

A HISTORY
OF THE WORK OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
AMONG THE NEGROES
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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JESSE BELMONT BARBER

A HISTORY
OF THE WORK OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
AMONG THE NEGROES
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A study in the Department of Church History of Auburn Theological Seminary, under the direction of the Reverend Professor Robert Hastings Nichols, Doctor of Philosophy. Pursuant to the degree of Master of Theology, this study was submitted and approved on May the fourth, 1936

By

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FOREWORD

CHOICE spirits hover gloriously near as one engages upon a story such as this: of those who, valiantly toiling, struggled in the darkness of slavery; of the pioneers of the dawn of freedom, who laid enduring foundations; of those who today strive and yearn and aspire to make meaningful and blessed for the present age something of the precious heritage herein revealed. The task has been a deeply-hallowed one, a thrilling and an abiding joy.

Mention is here given of a gratitude which is utterly boundless, to Dr. Hermann N. Morse, Administrative Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of National Missions, the rich resources of whose mind and spirit were so generously given; to Professor Robert Hastings Nichols, Ph.D., of Auburn Seminary, for his competent guidance and warm encouragement; to Dr. John M. Gaston, Secretary of the Unit of Presbyterian Work for Colored People, for his heartening support, and to the many others, unnamed here, whose eager interest and helpfulness served greatly to aid and inspire.

JESSE BELMONT BARBER

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INTRODUCTION

THE story which Mr. Barber has told in this thesis is not only of absorbing interest as a drama of struggle and achievement against great odds, but also of high significance as a chapter in the life of the Presbyterian Church and of its missionary enterprise. This introductory word is offered both as a sincere tribute to those workers, past and present, of whom he writes, and as an expression of personal appreciation of the author and of his very fruitful ministry. When one is considering the possibilities of progress for a race, the argument *ad hominem* is convincing. Mr. Barber's record as pastor of the Leonard Street Presbyterian Church and director of the Newton Community Center, Chattanooga, Tennessee, is one of the grounds for our confidence in the future of Negro Presbyterianism and in the capacity of its leadership.

In this study the author has done a careful piece of research and has made a contribution of real value to the literature of the subject. Even the casual reader will hardly overlook the distinctive factors in the development of this phase of National Missions which differentiate it from every other phase. A very large part of Presbyterian National Missions has been concerned, from the outset, with the service of handicapped or minority groups. Not infrequently, as with the Indians and the Orientals, they have been subjects of social injustice and oppression, or have been under pressure to adjust themselves to strange and changing circumstances. But no other group with which National Missions has dealt has been assigned such a rôle in our social, economic, and political history as the Negro race has filled.

The part of the history that antedates the Civil War is remarkable enough. A few short generations sufficed for this whole population, brought here against its will, to exchange the paganism of the jungle for Christianity, albeit a Christianity strongly marked by the social outlook of slavery and plantation life. But as a mission enterprise, work for Negroes, before emancipation, was largely a by-product. The pen of the Emancipator, backed up by the sword, was the instrument of destiny.

The Negroes, who had been slaves and now were free, were thrust into a world where they had no ownership of land, where they occupied an

anomalous social and political position, where they had no institutions of their own and where they were a minority group in a society which was largely hostile to their natural aspirations. That society, however charitable its attitude might become, could not understand or accept the goals toward which the Negro race must now be moving. That deeply-intrenched social system, though shaken and in some degree shattered by the shock of war and its aftermath, remained a difficult obstacle in the path of progress for this impoverished but determined people. The long period of disorganization and reconstruction increased the social and economic hazards to be overcome.

The Negroes as a whole had no background of education, no truly indigenous culture suitable to this new world of freedom, no experience of collective activity, and practically no trained leadership in any field. Everything essential to a missionary enterprise and to progress in general had to be created from the ground up. Freedom in its negative aspect was theirs. In its positive aspect it had to be considered *ab initio*. Of the economic and political problem we need not speak. Schools had to be established, churches organized, teachers and ministers recruited and educated, equipment provided, methods of work pioneered and adapted. A social pattern had to be worked out and, most difficult of all, a tradition and a morale created.

All of this, and more, we must remember when we appraise the developments of the last seventy years. If the results have not been all one might desire, yet the record must stand as one of distinguished achievement which warrants a high expectation for the future.

HERMANN N. MORSE

Chapter 1

PRESBYTERIAN ACTIVITIES WITH RESPECT TO THE NEGRO PRIOR TO THE CIVIL WAR

IN THE late summer of 1619 a Dutch man-of-war on its way to Bermuda touched at Jamestown and, in exchange for certain provisions, sold twenty Negroes to the settlers there. Thus simply begins the story, not only of what Bancroft calls "the epoch of the introduction of Negro slavery in the United States,"¹ but of the presence of the Negro as a factor which, probably more than any other through the succeeding years, has conditioned and determined the stream of American life. Jamestown, the first permanent English colony in America, had been settled only twelve years before, and only the energy of the doughty Captain John Smith and the resourceful John Rolfe had saved the little band of colonists from the same fate as that of the earlier Virginia settlement. *The Mayflower* and its Puritans had not yet reached America. A year later, in 1620, they were to come to Massachusetts and thereby immortalize the rock in Plymouth Bay.

It is interesting to note that these first twenty Negroes, as well as those who were brought in for some considerable time thereafter, were not thought of as slaves in the sense in which the term came later to be used. Their status, more nearly that of indentured servants, was exactly the same as that of the whites and Indians of the same class. All were "bound out," or indentured, for a specified term of years, were entitled to food, clothing, and shelter from their masters, and expected to receive, although they did not always do so, fifty acres of land at the expiration of their term of service. It is estimated that this practice was generally followed for nearly a century. With the passing of time, however, circumstances united to render the lot of all such indentured servants less easy, and the status of the Negro tended more definitely toward servitude without end, or slavery. The factors involved in this development, while highly important, can be but briefly mentioned here.

The year of 1653 witnessed an action of far-reaching consequence with respect to Negro slavery. A Negro, Anthony Johnson, said to be one of the original twenty Negroes who were brought into the Colony, came into court to answer the complaint of another Negro, John Casor, who accused

¹ George Bancroft, *History of the United States*, Vol. I, p. 197.

Johnson of holding him in indenture longer than the lawful period. Johnson averred that he had never seen the indenture papers of Casor and maintained that Casor belonged to him for life. Evidence that the status of Johnson had been changed into that of a freeman is established by the assignment to him of two hundred fifty acres of land in fee simple by the Northampton County Court in 1651 and by a court action relating to taxes in 1652. In spite of the fact that Casor offered to produce several witnesses, who incidentally were white men, the Court ordered that he be returned to his master, Johnson. "Thus was rendered, in strange and fateful irony, the first legal decision involving the right to the perpetual services of a Negro."² A second step was brought about in 1662, when a law was enacted in Virginia which provided that the child must follow the status of his mother. Other colonies, north and south, quickly followed with similar legislation. The third and final step in reducing the Negro to slavery was taken, first by Maryland, in 1671. It definitely declared that "the conversion of the Holy Sacrament of Baptism does not alter the status of slaves or their issue." This, too, was followed by the other colonies.

The matter has been well summarized by Dr. Charles S. Johnson:

As the institution developed, the Black Codes were crystallized in both custom and law; there were enacted the Fugitive Slave Laws so clearly foreshadowed earlier in the efforts to protect the planters in the labor of indentured servants. Humane sentiments persisted but could scarcely keep pace with the material necessity for binding this productive chattel more and more closely to its station. In the end, slavery became in theory not merely the life-time status of Negroes in a special economy which demanded it, but a universal condition to which they were fore-doomed from the beginning of time.³

THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH

✓ The first definite impulse of religion on behalf of the slaves seems to have come from the Society of Friends, or, as they are more commonly known, "The Quakers." In 1657 George Fox addressed a letter "To Friends beyond the sea, who have black and Indian slaves," in which he urged them to "give consideration to their slaves, since all nations were of one blood." Richard Baxter's "Christian Directory," published in 1673, has a chapter of "Directions to those Masters in Foreign Plantations who have Negroes and Other Slaves," in which he reminded the masters that the slaves had immortal souls "equally capable of salvation with themselves." The first to speak for the slave, the Quakers were also the first to espouse the cause of freedom and throughout the entire period of slavery they were loyal to their convictions. The names of John Woolman, Benjamin Lundy, Anthony Benezet and Dr. Benjamin Rush are but examples of their unswerving devotion to a glorious ideal. By their consis-

² The entire question is ably treated in Weatherford and Johnson, *Race Relations*, pp. 104-110.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

tent attitude and persistent endeavors the Quakers well merit the honorable distinction of being called "Friends of Humanity."

Although Presbyterian churches are said to have been in existence long before, it was not until 1705 or 1706 that the first presbytery was erected in America. The first synod came in 1715, while the first General Assembly met in 1789. The first recorded action of the Presbyterian Church with respect to Negro slavery came in 1774, when Dr. Ezra Stiles and the Rev. Samuel Hopkins requested the approbation of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, at that time the governing body of the Church, for the sending of "two natives of Africa on a mission to propagate Christianity in their native country." When up for discussion, the question of Negro slavery came also to be considered, and "after much reasoning on the matter" a committee was appointed to bring in an overture on the subject. This the committee did. While the synod approved the plan of assisting in a mission to the African tribes, it deferred action on the question of American slavery.⁴

The first action dealing directly with slavery came in 1787. An overture was presented, which recommended in "the warmest terms" to the churches and families under their care "to do everything in their power, consistent with the rights of civil society, to promote the abolition of slavery and the instruction of Negroes, whether bond or free." The synod not only approved this but further urged that education and sufficient time and means for procuring their own freedom be given to those held in servitude that they might be prepared for the better enjoyment of freedom and become useful citizens of society. This utterance is historic and for many years it served to stand as the testimony of the Presbyterian Church on the subject of slavery.⁵

In 1793 the General Assembly, having now been organized, adopted and ordered published the action of the synod in 1787, and two years later when the question of communion with slaveholders, which had arisen in the Presbytery of Transylvania, was presented, the Assembly referred to the actions of 1787 and 1793, adding, somewhat pointedly it would seem, "with which, we trust, every conscientious person will be fully satisfied."⁶

And so the matter rested, or appeared to rest, until the Assembly of 1815, when the questions of holding, buying, and selling slaves and of communion with slaveholders, which came in from several sources, were presented. The Assembly, reviewing once more its former actions, counselled all conscientious persons to "live in charity and peace according to the doctrine and practice of the Apostles." Recognizing the transfer of slaves "in some sections of our country" to be "unavoidable," it neverthe-

⁴ *The Presbyterian Digest* (Moore), pp. 266, 267.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 267-269.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 270, 271.

less condemned traffic in slaves as being "inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel" and called upon presbyteries and sessions to make use of "all prudent measures to prevent such shameful and unrighteous conduct." Only three years passed before the General Assembly was called upon again to express itself upon the subject of slavery. A brief consideration of the background of the nation at this time will be helpful in evaluating the importance of the declaration of 1818.

