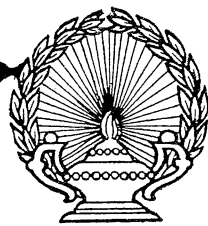




APRIL, 1909



FREEDMEN NUMBER

THE HOME MISSION MONTHLY

Ms. F. 1. Hall
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EDITORIAL NOTES



THE notable event in our Indian work in February was the dedication of the fine new plant of our Indian Training School at Tucson, Arizona. Dr. Donaldson, Field Secretary for the Board of Home Missions, Dr. Gass, Synodical Superintendent, and Miss Fraser, Field Secretary of the Woman's Board of Home Missions, were present and took part in the dedicatory exercises, which were delightful and impressive. On the same day occurred the dedication of the fine new Presbyterian church in the city of Tucson.

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THE burning of the school building of Dorland Institute, Hot Springs, which occurred in February, has occasioned much sympathy and regret. The loss is not entirely covered by insurance, but the necessity to rebuild will, it is hoped, be so fully realized that funds will soon become available for that purpose.

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PICTURE to yourself a little community of Indians, nestled in a far off but beautiful valley in Idaho. See these men and women of the red race, coming for daily instruction—the wives formed into a class, spending the morning studying the Bible, reading, arithmetic, physiology; meantime, the men gather in another little cottage for Bible instruction. You have guessed what this is, have you not?—the mission at Lapwai, Idaho, where Miss McBeth is instructing her beloved Nez Perces. Miss Hatch, who is assisting Miss McBeth, reports many visitors from all parts of the reservation, “always studying in classes while here. Ministers, elders, old and young Christians, backsliders, long-haired heathen, all coming to Miss McBeth for help and counsel.” One of these pupils is to present himself at the spring meeting of presbytery for examination, making still another Indian preacher who has gone forth from this “school of the prophets.”

And what does Miss McBeth, herself, say? “I have almost daily some from outside the class who come to prepare for Sunday school, or to lead the prayer meeting, or the Christian Endeavor service. Oh, yes; they all need helping, but when helped make good leaders, fine speakers, and there is no danger of power being lost through an interpreter.”

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OF the general advancement of the Nez Perces she says: “Indians are slow and cannot be hurried. I see some encouraging things as well as discouraging. The power of the Medicine men is about gone, Christians walk in a steadier manner, not so easily tripped as they were years ago. On the other hand, the wise ones who have returned from the non-reservation schools are disappointing, having lost much of the reverence for sacred things the fathers and mothers were noted for, and withal some of them are touched with scepticism.”

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FOR the better understanding of those who are new to the work of the Woman's Board of Home Missions, it is again stated that funds sent by societies and individuals intended for Freedmen work should be so designated; such funds are credited by the treasurer of the Woman's Board and transmitted in bulk to the Freedmen's Board in Pittsburg, as the Woman's Board of Home Missions does not have charge of the administrative work of the Freedmen schools, all of which is in the hands of the Freedmen's Board. Mrs. Susan L. Storer is the secretary of the Freedmen's Department of our Woman's Board and may be addressed at 513 Bessemer Building, Pittsburg, Pa.

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THE movement now on foot to provide “The Auburn Shops” for Mary Potter Memorial School at Oxford, N. C., is a gratifying endorsement, by Dr. George C. Shaw's friends and classmates, of his work for his own people, the colored race. Dr.

and bunting made the decoration of the auditorium, while a handsome bunch of Georgia roses stood in a large silver loving cup, near the speaker. On the platform, with Mr. Taft, were the Mayor and distinguished men. The portion of the address, in which the President-elect gave recognition to the noble character of the remarkable colored woman who has founded and carried on Haines school, will be endorsed and appreciated by all who know Lucy Laney's work. A saner, more clear-visioned, more capable woman than Miss Laney it were hard to find, or one more modest and unassertive. Those of us who have watched her work during the last twenty years, and more, will rejoice at this distinguished recognition, so justly deserved. We quote in part from Mr. Taft's utterances:

"That a colored woman could have constructed this great institution of learning and brought it to the point of usefulness that it has to-day, speaks volumes for the capacity of the

colored race. You and I don't have to be told or have a history of what she has gone through in the last twenty-five years. We know the obstacles she has had to overcome.

"Of course we know that from time to time, good people lent their aid and gave generously, but the construction of a great institution like this is not the work of a day nor accomplished by one act of generosity; it means a continuous life of hard, disinterested work of unselfishness, of tact, of patience, of willingness to submit at times to humiliating failure, and of confidence in the aid of God in the ultimate result; and therefore, I shall go out of this meeting, and—in spite of the distinguished presence of a great many people here, the Bishop of Georgia, Dr. Walker the great preacher of your city, Robert C. Ogden, who has done more in the cause of Southern education than any one man, and others—I shall carry in my memory only the figure of that woman who has been able to create all of this. She must, even in her moments of trial and tribulation, derive immense joy from looking back over what she has accomplished, and when she meets those whom she has sent forth to do the missionary work that they are taught to do, intense satisfaction."

THE NEGRO AS A RACE LEADER

By Rev. S. J. Fisher, D. D.

