who compose the General Assembly, is expected to take effect in June, 1936. Presbyterians in general see in it the culmination of a consolidation movement which has been in progress for many years. Where the Presbyterian Church 20 years ago had 17 Boards and agencies, this year's proposal would bring the number down to three.

The two other Boards are the Boards of Foreign Missions and of Pensions. The Foreign Mission Board carries on work in 16 nations, with a force of 1,450 missionaries and nearly 3,000 natives. In assets and annual outlay it ranks close to the Board of National Missions which is included in the present merger proposal. Disbursement of old age and retirement pensions forms the principal activity of the Board of Pensions, which has assets of more than \$32,000,000. Last year it paid pensions to nearly 6,000 ministers and other Church workers or to their dependents.

More than 60 languages are used by the 3,900 workers of the Presbyterian Board of National Missions. They conduct 7,000 activities, from the most Northern tip of American territory where winter reigns three-quarters of the year and summer is only six weeks long, to the tropical heat of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Among mountaineers, migrants, Negroes, industrial groups, Orientals, Indians, Eskimo and Spanish-speaking Americans they operate hospitals, dispensaries, schools, colleges, community houses, Sunday schools, and churches.

All these enterprises are under the executive supervision of the Rev. Dr. E. Graham Wilson, of New York, the Board's General Secretary. Associated with him are more than 60 other executives.

With the general secretary of the other merging organization, the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, are associated more than 50 other executives. The General Secretary is the Rev. Dr. Harold McAfee Robinson, of Philadelphia.

Fifty-two colleges, 12 theological seminaries and 43 State

universities are among the centers of work of the Board of Christian Education. It aids the educational work of 3,000 churches and Sunday schools. It maintains 65 Presbyterian ministers for work among 50,000 Presbyterian students, recruits new ministers and missionaries, educates the Church in money-raising and in social progress, stimulates and develops worship and work in the local churches, and every year publishes millions of copies of Sunday school lessons and illustrated weekly papers.

A Church of 2,000,000 communicant members is represented by these Boards. The members of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. live in every State and are organized in 282 regional Presbyteries and 44 State Synods. They are served by more than 9,000 ordained ministers.

Every phase of Church life will be considered by the Cincinnati General Assembly. Its decisions are binding on its Synods, on its Presbyteries which elect the Assembly's 1,000 members as their representatives, and on each of its members and ministers.

Alaskans, Indians, Negroes and representatives from China, Japan, Persia, Mesopotamia and other foreign lands will be among the men and women at the General Assembly.

Besides the thousand elected delegates, known as "commissioners," the sessions will be attended by 500 officers, missionaries and other Church workers. The General Assembly will continue for one week. Presbyterians hold in high honor the office of Moderator of their General Assembly. This presiding officer is elected annually for a one-year term, but continues for two years more as an ex-officio member of the General Council the ad interim executive body of the Church. During the Church year 1934-35 the Moderator is the Rev. Dr. William Chalmers Covert, of Philadelphia. The chief executive officer of the Church is its Stated Clerk, the Rev. Lewis S. Mudge, of Philadelphia.

INTERRACE GROUP FAVORS FEDERAL ANTI-LYNCH LAW

Atlanta, Ga., April 25.—The Commission on Interracial Cooperation, in seventeenth annual session here yesterday, went on record as favoring the enactment of federal anti-lynching legislation, and considered at length the status of Negroes in industry and agriculture. The anti-lynching statement was brought in by a committee headed by Forrester B. Washington, director of the Atlanta School of Social Work, and was adopted without a dissenting vote.

Dr. Geo. S. Mitchell, of Columbia University, reported the results of a national survey of the economic status of Negroes employed in mining, iron and steel, meat packing, and railroad work. It appears from this report that, though Negroes in these industries had suffered some ill effects from the NRA the net result had been to their advantage.

Dr. Charles S. Johnson, of Fisk University, who has directed an intensive study of the Negro in agriculture, painted a gloomy picture of the status of farm tenants, white and colored. This condition, he thought, could be remedied only by an extensive federal program making land ownership possible on easy terms. The commission approved the Bankhead farm tenant bill, now pending in the United States Senate, which

provides for the beginning of such a program. The results of these surveys, which were conducted under the Commission's auspices, are to be summarized and made public.

Dr. E. McNeill Poteat, Jr., of Raleigh, N. C., was re-elected President of the Commission. Drs. John Hope and Ashby Jones were elected honorary Presidents and Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, of Daytona Beach, Fla., 1st Vice-Pres. Dr. Will W. Alexander was re-elected to direct the work of the Commission. The anti-lynching statement, which was given to the press and sent immediately to all the Southern Senators, was as follows:

"Hitherto the Commission on Interracial Cooperation has taken no position relative to federal anti-lynching legislation. We were agreed that the primary responsibility for the prevention and punishment of lynching rested upon State officials and courts, and that, in the last analysis, public opinion was largely the determining factor. Consequently, the Commission from its inception has worked continuously along these lines, seeking anti-lynching legislation in a number of States, urging vigorous preventive measures when lynchings were threatened, asking effective court action against the members of mobs, and at the same time seeking through all possible avenues of publicity and education to build up a public opinion that would no longer tolerate crimes of this character.