During the period immediately following the close of the Revolutionary War and the emergence of America as a nation, the entire country experienced a strong wave of moral idealism, and the early abolition of slavery from the land seemed not merely possible but certain. Indeed, it would have been strange if the colonies, having united themselves to "throw off the yoke of oppression," had not been mindful that they themselves were holding their fellow human beings in bondage as slaves. There can be but little doubt, however, that this benevolent feeling was buttressed by some very practical considerations. In the North slavery long since had been found economically unprofitable, while in the South the collapse of the tobacco market and the absence of a profitable product curtailed its usefulness there. No more slaves were wanted; those already present were becoming a burden. Thus by 1800 almost all of the Northern states had passed laws which prohibited slavery, while a number, including five Southern states, had taken action against the further importation of slaves.

The Continental Congress reflected the same spirit. In 1784 a provision that would have prohibited slavery in the new states or territories after 1800, though failing, received a majority vote. In 1785 a measure was introduced that called for the immediate abolition of slavery, while in 1787 the historic ordinance prohibiting slavery in the "Northwest Territory" was passed with but one dissenting vote.

Weatherford comments:

As one reads the annals of slavery in America it seems evident that it was near to being abolished in 1780 and the years following, owing to the impulse of freedom inherent in the American Revolution. Again, in 1800, when . . . the States had forbidden the importation of slaves, it looked as if it might come to an end. But an economic factor entered at this time which changed the whole complexion of the issue.⁸

The economic factor to which Weatherford refers was cotton, or rather the invention in 1793 by Eli Whitney of the cotton gin, a simple device by means of which the production of cotton was made profitable. Greater by far than the influence of tobacco in its earlier day, was cotton, "King Cotton," which sprang full-grown into being as the mightiest force and factor of the day.

The following figures clearly show the amazing growth in the production of cotton:

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁸ Weatherford and Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

Date	Exported to Europe
1793	500,000 pounds
1795	6,000,000 pounds
1800	17,000,000 pounds
1810	93,000,000 pounds
1820	127,000,000 pounds

"Before this tremendous development of cotton culture had taken place," says Woodrow Wilson, "slavery had hardly had more than habit and the perils of the emancipation to support it in the South . . . after that, slavery seemed nothing less than the indispensable economic instrument of southern society." Thus by the year 1818 powerful economic factors were at work to bring about a complete change in attitude regarding slavery and to erect those defences for its perpetuation which proved so formidable in later years.

We now return to the momentous deliverance of the General Assembly of 1818. The declaration pronounces slavery "a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature . . . utterly inconsistent with the law of God, totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the Gospel of Christ." It points out the duty of all Christians to "use their honest, earnest and unwearied endeavors . . . to obtain the complete abolition of slavery." Expressing gratification for the early position of the Church on the question of slavery, it urges the continuance and, if possible, the increase of these efforts. The Colonization Society, recently organized, is warmly commended. The slaves should be instructed; cruelty and inhumanity to them should be discountenanced; and, if a Christian slave be sold by a member of the Presbyterian Church, without consent, such a member should be suspended from the Church.⁹ Thus spoke the Presbyterian Church, and it can truly be said that the declaration of 1818 is in every sense comparable to the strongest deliverance of any Church in America on the subject of slavery. For the Presbyterian Church it was her peak, her loftiest, ablest, and most vigorous utterance. She spoke then as never before, and alas, as she never spoke again!

During the years which followed, a period which extended almost to the Civil War, the Presbyterian Church was largely silent as to slavery. Other interests became absorbing: the opening of new fields "stretching away to the west;" the demand for preachers and missionaries; the erection of schools and seminaries; and, by no means trivial, the extension of the reign of "King Cotton." In fairness, however, it should be noted that as late as 1834 the Synod of Kentucky condemned slavery and urged the gradual emancipation of the slave.

⁹ Woodrow Wilson, *Division and Reunion*, p. 125.

¹⁰ *Presbyterian Digest* (Moore), pp. 274, 275.

The question of slavery came before the Assembly in 1836 but was "indefinitely postponed" because of the "urgency of other business" and the "shortness of time."¹¹ But, in all truth, "other business" was very much in the mind of the Assembly of 1836, for there was commenced that year the series of actions which resulted in 1838 in the complete division of the Church by means of the famous "Excising Acts" of 1837 into the "Old School" and the "New School" branches. As interesting as are the circumstances of this division, they are not properly germane to this study. However large the question of slavery loomed in the background, and it undoubtedly did, it does not appear as a direct contributing factor in the division of 1837-38. The subsequent actions of the Old and New School branches of the Church regarding slavery can be briefly told.

In 1845 the Old School Assembly, having been petitioned to speak on the matter of the holding of slaves by church members, gravely reminded itself that "slavery existed in the days of Christ and his Apostles," and, after excoriating the "movements of modern abolitionists," declared that slavery, "under the circumstances in which it is found in the southern portion of the country, is no bar to Christian communion." It also took the position that such petitions tended to separate the northern from the southern portion of the Church and country, "a result," it affirmed, "which every enlightened Christian will oppose."¹² It was evident that such a pronouncement was too unpalatable for even its makers, for the next year the Assembly declared with finality: "Our Church has . . . during a period of nearly sixty years, expressed its views of the subject of slavery. During all this period," it further averred, "it has held substantially the same sentiments. No further action upon this subject is at present needed."¹³ Thus ended the matter for the Old School.

The New School branch presented overtures on slavery to its Assembly with great frequency; its deliverances were far more encouraging to lovers of freedom and evidenced greater fidelity to, and consistency with, the declaration of 1818. This was undoubtedly due in great part to the fact that the strength of the New School branch was predominantly in the North, while the Old School had a large, vigorous, and extremely sensitive Southern constituency, which it strove zealously to appease and retain. It was not until 1853, however, that the New School Assembly finally took positive action. That year the Assembly, in response to overtures from both North and South, recommended that the facts relating to the Southern churches and slavery be given to the Assembly the next year. The measure was denounced as "inquisitorial" and the response was negligible, whereupon in 1855 the Assembly determined to act and appointed a committee to "report to the next Assembly on the con-

¹¹ *Presbyterian Digest* (Moore), pp. 275, 276.

¹² Robert M. Thompson, *Presbyterians*, pp. 370-372.

¹³ *Minutes of the General Assembly (O. S.) 1846*, pp. 206-207.

stitutional power of the Assembly over the subject of slaveholding in our churches."¹⁴

The committee reported as ordered, but events rapidly developed that made further action in the matter unnecessary. The Southern group of the New School Church became indignant and aroused, and the Presbytery of Lexington, South, gave official notice to the Assembly that many of its ministers and members were slaveholders "from principle," and "of choice." The New School Assembly the next year, 1857, met the challenge by voting overwhelmingly to "disapprove and earnestly condemn" the action, whereupon the Presbytery of Lexington and others sympathetic with the position taken by it, comprising virtually the entire Southern constituency of the New School Church, withdrew and formed a new body, known as the "United Synod of the Presbyterian Church."¹⁵ "Thus, before political convulsions had occurred to rend the Church through the State," remarks Gillett, "the New School Assembly had defined its position, had attained internal harmony, and had thrown off an incubus which for years had oppressed it and crippled its energies."¹⁶

WORK FOR THE SLAVE AND FREE NEGROES

Preaching and the imparting of religious instruction to the slaves made up the total contribution of the Presbyterian Church to the Negroes of the South prior to the Civil War and emancipation. Under the system of slavery, as operated in America, with restrictions growing more and more severe with the passing of the years, more could not have been expected. No church could do more than that. Schools were found occasionally, to be sure, as in Charleston during the early period, but they were for free Negroes and were not operated by the churches.

It is an abiding glory, which the whole Presbyterian Church now proudly shares, that during all of the years of slavery there were those of her communion who gave themselves magnificently to the work of preaching and teaching the gospel to the slaves. Some of her ablest preachers freely gave themselves to this service. Itinerant missionaries and settled pastors ministered to the slaves, while presbyteries and synods were constantly reminding masters of their obligations as Christians to provide religious instruction for those whom they held in bondage. It was the unswerving, unwearied devotion of choice individuals, far more than mere pious sentimentality, which showed that it was to them at least a most exalted aim and purpose.

A clear index of this spirit is given in the Assembly's narrative of 1825. It says, "No more honored name can be conferred on a minister of Jesus Christ than that of Apostle to the American slaves; and no service can be

¹⁴ *Minutes of the General Assembly (N. S.) 1855*, pp. 30, 31.

¹⁵ Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

¹⁶ E. H. Gillett, *History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, passim.

more pleasing to the God of heaven or more useful to our beloved country than that which this title designates."¹⁷ Dr. Weatherford rightly says, "Perhaps no group of Christians worked harder or more intelligently to give their slaves every advantage of Christian instruction."¹⁸ Truly, as the contrast is considered between official Presbyterian painful hesitancy of expression against slavery and individual Presbyterian energetic enterprise for the slaves; when the long procession of silent years marches across the mind, one can quite feelingly say: warmer, greater, more Christlike by far than her head was her heart!