THE Shaw Memorial at Boston is not only valuable as a work of art and a tribute to the patriotism of the patriots it portrays, it is full of suggestions, as well, concerning the principles of the negro problem. The bas-relief which represents a negro regiment following enthusiastically their white colonel, who, with many of his black soldiers, fell on the battlefield, reminds us of the need of white leaders and their stimulating influence for this race. It was necessary, it was inevitable, if there was to be any safe exodus from slavery, that, for a time, the negro should follow and be dependent upon white leadership. They came suddenly upon freedom—upon the new experience of liberty and its temptations and burdens. Certainly, they were unfitted to guide or teach themselves, and some of them rapidly became the prey and victims of wicked men who flattered them with false hope and evil suggestions. It is to the credit of the negro that, as a class, they have recognized their need of a white leadership, and seemed ever to repeat the cry which Paul heard in his dreams, "Come over and help us."

But every vigorous and worthy race must develop its own leaders. No people

capable of growth and responsibility can fail to educate and produce its own stronger and controlling minds. It always has been so; it always will be so. Even in our foreign missionary work the ideal is a native ministry—a native church. The same development is to be hoped for in the negro race in the direction of their own leadership. White assistance and oversight should seek this result—the education and the inspiration of those from the blacks who shall be worthy and responsible guides.

It is not impossible that some of the circumstances which we view with regret shall prove beneficial in this direction. It is very evident that there is a reaction from the enthusiasm and interest with which the Freedmen were once regarded. There is a harsher criticism of this people—a line of cleavage between them and the white population drawn by many a writer and speaker, which manifests itself in well known ways. It is quite true that a great deal of this is the result of selfishness—the old cry of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" It is thoughtless pessimism which argues a problem's hopelessness because of its difficulty. It is also true that every intelligent Christian will resist

the prejudice and realize that no deficiencies or failure of this people can remove the duty of the strong to the weak.

RISING FROM THE RANKS

But the very harsher and trying condition may do much good. This criticism, so often cruel, and this isolation may be the stimulus to greater exertion, and may rouse to a proof of their qualities of leadership. It is noticeable that there are negro leaders of increasing number, who are defending their race and rousing their fellows to disprove the charge of inability. Negroes of unmistakable intelligence and force of character are coming to the front, and while resenting unjust criticism are exhorting their companions to such a life of industry, sobriety and morality as shall falsify criticism. It is only a few years—little more than a generation—since these people came out of the dense darkness of slavery, and yet from among them are developing many of various degrees of ability who are ambitious for their race, regretful for their errors and ignorance, but urgent for a higher life. In literature, the professions, in school, in industrial work, especially in the pulpit, the better educated negro is proving his leadership.

It was once the general characteristic of this people that they preferred white leadership. They could not trust their own advocates. Slavery had made them so uncertain, so prone to rely upon the once dominant race. They had acquired the habit of looking unfavorably upon an assertive or ambitious negro. It seemed opposed to long received ideas. And doubtless many of these leaders gave no sign of real ability or admirable purpose. The negro despised the negro, and resenting his prominence turned to the inferior place beside the white. But as these relations have changed, and the old sympathies and friendships have declined, and the difference has been emphasized, the respect for their own leaders has increased. The negro turns more readily to the negro. He believes more in the new guidance and is proud of his own man of power.

LEADERS—FALSE OR TRUE

But the negro may be a wicked or false leader of his race. We who are familiar with the corruption of white leaders in many directions must not be satisfied

with mere ambition, energy or resolute guidance. A negro demagogue is no better than a white one. It will not benefit this people to educate and develop a set of minds utterly selfish and corrupt, whose motto shall be: "They shall take who have the power. And they shall keep who can." Nor will it benefit us as a nation to live in these close relations with a race more and more separated from us by hatred and the sense of injustice and centuries of injury, whose leaders are animated only by ambition and envy.

AN OBLIGATION

We owe it to them to give them every right opportunity of Christian education, to instill into their minds true ideas of God, of sin, of holiness and duty, to train them to patience, justice, truthfulness and love, to assist them to lead their people to Christ. It is therefore evident, that, as such negro leadership is a right ideal and a problem to be worked out, the Church of Jesus Christ should encourage, provide and support a thorough Christian education, and also offer to the most capable a higher and advanced education. Mere force of character will not make a negro a wise or judicious leader. He must be instructed. He must have a disciplined mind as truly as the white needs it. And he must be taught the highest morality or he will prove a blind leader of the blind. The best qualities of character are dependent on religious training.

Leaders are certain to arise among the negroes. We cannot help it if we would. The education which is being given them is opening many eyes. The restlessness, the ambitions, the very resentment which privileges denied arouses, will produce some natures of energy, decision and command. It rests in a measure with us to see that these are worthy leaders. It is the zest of Christian work, and to the glory of the Christian church, that it can infuse noble and Godly ideas into once barbarous minds, and give to these people, or to any people, a richer life and a higher service. Let us use all these means to produce such a consecrated leadership—a set of men and women once helpless and dependent but now able to use the words of Phillips Brooks: "I want to live, if God will give me help, such a life that, if all the men in the world were living it, the world would be regenerated and saved."