

The Africo - American Presbyterian

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JAMES WELDON JOHNSON

"Death loves a shining mark," says the familiar adage. The tragic taking-off of James Weldon Johnson, June 26, seems to bear out this statement. He was perhaps our most versatile literary figure. He was distinguished as a teacher, journalist, lawyer, poet, diplomat, author. Although his literary output includes notable books of verse and prose, the Negro National Anthem alone, which was written by him and set to music by his brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, will give him enduring fame. "Weep for Adonis."

THE FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT

(J. W. Ham, in "Good News For All Men.")

Rambling along the rock-bound coast of Maine I have observed, when the tide was out, little pools of water in the crevices of the rocks. These pools were filled with small fish. So long as the tide was out, the little groups of fish were separated from one another, with no possibility of fellowship. But when the tide came in, it overran the pools, liberating the fish and lifting them up into an expanse of water where there were no barriers. The pools inevitably meant stagnation and death. Our churches to-day need the inflowing tide of the Holy Spirit.

ONE HUNDRED WORDS

We do not like to have our faults pointed out or our judgment questioned, whether by a friend or a foe. The following paragraph by S. F. C., in the North Carolina Employment Service News, suggests how we may discover our own faults and thus escape the shock which comes to us from having them noted, and perhaps exaggerated, by others:

"It often displeases one to have others discover his faults. Some conceit is present and pardonable in all; but if the pangs of resentment are to be avoided, one should, by self-analysis, be the first to discover his own faults. Then he will neither be embarrassed nor resentful when his self-criticism is confirmed by the opinion of others. Moreover, such unanimity of judgment may furnish him the urge for self-improvement, the need for which he perhaps would not otherwise see. If this be true, he will acquire a relish for criticism—a desirable trait for everyone."

On recommendation of the Alabama Board of Pardons, Governor Bibb Graves has commuted the death sentence of Clarence Norris, one of the accused in the famous "Scottsboro case," to imprisonment for life. As hard as life incarceration is, it is a victory for those who have all along contended that the boys involved could not have been guilty as charged.

Last Sunday, July 3, President Roosevelt made an address and dedicated to "peace eternal" a monument at Gettysburg, Pa., where one of the decisive battles of the Civil War was fought in July, 1863—75 years ago. Survivors of the Union and Confederate armies who had part in that famous battle met together Sunday in reunion, and participated in the exercises.

More than 400 deaths are reported for the whole country as a result of the 4th of July celebration.

A NEGRO LIBRARY

(From The Chattanooga, Tenn., Times, June 30)

The Negro community in Chattanooga, with roughly one-fourth of the city's population, has a minute fraction of the city's library facilities. The principal Negro public library is a branch of the Chattanooga Public Library in a small room in the basement of Howard High School. In no regard except name can it be considered a functioning public library. Both its almost hidden location and the fact that it is primarily for Howard pupils discourage use of it by adults. The inadequacy of the library facilities for Negroes is no reflection upon the Chattanooga Public Library. This City-County institution is doing all it can with what it has. Howard has a good book stock, and branches or book services are provided for others of the Negro schools. All of which is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough.

Under the fine leadership of the Rev. J. B. Barber, pastor of the Leonard Street Presbyterian church, the Negro community is reaching out for a public library of its own, centrally located, and so housed as to furnish also the community gathering place which is sadly lacking. The hope of these thoughtful Negroes, and of their white friends in the Interracial Committee who are assisting them, is that such a plan can become a cultural focus for their race. There they would provide the means for Negroes to read good books, to hear informative lectures, to play games, to learn handicrafts, to do Little Theater work—services which the white community finds in the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations and the Frye Institute.

The Negro citizenship of Chattanooga has at the top men and women of culture, character and talent who are a credit to it and to the city. If they were white persons working for the upbuilding of a white community, they would constitute a driving force that could not be prevented from carrying the community forward with them. As Negroes who are part of a larger white community, they can do little without the assistance of their white fellow-citizens. White Chattanooga has been eager and needful in the past few years to develop white leaders. It does not need to develop Negro leaders. All it needs to do is to recognize them and to give them elbow room to work.

Rather tragically, the excellent type of citizenship that is to be found among those of the Chattanooga Negro community exists largely in an environment whose emphasis is on such things as gambling and drinking. The numbers racket flourishes—one of the most cruel and evil rackets extant, preying upon poverty and ignorance and taking a huge toll of money from those who have already too little money to live decently. There are plenty of places where Negroes can gather to drink and carouse. Why has not the influence of the better class of Negroes taken hold more firmly and shaped this environment to its own higher order? One answer is that it has not had enough assistance from the white population. Another is that the Negro community lacks institutionalism. It has its churches and its schools, but these are not enough. Their purposes are special and their reach is limited to groups of the population. There is no one place serving the function of a central meeting place for all the people.

One thing certain is that the Negro community will express itself. If it cannot express itself in terms of the nature of its best people, it will express itself in some other ways. What Dr. Barber and those associated with him are appealing for is simply an instrument with which they can make the useful life at least partly as attractive and accessible as the useless life now is being made.

Dr. Thomas A. Long left the city this week for Summer session at Columbia University, New York.