The first recorded preacher to the slaves was Samuel Davies, who commenced his work in Hanover County, Virginia, in 1747. Said to be, after Whitefield, the most eloquent preacher of his age, he became in later years the successor of Jonathan Edwards as president of Nassau Hall (now Princeton). While he did not preach exclusively to the slaves, many were numbered in his congregations. He is said to have baptized forty of them during his first three years in Virginia. Associated with him were John Todd, Robert Henry, and Henry Patillo.

In 1783 there journeyed across the mountains from Virginia to Kentucky a man whose name was destined to be long remembered in the Presbyterian annals of the latter state. He was David Rice. Already fifty years of age, he had rendered valuable service as a missionary in Virginia and North Carolina. But "Father" Rice, as he came later and affectionately to be called, was to spend thirty-three more of his years in active, fruitful service. He preached to the slaves during the earlier part of his life and was definitely against slavery, as his pamphlet, "Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy," attests. It was published in 1792, and was scattered widely. To his influence may be attributed the strong sentiment against slavery that developed early and long characterized the Presbyterians of Kentucky.¹⁹

Joseph Bullen in 1799 journeyed through the South, under the direction of the New York Missionary Society, on a mission to the Chickasaw Indians. His greatest success is reported to have been among the slaves, some of whom he baptized. Bullen's journey is memorable for another reason: on his way back to the North he met Gideon Blackburn and interested him in the work among the Indians. Blackburn later entered this service and labored with such telling effectiveness that he has been rightly acclaimed "a worthy successor to the Brainards."²⁰

Negroes are first specifically mentioned in the Minutes of the Presbyterian General Assembly of 1800, when they, with others who were deprived of "the means of grace," are spoken of as being objects of the mis-

¹⁷ Gillett, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

¹⁸ Weatherford and Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

¹⁹ Gillett, *op. cit.*, pp. 404, 405.

²⁰ Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

sionary work of the Church. The same year Joseph Badger, who was sent out as a missionary by the Connecticut Association, reported that there was "no Christian in the region of Detroit except one black man, who appeared pious."²¹

In 1801 there took place an event of real significance when John Chavis, styled "a black man of prudence and piety," was employed by the Church as "the Assembly's missionary among the people of his own color" in Virginia.²² This action of the General Assembly is important not alone because Chavis was a Negro, but because he was the first missionary of any race to be sent exclusively to Negroes, thereby bringing the whole race, bond and free, into a more direct and helpful relationship with the Church as objects of its missionary thought and enterprise. Chavis was re-appointed missionary for a number of years, the last for which record is given being 1807. John H. Rice, afterwards one of the most distinguished men in the Church in his day, began his ministry as a missionary to the Negroes. He was appointed in 1806 and served seven years.²³

Possibly the most fruitful missionary activity of the Presbyterian Church during this entire period can be traced to the missionary tour of Samuel J. Mills, of whom we shall write again and again, and John H. Schermerhorn. They set out in 1812, under the sponsorship of a group of New England missionary associations, to tour the western and southwestern frontiers. Preaching and baptizing as they went, they met all classes of men and women: hardy frontiersmen, Indians, Negroes. The journey required three full years for completion. Upon their return they described the urgent needs of the vast area still untouched so vividly that the zeal of the whole Church was fired and a new impulse given to missions. Among those who followed Mills and Schermerhorn as missionaries, Ezra Fisk and Elias Cornelius were noteworthy. It is not too much to say that these men mentioned, though unquestionably of front rank, were typical of their unrecorded fellow missionaries in their energies for the evangelization of the slave.

Perhaps the finest effort to evangelize the slave was attempted by "The Association for the Religious Instruction of Negroes." The moving spirit of this work, which was commenced in 1832, was Charles C. Jones, a Presbyterian minister, who afterwards became one of the heads of the mission work of the Church. A feature of the work was the use of a catechism, prepared especially for the slaves. Although the work of the Association itself was confined to Liberty County, Georgia, the patterns developed were put into practice in many of the Southern states before the end of slavery.²⁴

²¹ *Minutes of the General Assembly*, 1800, pp. 195-197.

²² *Minutes of the General Assembly*, 1801, pp. 229, 233.

²³ Ashbel Green, *Presbyterian Missions*, p. 8.

²⁴ Henry A. White, *Southern Presbyterian Leaders*, p. 293.

PRESBYTERIAN ACTIVITY IN BENEVOLENT ENTERPRISES

Two movements of major importance, both of which had as their chief aim the emancipation of the Negro, were definitely launched between 1810 and 1820. The first of these was the "Union Humane Society," or, as it was frequently called, "The Emancipation Society," founded by Benjamin Lundy, the Quaker, in 1815. Branches of this Society increased rapidly for ten years, especially in the South. Gillett states that of the one hundred one anti-slavery societies in the country in 1826 less than one-fourth were in Northern states.²⁵ The movement was then considered respectable, and commanded tolerance, if not interest and support. And because of the peaceable methods employed and the gradual measures proposed ministers and church members were led to unite with the movement.

It is not possible to estimate the number of Presbyterians who cooperated with these societies, but it is quite safe to say that the total was not small. Moreover, it is revealing to discover from various sources that so many who lived amid the scenes of slavery felt its curse and were led to give themselves to its removal from the land. Such a man was John Barr, a slaveholder in North Carolina, who, becoming convinced of its wrong, liberated his slaves with the offer of a home either in Liberia or in the great Northwest and moved with his family to Illinois.²⁶ The most notable of these, however, in the light of his later fame was James G. Birney. He was an elder in the Presbyterian Church of Huntsville, Alabama, and a slaveholder when he was "converted" by Theodore Weld, the real founder of the later Abolition Movement.²⁷ Birney disposed of his slaves, moved his family to a free state, and devoted the rest of his life to the eradication of slavery in America.

The second movement is most familiarly known as "The Colonization Society." For more than sixty years it occupied a large place in the thought of American life. Its stated purpose was "to settle the free Negroes of the country, with their consent, in Africa or such other place as Congress shall deem most expedient."²⁸ The Society was organized in 1816, and Robert Finley, a distinguished Presbyterian minister, well deserves the honor of being called its founder. Although established as a secular movement, it counted among its supporters some of the most distinguished churchmen of the day, and some of the most earnest friends of Negro freedom as well. Presbyterians especially were active in its support. Assembly after Assembly approved it. Two Presbyterian ministers were among its first directors, while one of the first two agents of the Society was none other than Samuel J. Mills. It is tragic to record that both Finley and Mills were not permitted to go on with this work. Finley, after

²⁵ E. H. Gillett, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 523.

²⁶ *Presbyterian Historical Almanac*, 1863, p. 287.

²⁷ Gilbert H. Barnes, *Anti-Slavery Impulse*, pp. 39, 70.

²⁸ Minutes of first meeting of the Society—1818.

accepting the presidency of the University of Georgia, died in 1817, while Mills, on a mission to Africa to find a place for the Colonization Society settlement, was stricken with fever and passed away, but not before the site of the present Liberia had been selected. While the Society did not accomplish the full measure of its purpose and judgments may greatly question the essential soundness of that purpose, two of its achievements cannot be gainsaid: it was the direct instrument through which the Negro Republic of Liberia was established, and it had its influence in America in bringing about the emancipation of the slave.

PRESBYTERIAN INTEREST IN NEGRO SCHOOLS

The absence of schools for Negroes in the South before the emancipation has been pointed out in these pages. True it is that in many parts of the South, in spite of prohibitory laws, Negroes were able to learn to read and write. But, except in the rarest of cases, this was all. Moreover, most of the schools of the North were closed to the Negro either by the school authorities themselves or because of opposition from those around. Miss Prudence Crandall, a Quaker, was arrested and forced to abandon her school for girls at Canterbury, Connecticut, because she admitted a Negro girl, while the Caanan Academy, in New Hampshire, was broken up because two Negro men were permitted to enroll.²⁹ In the light of these conditions three attempts of Presbyterians to establish schools for Negroes are interesting and important.

The African School at Parsippany. In 1816 the Synod of New York and New Jersey appointed twelve of its members "to organize and manage" a school to give ministerial training to Negroes for service in Africa. The school was organized, and located at Parsippany, New Jersey. Two young men were enrolled in 1817, and the same year the tireless Samuel J. Mills was chosen to collect subscriptions for the school. From his interest in missions and his deep devotion to the cause of the Negro, it can safely be inferred that he was a prime mover in this enterprise. It is interesting to find that Robert Finley, the founder of the Colonization Society, was a member of this synod and pastor of a church in New Jersey. An increasing interest was reported in 1818, but the death of Mills in Africa was a heavy blow. Four new scholarships were secured, and six pupils enrolled in 1821. In 1822 the synod was divided, each state forming its own body. The African school was given to the care of both groups. The Synod of New York in 1823 appointed a committee to raise funds for a professorship in the school. It is reported that a controversy arose on the question of loyalty to doctrinal standards: whatever the cause, the little school was unable to weather the storm, and in 1824 closed its doors.³⁰

²⁹ Weatherford and Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 351. Also Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro Church*, p. 175.