"Lynching records of the last fifteen years indicate progress along the line of prevention. Officers generally are more vigilant than formerly in the protection of prisoners, thereby reducing the lynching toll. Meaningful public opinion is practically unanimous in condemnation of mob violence.

"On the contrary, with rare exceptions, attempts at prosecution in lynching cases continue to be futile. In nearly every case the community hysteria which gives rise to a lynching makes impossible any effective court action against the perpetrators of the crime. Consequently, in not one case in ten is an effective effort made by the authorities to identify and prosecute members of lynching mobs. Even in the rare cases in which such efforts have been made indictments have seldom been obtained, and convictions have usually proved impossible.

"Disappointed by this record of impotence on the part of State and local officials, the Commission has reluctantly been forced to the conclusion that little is to be expected from this source, at least in the immediate future, and that an appeal to the federal courts in such cases is justified and demanded by the conditions.

"The Commission favors, therefore, the enactment of federal legislation to this end, in the hope that federal agents and courts would be in better position to act fearlessly and effectively in the prosecution of participants in the crime of lynching."

NOTICE

To Pastors and Church Sessions:

I am now available for evangelistic Services and Bible Lectures, and shall be pleased to serve city as well as rural churches and schools in any section of our great Church. Address:

REV. A. A. HECTOR,
314 West Clay Street, Richmond, Va.

The Bible always maintains a perfect balance. Believers constantly fall into the mistake of over-emphasis which is, at the same time, under-emphasis.

THE TWO POLITICAL DECISIONS BY THE SUPREME COURT

By Dr. Kelly Miller

The Supreme Court of the United States has handed down two vital decisions concerning the fulfillment of the purpose and intent of the 15th Amendment (first, the nullification of the Grandfather Clause and second, the recent decision on the Texas Democratic Primaries). The first of these decisions was affirmative and the second negative in tenor. The purpose of the 14th and 15th Amendments was clearly to place the Negro on a footing of political equality with the white race. This purpose has been fully accomplished in States which are disposed to have it so, and has been frustrated in those States of contrary mind. If the 15th Amendment is observed in Massachusetts and Kentucky and circumvented in Mississippi and Texas, it is because local sentiment favors it in the one case and frowns upon it in the other. Federal authority, whether political or judicial, has not been fully effective in enforcing the Civil War amendments against local sentiment.

Both of these decisions by the Supreme Court, however, have had theoretical rather than practical effect. The nullification of the Grandfather Clauses, by unanimous decision of the Supreme Court and through the mouthpiece of Chief Justice White, previously the Democratic Senator from Louisiana was justly claimed by Negro opinion throughout the country as a political deliverance of the race. And yet this decision has had no practical effect. The Grandfather Clauses, when in full force and effect, did not affect a sufficient number of white voters in a single State to materially change its political complexion. By declaring this law unconstitutional, not a single Negro gained the right to vote. The only beneficial effect to the Negro was that it keeps open the door of hope against political discrimination by Federal sanction. Political conditions remained the same in the South after this decision as they were before.

The recent Texas Primary decision, the lawyers tell me, was strictly in accordance with the letter of the law, although it undoubtedly contravenes its spirit. A political party is declared to be a private organization with the right to define and restrict its own membership. If any party, therefore, wishes to restrict its own membership to race, sex or creed, it has the right to do so. If this policy were widely followed in the different States it would lead to such confusion as would make orderly government impossible. So much for the letter versus the spirit of the Constitution.

But, as a matter of fact, no Negro in Texas is deprived of his right to vote nor to participate in the nomination of any candidate of his choice, only he can not do so under style, title and designation of the Democratic Party. He may join any party which will admit him to membership or he may form a party of his own and set its own conditions of membership.

Practically the Negroes in Texas, and for that matter in the South generally, are treated in the same way by the Democratic and Republican Parties. The Democrats exclude them from the primaries, through which the candidates for office are nominated, and the Republicans, by hook or crook, exclude them from the nominating conventions. There is no difference of advantage between the

attitude of the Democrats and white Republicans in the State of Texas, in so far as the Negro is concerned.

The effect of this decision will be to bring the Negro to his political senses. As a snarpy marked and easily differentiated minority, he is at the mercy of majority opinion in the State and community in which he resides. If the dominant will of the white people in Texas denies him full and equal participation in political procedure, his fate will be determined by that judgment. If, on the other hand, local sentiment in Illinois grants him absolute political equality, it will be so for the State of Illinois. The enforcement of the 15th Amendment and the curtailment provision of the 14th Amendment by National authority is not a part of the political mind of any serious statesman. I believe that even Congressman Tinkham of Massachusetts and ex-Congressman McPriest of Illinois have given up such hope.