MISS VIVIAN B. SHUTE WEDS L. BARNWELL WASHINGTON

By MRS. F. C. SHIRLEY

The Biddleville Presbyterian church was the scene of a beautiful wedding Thursday evening, June 30, at eight o'clock, when Miss Vivian Beatrice Shute became the bride of the Reverend L. Barnwell Washington.

The ceremony was performed by the Reverend F. C. Shirley, D. D., pastor, assisted by the Reverend L. B. West, D. D., Field Representative of the Board of National Missions.

The vows were spoken before a background of palms and Southern smilax before which were floor baskets filled with Easter lilies and pastel shaded gladioli. On either side were pedestal seven-branched candelabra holding lighted white cathedral tapers. Bows of bridal tulle and narrow satin ribbon marked the pews for the family and special guests.

As the guests assembled a program of nuptial music was rendered by Mrs. Z. Alexander, Jr., pianist. She played "Dawn" by Ethelbert Nevin and "The Fauns" by Charnades. Two vocal selections were sung by Miss Minnie Jackson, "If God Left Only You" by John S. Denmore and "For You Alone" by Henry Geehl. A violin solo, "At Dawning" by Charles Wakefield Cadman, was rendered by Mrs. Frederic Alexander.

The bridal party entered the church to the strains of Mendelssohn's Wedding March. During the ceremony the "Rosary" and "The Bridal Chorus" from Wagner's Opera "Lohengrin" were played. Mendelssohn's Wedding March was also played for the recessional.

Prior to the ceremony G. E. McKeithen and H. D. Johnson lighted the tapers.

The bride entered the church on the arm of her father, Dr. Charles H. Shute. She wore a wedding gown of lustrous Spanish white silk lace, fashioned on princess lines with tight-fitted bodice and tight sleeves ending in points at the wrist. Her embroidered net veil was held in place with a coronet of orange blossoms and extended to the end of her train. She carried a bouquet of bridal roses and lilies of the valley tied with bridal ribbon showered with lilies of the valley.

The maid of honor, Miss Ione L. Shute, sister of the bride, wore a gown of peach silk marquisette over satin, with blue satin ribbon. A halo of matching flowers was worn on her head. She carried an arm bouquet of talisman roses, delphinium and gypsophila tied in a shade to match the ribbon on her costume. The bridesmaids, Miss Mary Shute, Ruth Jordan Plair, cousin, wore blue chiffon gowns over satin with ruffled boleros. Their flowers were arm bouquets of pastel roses tied with blue ribbon. The two little maids, Annette Johnson and Carolyn Stewart, were dressed in floor length gowns of pink organza. They each carried a white basket tied with pink tulle and filled with rose petals. As they walked along the aisle they scattered the petals. The ring-bearer, Marshall F. Atkins, dressed in a white satin suit, carried the ring in the heart of a lily.

Mrs. C. H. Shute, mother of the bride, wore a gown of aquamarine silk lace over satin, with a jacket of peach silk lace. Her shoulder bouquet was of talisman roses.

The bridegroom had as his best man, his brother, A. L. Washington. The ushers were Marlowe F. Shute, Matthew Shute, brothers of the bride; G. E. McKeithen and H. D. Johnson.

Immediately after the ceremony a reception was given at the home of the bride's parents. Mrs. Hallie Q. Mayberry introduced the guests to the receiving line. Mesdames Julian Stinson, Frederic Alexander, W. R. Coleman, A. R. Dawson, Miss Irene Sanders and Miss Willette Byers assisted in serving. The home was very attractively decorated with beautiful white phlox, roses, gladioli and other summer flowers, and lighted tapers. The dining room table, covered with an imported lace cloth, was graced with a beautiful wedding cake. Later in the evening the

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA

By Mrs. Dora Johnson

It is not often that items of news of the Central church appear in these worthy columns; but seldom news does not in our case indicate inactivity. We are happy to say that the work here is moving forward to certain success under the leadership of our beloved pastor and his faithful wife.

After due announcements from the pulpit, by order of the session, the congregation of the Central church assembled in a meeting called for that purpose, and extended a call to Rev. Thos. A. Robinson as our pastor on the first Sabbath in April, (This year). By invitation of the session, the Rev. H. W. McNair, D. D., President of Ingleside-Fee Junior College of Burkeville, Va., presided over the meeting.

The call was properly drawn up and signed by the presiding minister and certain elders and deacons elected by the congregation to sign for them and sent to the Presbytery, which approved it and elected a special commission of elders and ministers with orders to come to the Central church and conduct the installation as follows: Rev. W. B. Stitt, S. T. B., Chairman; Rev. R. L. Hyde, A. M.; Rev. H. E. James, B. D.; Rev. Walter G. Anderson, D. D.; and Rev. D. A. Henry, S. T. B. Elders: J. M. Johnston and E. B. Harris, M. D.