³⁰ *Minutes of Synod of New York and New Jersey—1816-1823.*

The New Haven College Project. To Arthur Tappan is due the distinction of being the moving spirit in the effort to establish the New Haven College, the most ambitious undertaking for Negro education before the Civil War. The Tappans, Arthur and Lewis, wealthy merchants of New York, were probably the most unselfish philanthropists of their day in America, and, although Presbyterians, extended their encouragement and support far beyond denominational boundaries. Through Benjamin Lundy, the Quaker abolitionist, who also influenced William Lloyd Garrison, they were led to cooperate in efforts to aid the Negro. This they did, and to such an extent that friends were led to caution them that such actions would ruin their business, to which Arthur Tappan is reported to have replied, "My business is for sale, but not my conscience."³¹

In 1828, while spending the summer in New Haven, Arthur Tappan met a home missionary, Simeon S. Jocelyn, who was serving a congregation of Negroes there. To him Jocelyn outlined a plan which he had conceived for a Negro college. Mr. Tappan became interested, bought several acres of ground, and pledged, with his brother, a large contribution for buildings. At first the leading citizens of New Haven appeared to be favorable to the plan. Members of the faculty of Yale agreed to teach. Much publicity attended the efforts. In 1831, encouraged and financially supported by Arthur Tappan, a "Convention of Colored Citizens of America" was held in Philadelphia, the first meeting of its kind. The Convention enthusiastically endorsed the proposed college, and elected Samuel E. Cornish, a Negro Presbyterian minister, as "Convention Agent" to solicit funds. Arthur Tappan was chosen treasurer.

Jocelyn returned to New Haven only to find that a decided change of sentiment had taken place. On September 10, 1831, at a meeting called to decide upon the matter a large number of the citizens of New Haven, including the mayor, aldermen, Common Council and others adopted a resolution which stated, "We will resist the establishment of the proposed college in this place by every lawful means in our power." Thus ended the Negro college.³²

Ashmun Institute. "An institution," says Emerson, "is the lengthened shadow of one man." If this be true, then Ashmun Institute and its successor, the present Lincoln University, are but visible reflections of the purpose and prayer and faith, even the dream, that possessed John Miller Dickey, a Presbyterian minister of Oxford, Pennsylvania, the founder of the oldest institution for the higher education of the Negro in our land. The event that led to the establishment of the school has been preserved. In 1852, a young Negro, James Ralston Amos, came to the home of Dr. Dickey, seeking his counsel and aid that he might receive training to preach to his people.³³ This providential incident so fired the zeal, long

³¹ Dwight O. W. Holmes, *Straight Ahead*, p. 7.

³² Gilbert H. Barnes, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-28.

³³ George B. Carr, *John Miller Dickey*, pp. 161ff.

deeply burning, of Dr. Dickey that he set about to find a school which would admit young Amos; he was successful, but only after repeated failures. It was then that he determined to found a school for Negro youth. A site was selected and secured by Dr. Dickey out of his own funds; the next year saw the plan presented to the General Assembly, being recommended by the Board of Education of the Church through Dr. Courtland Van Rensselaer, long a friend of the Negro cause. The Presbytery of New Castle, in the bounds of which the school was to be located, gave its approval and empowered its own members to aid in establishing the work. Funds were secured, a building erected, and the Institute, named in honor of Jehudi Ashmun, one of the early leaders of Liberia, became a reality.

Ashmun Institute began its work on January 1, 1857, with four students. Dr. John Miller Dickey lived to direct the work which he began until 1878, and to see it emerge as Lincoln University, but of it we shall write later from the vantage point of the present day.

NEGRO PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS

John Chavis. In any record of notable American Negroes of the period prior to the Civil War the name of John Chavis is conspicuous. Born, whether a slave or free is not known, in Granville County, North Carolina, in 1763, he early exhibited such mental gifts that, through the interest of white friends, he was sent to Princeton. There, under the tutelage of Dr. John Witherspoon, he became proficient, especially in Latin and Greek. His appointment as the first Negro missionary in the Presbyterian Church has already been noted. Ashbel Green states that even before Chavis had been employed, "as a missionary among the blacks by the Synod of Virginia,"³⁴ he had the distinction also of being the first Negro Presbyterian minister, having been ordained by the Presbytery of Lexington. There is no record of his having held a pastorate, though Dr. George C. Shaw, in his book on Chavis, tells that Chavis supplied for a time the pulpit of a white Presbyterian church in the same county in which he was born. As a result of Nat Turner's insurrection in 1831 the preaching of Negroes was prohibited in most of the Southern states. Chavis then turned his attention to teaching, and with such eminent success that it is upon his work as a teacher that his fame chiefly rests.

John Gloucester and the First African Presbyterian Church. The story of John Gloucester is greatly worth the telling. Of his early life nothing is known until, as a slave in Tennessee, he came under the notice of Gideon Blackburn, the great missionary to the Indians. Dr. Blackburn, attracted by what he saw of promise in the man, bought him and, carrying him as a servant on his missionary travels, instructed him in the doc-

³⁴ Ashbel Green, *Presbyterian Missions*, p. 7.

trines of the Presbyterian Church. By his teaching Gloucester became an earnest and acceptable preacher. Coming to Philadelphia with his master, he was given an opportunity to preach and to gather a congregation of Negroes. It is said that he began preaching in a private house, and in clear weather, on a street corner. He soon won the respect of all classes. "Even the dram shops would close their doors until the meeting was over."

The First African Church was organized the latter part of May, 1807. It was during this time that Gideon Blackburn, with true Christian benevolence, gave Gloucester his freedom. Later, through the contributions of friends in England and America, he was able to purchase the freedom of his wife and children. In 1810 he was ordained by the Presbytery of Union, in Tennessee. Through the interest and support of "The Evangelical Society of Philadelphia" a house of worship was erected and dedicated in 1811. Dr. Archibald Alexander, a noted Presbyterian minister of the day, and a friend and helper of the work from the beginning, preached the sermon. Success attended the ministry of John Gloucester, and he had the joyous privilege of presenting two young Negro men to his presbytery and of seeing them placed under its care. The church prospered until his death in 1822. During the comparatively brief years of his ministry, he had gathered a congregation; he had shaped and molded his people; he had laid a foundation which was to endure, even to this day. But even this does not end the story; John Gloucester was still to serve through the ministry of his sons.

In 1824 the Presbytery of Philadelphia set apart another Negro church in that city, the Second African Presbyterian Church, and Jeremiah Gloucester, son of John, became its minister. The church flourished for many years. In 1844 another Negro church was established in Philadelphia, the Lombard Street Central Presbyterian Church, and Stephen Gloucester, also a son of John, became its minister. In 1848, the Negro Presbyterian Church of Reading, Pennsylvania, was organized by Stephen Gloucester, and it is reported that James Gloucester, still another son of John, was the founder of a church in Brooklyn, New York. It is most appropriate that the Negro Presbyterian Church in Boston bears the name of John Gloucester. Thus, because of his own great service, and because of his sons, there are few names among Negro Presbyterians that merit a higher place than that of John Gloucester, the founder.²⁵

Samuel E. Cornish. One of the young men presented by John Gloucester to the Presbytery of Philadelphia, Samuel E. Cornish, was licensed by it and ordained by a New York Presbytery. In 1824 he became the first pastor of the First Colored Presbyterian Church of New York City and remained until 1828. In 1840 he united with another presbytery in the same city and, while laboring as a missionary, he organized the Eman-

²⁵ William T. Catto, *Semi-Centennial Address*, 1857, *passim*.

uel Church, the second Negro Presbyterian church in New York City. He served this church until 1847. One of the most active men of his day, Samuel E. Cornish had the honor of establishing, with John Russworm, the first Negro newspaper to be published in the United States, "Freedom's Journal," in 1827.⁵⁶ In 1837 he became editor of another weekly Negro paper, "The Weekly Advocate." It will be recalled that Cornish was chosen in 1831 as agent to collect funds for the ill-fated New Haven college.⁵⁷

The careers of *Henry Highland Garnett* and *J. W. C. Pennington*, who were among the most outstanding Negroes of their day, in many respects were similar. Both were born as slaves in Maryland; both escaped to the more friendly North, gained their education, and became Presbyterian ministers and distinguished orators. Pennington was impressive for his scholarship as well as for his eloquence. He visited Europe three times as a lecturer, remaining four years on one of these visits, preaching and lecturing with great acceptance. In 1849 he preached, by invitation, at the Protestant Church in Paris and made a profound impression. He is said to have been a brilliant master of Latin, Greek, and German, and, in recognition of his scholarship, the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by the University of Heidelberg. Garnett won national fame by an address delivered at Buffalo, New York, in 1843 before the Congress of Colored Americans. He subsequently lectured in England and was warmly received. He served for a time as a missionary to Jamaica. Garnett is said to have served Negro Presbyterian congregations in Washington, D. C., and Troy, New York, while Pennington served with great favor a Congregational church in Hartford, Connecticut. Both served as pastor of the First Colored Presbyterian Church of New York (the name of the church was changed to "Shiloh"), Pennington, from 1848 to 1856, while Garnett, succeeding him the same year, continued until 1864. Garnett began a second pastorate at the Shiloh Church in 1867 and served for fourteen years.⁵⁸

Samuel R. Ward. Minister, lecturer, and popular orator, Ward is reported to have "preached with great acceptance" to a white Presbyterian church at South Butler, New York, for a number of years. Well-trained, and a gifted speaker, most of his time from 1840 was spent as a lecturer, covering America and visiting England. He was a contemporary of Frederick Douglass and ranked with him as one of the most popular orators of the day.⁵⁹

Of course there were others: men like Elymas P. Rogers, who served the Plane Street Church of Newark, New Jersey, for fourteen years with

⁵⁶ Weatherford and Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 484.

⁵⁷ *Ante*, p. 18.

⁵⁸ Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro in Our History*, pp. 275ff. Also S. D. Alexander, *The Presbytery of New York*, pp. 44ff.

⁵⁹ Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro Church*, pp. 182, 183.

signal success, but refused to be installed as pastor, feeling impelled to preach the gospel in Africa. A strain of pathos enters the story as we learn that he gave up his work, in 1861, and journeyed to Africa, but was not suffered to live even two months after setting foot upon "the loved land of his fathers."⁴⁰ Or John William Holm, a young man of rare brilliance, who, after spending two years at Ashmun Institute, entered Auburn Seminary in 1861, was licensed the next year by the Presbytery of Cayuga and was serving during the summer as a supply of the Siloam Church in Brooklyn when he sickened and quickly died. Young Holm had made a deep impression upon the faculty and students of Auburn, and, when they returned to the Seminary that Fall, they held a memorial service out of their affectionate regard for him.⁴¹ And then there are those who to a later day are but little more than dimly-perceived names. Gillett gives us one, a George Erskine,⁴² who was appointed to serve four months under the direction of the East Tennessee Missionary Society. This occurred in 1818, and he was reappointed in 1819, but the record does not speak again. There are names such as Benjamin Hughes and W. T. Catto, who served as ministers of the First African Church of Philadelphia, and Theodore Wright of the First Colored Church in New York, who withdrew with his congregation from one presbytery to another. Could we but catch a glimpse of the mystery behind these names we should have a far more glorious picture, for these names were men!