All of this leads to the thought that the Negro's political salvation, such as he may reasonably hope for, must be secured by local propitiation and not by national compulsion. If the Negroes in Texas ever expect to gain the privilege of voting in Democratic primaries, it must be done through the voters of Texas and not through legislation at Washington.

It is interesting to note that this Texas decision was by Justices of the Supreme Court, unanimous concurrence of the majority of whom are Republicans. This decision was delivered through the mouthpiece of Justice Roberts, a staunch Pennsylvania Republican, who was nominated to take the place of Judge J. J. Parker, a lily-white of North Carolina. There was neither sectionalism nor partisanship in this decision. It merely brings the Negro to a realizing sense of the political situation which confronts him North and South, East and West. The Negroes united and protested against the nomination of Judge Parker to the Supreme bench with a salutary unanimity for fear that his confirmation might seriously blast their political future. But, alas, and alas, the staunch Northern Republican who supplanted him became the mouthpiece of a decision which blasted his political hope.

The Republican partisans of the Perry Howard stripe, of whom there are a few left, will seek to dramatize this action to frighten Northern Negroes away from the Democratic Party. But this is but a part of the same old bogaboo with which this brand of leadership has been frightening the Negro ever since the Emancipation. The fact is, the two parties remain just as they did before as to their attitudes towards the Negro. Where the number of Negroes is relatively small they are accorded equal political rights and privileges by Democrats and Republicans alike. On the other hand, where the number of Negroes is large enough to threaten the white political dominance, they are limited and restricted in their political rights and privileges. Unfortunately, the one set of conditions prevails in the South and the other in the North, but it runs deeper than political division between parties, which is not deep at all.

In his struggle for full political equality North and South, and East and West, the Negro must realize that it is a condition, and not a theory that confronts him.

THE PRESBYTERIAL OF SOUTHERN VA.

The Women's National and Foreign Missionary Presbyterial of the Presbytery of Southern Virginia met in session with the Missionary Society of the Community Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Va., Wednesday, April 10, 1935, in the above named church building.

After the Executive meeting the business meeting of the Presbyterial was begun with devotions conducted by Mrs. M. L. Kendrick at 10 o'clock A. M. "The Son of God Goes Forth to War" was sung, followed by the reading of the 96th Psalm. The theme was: "Worship the Lord." Mrs. Kendrick then urged her hearers to let service be their watchword. She gave a few minutes for each woman to give a statement of her fidelity in the service of her Lord. Mrs. Burrell expressed her attitude and said we do not have our best in service, and asked that we determine to do more. She said she is determined to do more. Mrs. Dillard and Mrs. Marks prayed and our hearts were made to feel glad in the Lord. Mrs. Stitt and Mrs. Marks expressed their feelings toward service for the King. The meeting then closed.

After listening to the reading of the 23rd Psalm in the Indian language, we listened to greetings from the Community Presbyterian church, Alexandria, by Mrs. Nelson, who in a very pleasing manner made us all feel perfectly at home. Miss Reynolds, in well chosen words, responded.

The roll call resulted in the response of twenty societies, which showed an increase over last year's response.

The reports of the various secretaries were discussed and advice given the delegates as to ways and means of securing the necessary finance. One way is to have a big rally to raise the amount, especially the societies whose membership is small.

Mrs. F. D. Nance, Secretary of Literature, urged the delegation to urge their locals to spend more time reading the Literature of our Church furnished by our Boards. Mrs. Hedric encouraged the use of the Literature at this time especially as never before, as this alone is the only means of Missionary Education being taught in our churches.

Mrs. L. Lomax, the Secretary of Over Sea Sewing, and Miss Gunn, the Secretary of Young People's Work, made their reports, both of which showed improvement in their work. The report of our Stewardship Secretary showed better work as we better understand.

Mrs. Hyde gave some remarks about Ingleside Seminary and asked Mrs. McNair to give some of the needs of the school which she hesitated to specify or name definitely. However, she named several things and then left the matter to the desire of the Presbyterial.

Afternoon Session

Opened with prayer by Mrs. M. L. Kendrick, President Emeritus. The report of the nominating committee resulted in the re-election of all the officers and secretaries, excepting Mrs. McNair, who is to succeed Mrs. Harris as Secretary of Education, and Mrs. Young, who is to succeed Mrs. S. D. Leake as Secretary of Young People's Work.

The delegate was then elected to represent the Presbyterial of Southern Virginia Presbytery at the Synodical to be held October, 1935, at Ingleside Seminary, Burkeville, Va., in the person of Mrs. C. P. Hedric, of Carver Memorial Presbyterian church.

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