After due arrangement with the Chairman, and previous announcement to the congregation, a very inspiring week of pre-installation services was conducted in the Central church, participated in by several pastors and churches of the city as follows:

Sunday, June 12th, 4 P. M., Sermon by Rev. J. Edwin Hemphill, D. D., pastor of the Tabb Street Presbyterian church in the U. S. (white); Monday, June 13th, 8 P. M., Sermon by Rev. H. L. James, pastor of First Baptist church, Waverly, Va.; Tuesday, June 14th, 8 P. M., Sermon by Rev. Rufus T. Hawkins, B. D., pastor of Oak Street A. M. E. Zion church; Wednesday, June 15th, 8 P. M., Sermon by Rev. W. E. Kidd, S. T. B., rector of St. Stephen's P. E. church; Thursday, June 16th, 8 P. M., Sermon by Rev. J. B. Brown, D. D., pastor of Zion Baptist church; Friday, June 17th, 8 P. M., Sermon by Rev. S. A. Brown, D. D., pastor of Gillfield Baptist church.

The above named ministers brought inspiring messages appropriate for the occasion, and were accompanied by their choirs, except Revs. James and Hemphill. The week's services prepared the hearts of the members for the very solemn and sacred service of installation to be held the following Sabbath.

On Sunday morning, June 19th, at eleven o'clock, the Rev. W. B. Stitt, S. T. B., minister of Bethesda Presbyterian church, Nottoway, Va., delivered a great message before a large and appreciative audience from the subject: "The Way of Righteousness and the Way of Sin." We felt the moving power of the Holy Spirit as the man of God lifted our hearts heavenward. Our souls were richly fed.

Four o'clock in the afternoon was the hour set for the finals of the series. Soon after the morning worship some members of the installation committee began to arrive, and by the hour set the entire delegation was present, from Mannboro, Amelia C. H., Nottoway, and Danville, Va., a hundred and fifty miles away. Long before the hour, elders of Central and the sister churches of Petersburg and away, had come so as to be present and witness something very unusual: "The Installation of a Pastor of Central Presbyterian Church," an incident that had happened in the Central church only once in more than fifty-two years of its history! Preparatory to the official installation service, a brief informal meeting was held by the session and members of the Presbytery's committee, during which the order of the service was explained by the chairman.

Rev. W. B. Stitt. The members of the commission, led by the chairman, marched to the main church edifice where the large audience of members and friends, sprinkled with visiting ministers of the city, waited in silence for the final drama in the play.

Rev. Stitt, the chairman of the committee; Rev. Walter G. Anderson, D. D., who preached the installation sermon, and Rev. H. W. McNair, D. D., Moderator of the Presbytery, were seated in the pulpit. The signal was given and the vested choir with Mrs. Robinson at the piano sang the long meter Doxology. Invocation was offered by Rev. Stitt, followed by singing "The Church's One Foundation." Scripture was read and prayer was offered by Dr. McNair.

The second hymn, "Go Preach My Gospel, Saith the Lord," was lined by the chairman. The choir was joined by the congregation. At the close of this hymn Dr. Anderson was introduced to preach the installation sermon. The speaker used these or like words as a subject: "The Obligation and Duty of the Gospel Minister." From start to finish, the preacher held the audience spell-bound as he treated his subject in an inspiring and masterly way.

At the conclusion of the sermon and prayer, Rev. Stitt stated the design of the meeting, and recited the proceedings of the Presbytery relative to it. He then addressed the pastor-elect, propounding to him the constitutional questions. Rev. D. A. Henry gave the charge to the pastor-elect, and Rev. R. L. Hyde gave the charge to the congregation. Prayer was offered by the chairman, who then declared the pastor-elect now duly installed as the pastor of the Central Presbyterian church.

The newly installed pastor was then invited to the pulpit, from which he pronounced the benediction after the last hymn was sung by the choir and congregation; and another page of history was written in the Central church. At the conclusion of the service the newly installed pastor was swamped with handshakes and congratulations by the elders, members and friends.

After the services were over the women of the Central church, with their friends, spread a bountiful table laden with choice and delicious food which the members of the committee and their friends were invited to feast upon.

The record shows that the following named ministers supplied and pastored the Central church during its fifty-two years of history:

Rev. Yorke Jones, D. D., who started the mission from which the church grew, helped to organize it and served as its first minister; Rev. H. C. Mabry, D. D.; Rev. Thos. H. Lee; Rev. J. G. Harris, (deceased) who served here longer than any other minister, and raised the first thousand dollars as a nucleus for building purposes; the Rev. John E. Tice, under whose administration, a beautiful church edifice was built, and the first manse ever to be owned by the Central church was secured through the aid of the Board of National Missions; and our present pastor, Rev. Thos. A. Robinson.

From an authentic source the following is a brief outline of services rendered by Rev. and Mrs. Robinson previous to their coming to Petersburg, and the Central church:

1916: Co-organizers of the Presbyterian mission Sabbath school, Bamberg, S. C.; 1917, founded the Frazier Excelsior Academy, Bamberg, S. C.; 1922, assisted in organizing the Zion Hill Presbyterian church, Bamberg, S. C., where both Rev. and Mrs. Robinson worked in church and school for more than 12 years.

While at Bamberg, S. C., the work there grew by leaps and bounds. The day school grew from an enrollment the first day of 25 to the larger number of 385; and from a small one-room building to a modern school plant more than

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