We find one name, however, which because of subsequent events, has rare significance. The General Assembly Minutes (O. S.) of 1861 carry the name of H. R. Revels, as pastor of the Madison Street Presbyterian Church, Colored, of Baltimore.⁴³ Other authentic sources reveal that H. R. Revels was born free . . . a graduate of Knox College in Illinois, entered the ministry of the African Methodist Church and served important charges in several states; that he resigned his church in St. Louis, came to Maryland and was there at the outbreak of the Civil War and helped to organize the first Negro Regiment in Maryland.⁴⁴ From an historical sketch of the Madison Street Church we find that H. R. Revels served as assistant pastor of this church, with pastoral responsibility for a mission, Govan's Chapel, from April 27, 1858, to October 14, 1863. The significance of the name becomes apparent and of considerable importance when we discover that the H. R. Revels that served five years as the assistant pastor of a Presbyterian church became in 1870 Hiram R. Revels of Mississippi, the first Negro to be chosen a member of the Senate of the United States.

⁴⁰ *Presbyterian Historical Almanac*, '62, pp. 191-194.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1864, p. 304.

⁴² Gillett, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

⁴³ *Minutes of the General Assembly (O. S.)* 1861, p. 65.

⁴⁴ Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro Church*, p. 184.

NEGRO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES AND MEMBERS

As far as can be verified, there was only one Negro Presbyterian church in the South at the beginning of the Civil War, and the circumstances of its origin and life make an unusual story. In 1846 Dr. John B. Adger, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston, South Carolina, conceived the plan of holding separate services for the Negro slaves, and the basement of his church was taken over for the purpose. The idea proved to be popular; large numbers attended the services, and Sunday schools and prayer meetings were conducted regularly at various points throughout the city. The next year the congregation of the Second Church decided to erect a house of worship for the use of the slaves. This was done and in 1850 the building, a "T" shaped structure, was dedicated. Shortly afterwards Dr. Adger resigned his pastorate to accept a professorship in the theological seminary at Columbia, South Carolina, and John L. Girardeau came to the Second Church, assuming charge at the same time of the Negro church. Under the preaching of Dr. Girardeau, who was reputed to be one of the most eloquent of Southern preachers, the slave church soon outgrew its quarters. An immense structure was erected, costing \$25,000, said to have been the largest in the city. This new church was given over to the use of the slaves, and Dr. Girardeau preached to them until the outbreak of the Civil War. The name given to this church was "Zion." It stands today as the oldest Negro Presbyterian Church in the South.⁴⁵

There were, in 1860, between twelve and fourteen Negro Presbyterian churches in the North. We can locate, with reasonable certainty, twelve of those churches. The existence in 1860 of another, the Second African Church of Philadelphia, is uncertain, while Govan's Chapel in Baltimore was classified as a mission. Names and locations follow:

<i>Name of Church</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>
Shiloh	New York	New York
Seventh Avenue	New York	New York
Siloam	Brooklyn	New York
Colored	Troy	New York
Plane Street	Newark	New Jersey
Witherspoon Street	Princeton	New Jersey
First African	Philadelphia	Pennsylvania
Second African (?)	Philadelphia	Pennsylvania
Lombard Street Central	Philadelphia	Pennsylvania
Capital Street	Harrisburg	Pennsylvania
Colored	Reading	Pennsylvania
Madison Street	Baltimore	Maryland
Govan's Chapel (Mission)	Baltimore	Maryland
Colored	Washington	D. C.

⁴⁵ Henry A. White, *op. cit.*, pp. 293-304.

An interesting development as to the names of some of these churches may be noted. The church given here as Shiloh was originally The First Colored Presbyterian Church of New York. The original name of The Seventh Avenue Church was Emanuel; this church subsequently took the name, The Church of the Covenant, and still later, The Church of Hope. The name of The Plane Street Church, Newark, was changed to The Thirteenth Avenue Presbyterian Church, which name it bears to the present day.

Chapter 2

THE BEGINNINGS AND DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIZED WORK AMONG THE NEGROES

IT is probably beyond the realm of possibility to find with any degree of accuracy the number of Negro Presbyterians in the North in the year 1860. One hesitates even to essay an opinion, but, if one be offered, it is to the effect that the total Negro Presbyterian membership in the North in Negro churches, listed on another page, and in the white churches was relatively very small.

As for Negro Presbyterian membership in the South, which would be made up very largely of slaves, the figures submitted can best serve as a very general and superficial estimate.

Number of slaves reported as belonging to Presbyterian churches in the South in 1858.¹

Old School Churches	12,000
New School Churches	2,000
Cumberland Churches	20,000
Total slave membership	34,000

PRESBYTERIAN ACTIONS DURING THE CIVIL WAR

It was in an atmosphere of greatest tension and suspense that the Old School Assembly of 1861 met to do its work. Secession from the Union had come; Fort Sumter had fallen; war had been declared; President Lincoln had issued the first call for volunteers. Encouraged by the fact that the previous Assembly had been tranquil and "exceptionally harmonious,"² there were those in the Church and in the Assembly who still hoped that the Assembly would take no action of a disturbing nature; they still fancied that the Southern constituency might be saved to the Church. However mistaken the judgment and misplaced the confidence of this group, of which Dr. Charles Hodge of Princeton was the very able spokesman, it must be conceded that they were at least consistent: for fifteen years, or since the amphibolic utterance of 1846, they had succeeded in excluding

¹ *The Presbyterian Magazine*, 1858, p. 567.

² Vander Velde, *The Presbyterian Churches and the Federal Union*, p. 29.

any word against slavery, or upon any matter disturbing to the slaveholding South, from the actions of the Assembly.

On this occasion, however, they reckoned without foundation. Silence would no longer satisfy. As Vander Velde well comments: "The Assembly (of 1861) was to prove in case after case that when a man's nationalism conflicted with his natural conservatism, it was the conservatism that had to give way." Thus, with unprecedented enthusiasm, and by a decisive vote, albeit after a debate which lasted five days, the Old School Assembly adopted the historic "Spring Resolutions," the inspiration of the venerable Dr. Gardiner S. Spring, pastor of the Brick Church in New York City and long one of the ablest and most respected leaders of the denomination. By these resolutions the Church was committed to "strengthen, uphold and encourage the Federal Government," and to an "unabated loyalty" to the Federal Constitution.⁴ The historic importance of the "Spring Resolutions" is not found in the resolutions themselves, nor yet by a comparison with the utterances of other Churches at this time. Their importance rests chiefly upon the fact that they were distinctly an advance step for the staid, ultra-conservative Old School Church of that period, and that they prepared the way for later advances. Fortified by the favorable reaction of their constituents, and of the country in general, and at the same time remembering that the seceding states had formed another "Country," succeeding Assemblies were increasingly vocal and emphatic until the close of the War.

The end of the same year, which for the Old School Church had been made epochal by its adoption of the "Spring Resolutions," witnessed the withdrawal of the Old School Southern constituency and the organization of "The Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America." This was effected on December 4, 1861, at Augusta, Georgia. At its beginning the new group comprised ten synods, forty-five presbyteries, and numbered 840 ministers and 72,000 communicants. Its geographical boundaries corresponded exactly with those of the seceding states. This church came early to be popularly known, and continues so, as the "Southern Presbyterian Church," although its official title was changed in 1865, when it determined to maintain permanently its separate status, to "The Presbyterian Church in the United States." As to the influence of the "Spring Resolutions" on the establishment of a separate Southern church, it is undoubtedly true that the resolutions served to provide an outward basis for secession and to hasten positive action; but weightier judgment supports the view that the Old School position was not the paramount factor and that the withdrawal of the Southern churches was inevitable.⁵

On the question of slavery the Assemblies of the Old School Church, even during the war period, kept strictly silent until 1863, five months

³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-65 for fuller treatment.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 101-106.

after the Emancipation Proclamation had become effective. And as for the action of that year, far better it would have been to have kept to the policy of utter silence than to have adopted what has been appropriately called "a masterpiece of equivocation and indefiniteness." Of all the actions of the Old School, its position on slavery in 1863 can be the least understood, appreciated, or justified. In 1864 it took its final action on the subject, and pronounced a clear, vigorous, and emphatic condemnation of slavery. To its weight was added the fact that it was adopted with almost entire unanimity. However, with the slaves already freed, with victory attending the Union arms, and the early end of the War reasonably assured, such a tardy deliverance, however able, did not and could not greatly contribute to the prestige of the Old School Church.

In marked contrast were the meetings of the New School Church. Their Assemblies enjoyed internal harmony and showed vigorous action. The major reason for this is to be found in the withdrawal in 1857 of its Southern constituency, as has already been noted. The direct consequence of this separation, which involved six Southern synods, was to leave the New School body almost a completely Northern Church. Thus the New School Church could take a united and emphatic position in an avowal of loyalty to the Union and in condemnation of slavery.

