

Edited by

THE WORKS OF FRANCIS J. GRIMKÉ

Edited by
CARTER G. WOODSON

Volume I

Addresses Mainly Personal and Racial

1921

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The next year I went to Washington, D. C. and entered the Law Department of Howard University, where I continued for more than a year. It was while there that I decided, after due reflection, to turn my thoughts to the ministry. Accordingly, in the fall of 1875 I entered the Princeton Theological Seminary, from which I graduated in 1878. From the Seminary I went directly to Washington as pastor of the 15th St. Presbyterian Church, where I remained until the latter part of October, 1885.

To the Rev. Mr. Grimké was issued the following significant call:

The congregation of the 15th St. Presbyterian Church Washington City, being on sufficient grounds, well satisfied of the ministerial qualifications of you, Frank J. Grimké, now of Princeton, N. J.; and having, from our past experience of your labors, good hopes that your ministrations in the gospel will be profitable to our spiritual interests, do earnestly call and desire you to undertake the pastoral office in said congregation, promising you in the discharge of your duty all proper support, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord.

And that you may be free from worldly cares and avocations we hereby promise and oblige ourselves to pay to you the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1000) in monthly payments for the term of each year during the time of your being and continuing the Pastor of said Church.

In Testimony whereof we whose names are hereto appended do subscribe our names on the day herein named:

Henry W. Lee, Commissioner for the Session.

H. F. Grant }
John C. Hart } Commissioners for the Board of Trustees.

Chas. N. Peters, Commissioner for the Congregation at Large.
Washington City, Feby. 7, 1878.

I hereby certify that, on this Seventh day of February, 1878, at the request of the Session of the 15th St. Church (Pres.) of the City of Washington, I have moderated a Congregational meeting called after notice of a previous meeting for the purpose of calling a Pastor; and that after full presentation of the case to the people, Rev. F. J. Grimké of Princeton, N. J. was unanimously elected to the office of Pastor.

I. E. Nourse.

Forwarded Feby. 8 to
Rev. F. J. Grimké
at the request of the Commissioners
I. E. Nourse

In this work the Rev. Mr. Grimké had the good wishes of the head of Princeton and of his teachers in the Theological Seminary. On October 18, 1879, the Rev. A. A. Hodge addressed Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler the following:

Princeton, N. J., Oct. 18, 1879.

Rev. Theo. L. Cuyler, D.D.

Dear Friend,

The bearer of this, Rev. Francis J. Grimké, graduated from this Seminary last year. He is a very able man, highly educated, of high character, and worthy of all confidence. He is pastor of the only Colored Presbyterian Church in Washington, D. C. I can with confidence and cordiality commend him to you. He has the endorsement of his Presbytery in his present enterprise.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. Hodge.

Of his prospects in the ministry Dr. James McCosh, wrote the same day:

College of New Jersey, Princeton, N. J.

Oct. 18, 1879.

I became acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Grimké when he was a student in the Theological Seminary here. The late Dr. Hodge reckoned him equal to the ablest of his students. He studied the History of Philosophy under me in the College. He is now settled as a minister of the Presbyterian Church in Washington, D. C. and is there doing a very important work. It is of great moment to have such a man in the Capital of the country. But his church has a considerable amount of debt. I hope that the friends of religion in general and of the Colored Race in particular will encourage him in the effort to relieve his congregation and their burden.

James McCosh, President,
of Princeton College.

Less than two years later Dr. McCosh said further of the Rev. Mr. Grimké:

College of New Jersey, Princeton, N. J.,

Feb. 10, 1881.

Mr. F. J. Grimké was a student in the Theological Seminary here, and while he was so, he attended a post graduate class of mine in Philosophy. While here he convinced all the professors under whom he studied as a young man of a very high order of talent and of excellent character. I have heard him preach and I feel as if I could listen to such preaching with profit from Sabbath to Sabbath. I rejoice to find that the colored people of Washington have such a man to minister to them.

I know somewhat of the condition of the congregation at Washington to whom he ministers. It is most desirable that for the