Before the famous "Spring Resolutions" had been even permitted to reach the floor of the Old School Assembly, the New School Assembly, which had convened on the same day as the Old, had adopted an able recommendation which in ringing words pledged its loyalty to the Union cause: "There is no blood or treasure too precious," it declared, "to be devoted to the defense and perpetuity of the Government in all its constituted authority." Prayer was commended to pastors and churches for the President and those in authority, and for the removal of slavery. In 1862, preceding the Emancipation Proclamation by four months, was issued a scathing denunciation of slavery, declaring it to be the "one primordial root . . . of the whole insurrectionary movement." Deliverances of the following years maintained their assurance of loyalty and bore a new note of gladness for the "breaking of the yoke of oppression," and the "complete destruction of the vile system of human bondage." Through these years these deliverances were sent or carried to the President of the United States and scattered by the newspapers throughout the land. There can be no doubt that the spiritual and moral influence of the New School Presbyterian Church served to strengthen the country in her time of crisis.⁶

THE CHALLENGE OF THE EMANCIPATION

The proclamation of President Lincoln, decreeing in effect that on January 1, 1863, slavery should cease to exist in America, set in motion one of the major events of history. Other movements of population and mass

⁶ Vander Velde, *op. cit.*, pp. 344 ff.

changes of status, from freedom to bondage or from bondage to freedom, there had been, but not in such vast numbers; rarely with such sudden immediacy; never with conditions and factors such as were found in the case of the Negro in America. Let us endeavor to visualize the situation: four million Negroes, ignorant, uncouth, their habits and customs molded and machined and grooved into a slave experience of two hundred fifty years, are suddenly set free, without food, shelter, clothing, tools or land, and are destined to live in a section impoverished by war and by the side of their conquered former masters.

This then is the setting, the basis of the challenge that came, with the coming of freedom to the Negro slave, to all America. It came to every part and phase and factor of American life: legal, economic, civic, social, educational. And it was a challenge to religion most of all, to the forces of Christianity in our land. By the end of the Civil War all of the Northern churches had definitely committed themselves against slavery. All had expressed some measure of interest and compassion for the truly helpless condition of the slave. The emancipation, although at first purely a war measure, had been made certain by the success of the Union cause. Whatever hindrances or barriers there had been between the churches and the Negro were now removed by the fact of freedom. The Christian churches, aware of the plight of the newly-made Freedman, were challenged definitely and strongly.

In the succeeding pages we shall endeavor to show how one of the Christian churches of America met the challenge of the emancipation. Were it possible to gather up the fruits of all of the American churches that engaged in this service, such a story would add a marvelous chapter to the Christian annals of our day. But such is manifestly beyond the confines of this study, even as is the work of other branches of our own large Presbyterian fellowship. Consequently we shall confine ourselves largely to the work of the Old School and New School branches of the Presbyterian Church until their reunion in 1870. After that period we shall use the term, "The Presbyterian Church," reserving the use of the proper qualifying adjective to the other Presbyterian branches to which we may refer.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

It may not be amiss here to establish the fact that neither the Old School nor the New School branches led out in work among the Freedmen. This distinction belongs to other Presbyterian groups. The first Presbyterian branch to begin work among the Negroes during this period was one of the smallest, the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, or, as they are more usually called, the "Old Side Covenanters." They began in 1861 by sending a missionary to Port Royal, South Carolina, and afterwards established missions in Washington, D. C., and Natchez, Mississippi.⁷ The United Presbyterian

⁷ *Presbyterian Historical Almanac '63*, p. 396.

Church began its work in 1863. The first report, in 1864, showed six stations, with twenty-four teachers, and an expenditure of \$8,000. Their first stations were placed in Tennessee and Alabama. Though they experienced difficulties, some of their work being destroyed, they persisted, and established the basis of their small but substantial work of the present day.⁸

Activities of Old School Presbyterians among the Freedmen were commenced in 1864, when the General Assembly appointed two committees, one in Indianapolis and the other in Philadelphia, for this work. They were empowered "to collect and disburse funds, and to appoint teachers and ministers," but were "allowed in no wise to interfere with the plans or work of the Board of Domestic Missions."⁹ Very few, if any results came from the activities of these committees, so the next year the Assembly, aware of the urgency of the situation, appointed a committee consisting of nine ministers and nine elders, to be "style[d] the General Assembly's Committee on Freedmen."¹⁰ This Committee was located at Pittsburgh and to it were given the religious and educational interests of the Freedmen "during the present exigencies and until the Assembly shall otherwise order." The actual work of the Old School branch may properly be said to have begun with the appointment of this committee. The deliverance which authorized the work in 1865 declared it the duty of the Presbyterian Church "as patriots, as philanthropists and as Christians at once to enter upon and vigorously to cultivate the field that God has opened before them." And so vigorously did they enter the field, that by 1870, in just five years, they had firmly established the beginnings of much of the work of the present day.

New School Presbyterians began, also in 1864, by directing their Home Missions Committee to seek to effect arrangements through which the "institutions of the Gospel may be given to the large and increasing number of Freedmen . . . emancipated—during the present Civil War." The next year the Committee recommended that agents be appointed to work among the Freedmen and suggested that Colored men be chosen, if possible.¹¹ While the committee was able to report the organization of three promising missions among the Freedmen in 1866, the lack of Colored ministers served to hinder the progress. It was not until 1868 that an associate secretary was employed for the work and a Freedmen's Department created. The reports of 1869 and 1870 showed splendid progress.

Let us trace more directly some of the beginnings of the work of the Old School and the New School among the Freedmen. (There has come to light in recent years a beautiful tradition, which relates that Presbyterian work in the South among the Freedmen was first begun in 1864,¹²

⁸ Vander Velde, *op. cit.*, p. 453.

⁹ *Minutes of General Assembly (O. S.) '64*, pp. 321-323.

¹⁰ *Minutes of General Assembly (O. S.) '65*, pp. 543-545.

¹¹ *Minutes of General Assembly (N. S.) '64*, p. 467.

¹² *Annual Report, Board of National Missions, 1927*, p. 85.

at Amelia Court House, Virginia, by Mrs. S. J. Neil, white, and that under a venerable oak with spreading branches she taught her first class, composed of little children and gray-haired men and women, all eager for knowledge; and that from this foundation the Negro Presbyterian work in Virginia and especially Ingleside Seminary, have come. While it is quite likely that the account of the beginning of this Virginia work is correct, it is probable that it was started as an individual benevolent activity and was later taken over by the Committee on Freedmen. This was done in other cases. There is no evidence that either of the Freedmen's Committees of 1864 sponsored or authorized such a work.)

The first work of the Old School Committee, of which there is authentic record, was begun in North Carolina in the vicinity of Charlotte probably in January, 1866. Early that year two churches were organized: McClintock, with the Rev. S. C. Alexander as minister, and Freedom, with the Rev. S. S. Murkland in charge. These ministers, with a third, the Rev. W. L. Miller, organized the first presbytery among the Freedmen, Catawba Presbytery, on October 4, 1866. These three ministers were white, the vanguard of that matchless band of men and women that came later. The story of the entry of these into the Freedmen's service is interesting: Murkland and Alexander were members of the Presbytery of Concord of the Southern Presbyterian Church. During the war they had been in charge of white congregations and had preached occasionally to Negroes. At the close of the war each had resigned from his white church and, gathering Negro congregations, had been commissioned by the Old School Committee. On learning that they had accepted commissions from the Old School Church, their presbytery gave them the choice of returning their commissions and refusing all aid from the North or of leaving the presbytery. They accepted the latter alternative and organized the Presbytery of Catawba in the Old School Church. This presbytery was first attached to the Synod of Baltimore. The next year Alexander was appointed by the new presbytery to "establish a Theological Class at Charlotte, the Henry J. Biddle Institute, in honor of Major Henry J. Biddle of Philadelphia, who lost his life in the Rebellion."¹³

The circumstances attending the organization of the second Old School presbytery among the Freedmen give it more than ordinary interest. In 1866 three Negro ministers, David Laney, Joseph Williams, and Robert Casters, all of Georgia, were ordained by the Presbytery of Hopewell of the Southern Church, "to labor among their own people." Evidently objecting to what to them appeared a qualified ordination, they withdrew and proceeded, probably in 1867, to organize an independent presbytery, the Presbytery of Knox. Upon the application of Dr. S. C. Logan, the first secretary of the Freedmen's Committee, Knox Presbytery was received by the Old School Assembly in 1868. It is interesting to find that the David

¹³ *Minutes of General Assembly, '67*, pp. 441-448.

Laney here mentioned was the father of Miss Lucy Laney, who in later years became the noted founder of Haines Institute, Augusta, Georgia.¹⁴

The next presbytery, Atlantic, came on January 1, 1868; it was located in lower South Carolina in the general vicinity of Charleston. The ministers making up this presbytery were of both races. Thus we find in the three presbyteries, the first three organized among the Freedmen in the Old School Church, this singular picture:

- 1866 Catawba Presbytery, North Carolina—Ministers all white
- 1867 Knox Presbytery, Georgia—Ministers all Negro
- 1868 Atlantic Presbytery, South Carolina—Ministers of both races

In 1868 the Old School Assembly gave authority for the erection of the first Negro Synod "on Thursday before the second Sabbath of October, 1868, to be opened with a sermon by the Rev. Sidney S. Murkland, or in his absence by the oldest minister present."¹⁵ This synod was named Atlantic and was composed of the Presbyteries of Catawba, Atlantic, and Knox. Thus by 1870 the advance guard of the Old School Presbyterians, beginning in North Carolina, had extended their operations to South Carolina and Georgia and had effected, through their presbyteries and synod, the means of establishing and extending their work.

Two schools above parochial were established in this five-year period: the Biddle Memorial Institute at Charlotte and Wallingford Academy at Charleston. Lincoln University in Pennsylvania was included in the report; also the Freedmen's University in Quindaro, Kansas, under the joint control of the Freedmen's Committee and the Synod of Kansas.

New School Activities. A study of the work of the New School Church among the Freedmen during this five-year period from 1865 to 1870 may well serve to correct a popular fallacy: that the activities of the New School were negligible. True it is that the Freedmen's Committee of the New School Church did not begin to operate until the middle of 1868 and that the sphere and volume of its activities were much smaller than that of its sister branch; yet in quality the work of the New School Church was of greatly significant value and much of its rich influence extends through to the present time.

The first work of the New School branch to be established among the Freedmen was probably at Knoxville, Tennessee, although a mission was planted at Charleston, South Carolina, the same year, which flourished for a time but at length went out of existence. But the Knoxville church, established, it may be, as early as 1865, not only is the oldest living church of the Freedmen's work of the New School but can also strongly claim to be the first Negro church to be organized after the Civil War by either branch. The Knoxville Shiloh Church, organized by the Rev. George W. Le Vere, a Negro missionary, continues and is today one of the strongest

¹⁴ *Minutes of General Assembly (O. S.) '68*, p. 735. Also *The Assembly Herald*, 1908.

¹⁵ *Minutes of General Assembly (O. S.) '68*, p. 650.

Negro Presbyterian churches in the South. Le Vere, one of the first New School "agents" to be sent South, was active in establishing churches at Maryville and New Market, Tennessee, and a number of missions in the vicinity during this time. An interesting contrast may be noted: In Tennessee the New School work among the Freedmen was performed by Negroes and their churches were received into a white presbytery, Union, the same by which John Gloucester was ordained more than a half century before.

Of more than ordinary interest is the fact that the illustrious Dr. J. W. C. Pennington, of whose career mention has previously been made, served as a New School missionary in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1869 and 1870, and it is highly probable that he organized the Negro Presbyterian church there. The report of 1871 tells of his death at Jacksonville while still in charge of this church. Another unusual character, Hiram Baker, who labored mightily throughout the South for a generation after the Civil War, organizing the church at Chattanooga as late as 1890, was a New School licentiate of the Presbytery of Carlisle in 1864.

In 1868 rather elaborate parochial school activities were undertaken by the New School Freedmen's Committee. After taking over a group of schools from another organization, the Committee had a total of sixty-one schools scattered throughout nine states and the District of Columbia. The major work, however, was centered in South Carolina, with five active stations, and on May 11, 1869, the New School Presbytery of South Carolina was erected and attached to the Synod of New York and New Jersey. Seven ministers of both races were members. Among these seven are names that show beyond doubt the high quality of this work: Willard Richardson, from whose Fairfield Institute at Winnsboro, South Carolina, came the distinguished Dillard brothers; President Henry L. McCrorey of Johnson C. Smith University; and Dean Kelly Miller of Howard University. Samuel Loomis had already established at Chester, South Carolina, Brainerd Institute, that maker of generation after generation of sterling men and women. But perhaps of most exceptional significance, in the light of things to be, was a name recorded upon the roster of the Presbytery of South Carolina in 1870 as a licentiate: Daniel J. Sanders.

A VIEW OF THE WORK IN 1870

The year 1870 marked the reunion of the Old School and the New School branches of the Church and the consolidation of the missionary activity of both branches, including the work among the Freedmen. From the last reports of each Committee we are able to get a glimpse of the work as a whole.

The work of the Old School Committee extended throughout three states: North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, while Tennessee and South Carolina were mainly the field of New School activity. There were

three presbyteries and one synod in the Old School field and one presbytery in the New School work. The Freedmen's Committee of the Old School reported sixty-nine churches, with 5,264 communicants; fifty-seven church buildings and eight manses or homes for teachers; seventy-six schools with 5,220 pupils, sixty-seven Sunday schools and 5,417 pupils; 146 marriages and 1,234 baptisms; Biddle, Wallingford, and the Freedmen's University were higher schools. Twenty-seven ministers, of which fifteen were white and twelve Negro, were active; there were two licentiates and twenty-seven catechists, and 101 day school teachers.

There were probably sixteen New School churches, with 1,500 communicants; sixty-one schools with 185 teachers; there were six white ministers and two Negro, and five licentiates. There was a Normal school at Winchester, Virginia, with valuable property and with four thousand pupils, in addition to the work at Chester and Winnsboro, South Carolina.

Before we leave this story of beginnings, two most important facts should be noted:

The Old School and the New School Churches, in beginning their activities for the Freedmen, not only were entering a new field but were at the same time attempting a new work, one with which they were utterly without experience. They had no analogies to follow; there were no precedents to lead them in their task. For them, as for all of the churches that engaged in this work, it was a unique experience. The Freedmen, though emancipated, were overwhelmingly ignorant; without churches of their own, "they could not be induced to remain in the churches where they were not allowed equal privileges."¹⁰ The old ways of "evangelizing the slave" were definitely outmoded: of that there could be no possible doubt. Thus the problem of discovering the most effective approaches and of evolving a program best suited to the needs of the Freedmen became the first task of those who sought to help them. And this task was by no means a small one.

The other factor was the truly critical state of the newly-emancipated race. The picturesque language of an early report vividly describes their plight: "The rags of their heathenism are neither worn nor thrown away." Emphasizing their migratory tendencies, it avers, "our missionaries preach as to running waters." The need, though dire, is not without hope; "The whole race is now as wax." And now a warning, which is repeated again and again through the years, "If the Church of God does not give them His Gospel, the Church of Rome will give them hers!" And one can feel the moving earnestness of this appeal: "Surely there is in this sin-burdened world today no company of the perishing whose claims are more pressing or important! Unforced as they are by the thunders of His voice who has shaken the nation, and before whose footsteps of power the bands,

¹⁰ *Minutes of General Assembly (O. S.) '67*, p. 445.

forged by Christian civilization through two centuries and a half, have fallen from the hands of four millions of people, as the rain drops from the leaves of the forest before the sweep of the wind."¹⁷

STANDARDS AND POLICIES

Presbyterian emphasis upon education and Presbyterian insistence upon a thoroughly trained ministry for its churches are well nigh proverbial, and it is to the glory of both branches that they adopted at the very start this same high standard for their work among the Freedmen. Each branch had its cluster of parochial schools, a school and a church together always, and at times schools where there were no churches. Each had prepared the groundwork for secondary schools, while the Old School Committee had commenced, it will be recalled, a school for the training of ministers before 1870. As early as 1868 the Old School Committee had declared, "It is the true policy of the Church to combine, as far as practicable, both parts of the work, evangelism and education," while in 1870 the object of the work was thus stated: "To cultivate intelligence and piety among the Freedmen of the South, by planting and maintaining where they live, the church and school conjointly."¹⁸ An illustration of the Presbyterian demand for a properly trained ministry is given in the action of the Old School Assembly in 1867 when a committee was appointed "to look into the matter of the licensure and ordination of Colored men."¹⁹ Although in 1868 the committee found it "inexpedient" to report, the Assembly, in approving the erection of the first Negro synod the same year, advised the use of "great caution in licensing and ordaining Colored ministers."²⁰ Thus, as to policy from the very beginning, the Presbyterian Church consciously and definitely chose as her contribution to train the Freedmen through her churches and schools and by them to aid in the development of leaders of the race.

PROGRESS OF THE WORK FROM 1870 TO 1890

By direction of the reunited Assembly in 1870 the work of the two Committees on Freedmen was merged and placed in the hands of a new committee to be located in Pittsburgh. A proposal to consolidate the Freedmen's work with that of the Board of Home Missions came before the Assembly of 1870 and was defeated, but it was destined to be heard again. In 1874 the Assembly voted to transfer some of the activities of the Freedmen's Committee to the Board of Home Missions, the transfer to take effect in 1879, but that year the Assembly decided to place all of the work in the hands of the Freedmen's Committee. In 1888 the same transfer was again considered, but the next year the Assembly showed a decided

¹⁷ *Minutes of General Assembly (O. S.) '67*, p. 448.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, '68, p. 94; '70, p. 19, Appendix.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, '67, p. 654.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, '68, pp. 650-656.

preference for the continuance of the work without change. In the meantime the Committee had received a charter for the work and was now the Board of Missions for Freedmen.

In 1870 the newly-organized Committee on Freedmen chose E. E. Swift as chairman and A. C. McClelland as secretary. These officers had served in the Old School organization. Dr. S. C. Logan, their first secretary, resigned. One notes the kaleidoscopic rush of events: Dr. Stephen S. Mattoon begins his long and fruitful presidency at Biddle Institute. . . . Scotia Seminary, the first Presbyterian school for Negro girls, is organized by Luke Dorland. . . . The New School Presbytery of South Carolina is changed, probably because of another presbytery in the same state, to Fairfield Presbytery. . . . Mid-Macedonia Church in Georgia, under "Uncle Joe" Williams, one of the intrepid founders of Knox Presbytery, boasts of seven hundred members! . . . The president and professors at Biddle care for twenty-two churches. . . . "The Southern Evangelist," a journal for Presbyterian Freedmen, makes its entry. . . . Names begin to appear: A. A. Jones, W. H. Franklin, R. P. Wyche, each to give back more than fifty years of illustrious service. . . . It is now Biddle University instead of Institute. . . . John E. Rattley a tutor there. . . . J. P. Crawford and John Murray enter. . . . The Dilliard brothers, George and Clarence, later to become such towers of strength, begin as catechists. . . . Death ends the labors of Secretary A. C. McClelland of the Freedmen's Board, with Richard H. Allen succeeding him. . . . Solomon Porter Hood, afterwards a distinguished bishop of the A. M. E. Zion Church, is ordained by the Presbytery of Chester (Pennsylvania). . . . The eloquent Joseph C. Price, and W. H. Goler, both later presidents of Livingstone College, complete their work at Lincoln. . . . Dr. Samuel J. Fisher begins a long and illustrious career as an executive of the Freedmen's Board. . . . More names: M. J. Seabrook, and F. C. Potter. . . . J. A. Savage and H. C. Mabry and A. B. Fortune, later a noted elder, begin their varied tasks. . . . Lack of harmony noted between Lincoln University and the Freedmen's Board. . . . Dr. Dorland resigns after seventeen years at Scotia, is succeeded by D. J. Satterfield, and journeys to western North Carolina to erect another monument of service in Dorland Institute for white mountain youth. . . . Dr. E. E. Swift, long a leader of the Freedmen's Board, passes on, and is followed by one who was to become as noted, E. P. Cowan. . . . Fairfield Institute merges with Brainerd. . . . F. J. Grimke begins at Jacksonville . . . the long labors of Le Vere, the Tennessee pioneer, reach their close.

As might be expected, one finds that the years from 1870 to 1890 were marked by considerable experimentation. New methods were attempted; new features employed or adapted to the work. Students from Lincoln and Biddle were used extensively as summer teachers during the first part of this period. A distinctive feature throughout these years was the large use of licentiates and more especially that of catechists. Something as to the

manner of use of these early catechists may be informing: the usual practice was to select young aspirants to the ministry, who were without sufficient training for licensure, and to place one in charge of a church as a sort of guide or helper, but always under the supervision of an ordained minister. By this arrangement one minister might have responsibility for a number of churches, with a catechist for each church. Thus in 1874 President Mattoon and Professor Shedd of Biddle are reported to have had responsibility for ten churches between them, with a catechist for each church. In the early days when the number of churches far exceeded the available supply of regularly-ordained ministers, this method was effective, not alone in maintaining vigorous churches but also in the training of these early ministers.

Another helpful experiment of these early years was the practice of conducting presbyterial conventions at convenient centers. These conventions were in reality training schools for Presbyterian ministers, elders, and deacons, and were signally effective in the development of an informed laity and in giving prestige to the Presbyterian enterprise. Still another venture of the period was the creation of the office of field secretary for the actual supervision of the work. The first to fill this position was a white minister, Henry N. Payne; his active energies and positive influence over a long period of years contributed largely to the development of the work.

It was a time of rapid expansion. The work was early extended into Virginia, Kentucky, and Florida, and by the end of the period extensive operations had been begun in Arkansas; a school, Mary Allen, had been founded in Texas, and work started, which does not seem to have lasted, at Baxter Springs, Kansas. (It is worthy of note that this work at Baxter Springs was planted as a result of the short-lived migration of Negroes to Kansas in 1879 under Benjamin "Pop" Singleton.) The greatest expansion of the time came among the Choctaw Indians and their former slaves in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). The first presbytery west of the Mississippi River was established among them. But the old ground was by no means neglected. Churches and parochial schools sprang up plentifully, and important secondary schools: Albion Academy at Franklinton; Haines Institute (Lucy Laney) at Augusta; Swift at Rogersville; Ingleside in Virginia, and more than minor work at Beaufort and Abbeville in South Carolina, all came within this bustling, busy period.

As early as 1876, one church, unfortunately unnamed, is credited with being self-supporting, while three years later, Atlantic Synod, still the only Negro synod, voluntarily reduced the amount asked of the Freedmen's Committee for support. The next year the same synod chose a missionary to further the work within its bounds. The number of churches, communicants, parochial schools, and pupils, and the contributions from the field showed substantial growth and enlargement. In 1888 the Freedmen's

Board could boast, with a pride that was altogether understandable, that twenty new ministers, ten from Lincoln, six from Biddle and four from other sources, had that year been commissioned and sent as missionaries into the field. And it was during this latter period that there came two events that were destined to provide a mighty impulse for the development of the Freedmen's work: the organization in 1884 of the first Negro Synodical Women's Missionary Society and in 1887 the appointment of the first Sunday school missionaries for work among the Freedmen.

OF THE PIONEERS

As we approach the year 1890, it is difficult to realize that twenty-five years have passed since emancipation, nor can one readily appreciate the vast changes brought about in the race, and especially in that rather minute segment of Freedmen which had been brought under the influence of the Presbyterian Church. In 1865 the Freedmen had no churches or schools; they, especially the Old School branch, had no educated ministers or teachers. Now a line of churches and schools, beginning in Virginia, extended down the Atlantic seaboard through the Carolinas and Georgia into Florida, back again and westward over the mountains into Tennessee and Kentucky, across the mighty Mississippi into Arkansas, and on to the Indian Territory and Texas. And more, by far the greater part of the work of these fields was carried on now by Negroes who had been trained for their tasks in Presbyterian schools by Presbyterian men and women. And those who gave this blessed service and who wrought this marvelous transformation were the pioneers: white men and women who came from the North as missionaries to the Freedmen and whose coming brought light and life.

Dean Kelly Miller, himself a product of Willard Richardson's Fairfield Academy, as we have seen, pays the pioneers this eloquent tribute: "A worthier band never furnished theme or song for sage or bard. Their courage, their self-sacrificing devotion, sincerity of purpose, and purity of motive, and their unshaken faith in God, were their pass keys to the hearts of those for whom they came to labor." Mrs. L. H. Hammond, a Southern white woman, says: "They brought with them the principle of life: love. They kindled light in darkened hearts; they sent out thousands of Negroes fired with ideals of service to their race."²¹

But perhaps the most eloquent and meaningful of all tributes is revealed in the records of Presbyterian work among the Freedmen, a tribute of love and honor and of the ever-living gratitude of Freedmen to their friends. Old Logan Hall at Biddle; a Murkland and a Mattoon Church; schools such as Swift, Haines, Mary Holmes, Boggs, Mary Allen, Coulter, Richard Allen, Larimer on Edisto, Fee, for the stalwart champion of free-

²¹ Quoted by S. J. Fisher, *The Negro: An American Asset*, p. 95.

dom in Kentucky; McClelland and Rendall Presbyteries, and Le Vere Presbytery for the Negro pioneer in Tennessee. Wherever one travels through the Negro Presbyterian harvest fields of the South, one finds such precious memorials. It is but natural, though eminently fitting, that the names of generous givers of gold be signalized in bronze and stone, but the strange and beautiful fact is that even more numerous and conspicuous are the names of those who gave something, which to the Freedman was infinitely more precious and abiding. And so the Freedmen have given no monuments of stone or tablets of bronze, but to their choicest and dearest possessions: their churches and their schools; their sons and their daughters . . . they have given the names of their friends.

Chapter 3

THE DAWN OF A NEW LEADERSHIP

IN 1891 Daniel Jackson Sanders was elected president of Biddle University. This action, the most momentous in the history of the work among the Freedmen, centered upon the greatest Negro character the Presbyterian Church has known.

Daniel Jackson Sanders was born a slave in South Carolina in 1847. Apprenticed at the age of nine to learn the shoemaker's trade, he soon became a skilled workman, learning to farm also. He learned to read when he was twelve years old by puzzling out the letters of the alphabet from a copy of Webster's "Blue Back Speller" and further developed his skill by poring over old newspapers and stray leaves from discarded records. One day, a blessed day it was for him and for the race, he came upon a copy of Benjamin Franklin's "Autobiography," and, reading it, became inspired to seek a larger and fuller life. In February, 1865, he went to Chester, South Carolina, starting from his home at midnight and walking the many miles between. Something of the Franklin manner is seen in his carrying with him a bundle of clothing, his kit of shoemaker's tools, and a supply of bread and cheese.

At Chester he came under the influence of Samuel Loomis, the founder of Brainerd Institute, and the ministry became his high objective. He became a student at Brainerd and gave himself with full ardor to Christian work. It is stated that five Presbyterian churches in the vicinity of Chester owe their beginning to his active labors. In 1871 he entered Western Theological Seminary, then at Allegheny, Pennsylvania, and completed the full three-year course, taking prizes in Hebrew. Upon his graduation in 1874 he went to Wilmington, North Carolina, where, as minister of the Chestnut Street Presbyterian Church, he spent the next sixteen years, covering so full and wide an orb of distinctive service that even before 1890 his rare gifts and strong influence had become widely recognized.

As early as 1876 he had spent nine months in Scotland, speaking for the Presbyterian Freedmen's Committee, and had been instrumental in securing substantial funds for the work. At Wilmington he had been the first superintendent of Negro schools, had directed a parochial school in connection with his church, and had been influential in establishing other

churches and parochial schools in that section. He served as co-editor, with Professor J. H. Shedd of Biddle, of the first Presbyterian paper for Freedmen, and in 1877, merging it with "The Africo-American Presbyterian," which continues to this day, became its first editor and manager. He was a large factor in the erection of the first women's society of the Synods of Atlantic and of Catawba and had the unique privilege of serving at different times as Stated Clerk of both synods. Honors too had come: he was the first person to receive the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Biddle University and the first Negro to be elected a member of its Board of Trustees, while Lincoln University had conferred upon him both the degree of Master of Arts and of Doctor of Divinity. What a truly astounding series of achievements for a former slave, and all within the space of twenty fleeting years!¹

In the light of so distinguished a record it might be expected that the selection of Dr. Sanders would have been attended by the most favorable and happy circumstances. Such, however, was not the case. When the Presbyterian Freedmen's Board decided upon a Negro for the presidency of the largest and most widely known institution under its care, it undertook at the same time another bold venture. All of the professors at Biddle had hitherto been white men, with the exception of one Negro professor, George E. Davis, who had been elected two or three years before. Now the Board proposed to have a faculty of eight professors, four white and four Negro. Upon learning of this plan, three of the white professors, "for reasons satisfactory to themselves," resigned.² Only the fourth, Dr. A. P. Bissell, professor of Hebrew, remained unperturbed and continued teaching there for ten years afterwards.

It is reported that leading church papers expressed their judgment that the election of a Negro to the position was untimely. Dr. Metz states that the local newspapers roundly condemned the action and that the Southern white trustees of the school resigned. "Even the students," it is stated, "were skeptical."³ The Board, however, did not yield to adverse sentiment but remained faithful to its aims and purposes. Its position in the matter is well worth remembering with joy and gratitude. Three other Negro professors were elected and the plans went on.

It can readily be seen, nevertheless, that the first Negro president of Biddle University faced a tremendous task as he entered upon his duties in 1891. The eyes of the Presbyterian Church and of the South, Negro and white, were upon him. Upon the success of his administration depended not only his own career and that of Biddle University but the whole policy of the Church with respect to Negro leadership. Moreover, be it remembered that in 1891 in the major educational institutions of Church and

¹ From an article by E. P. Cowan, in *The Assembly Herald*, March, 1901, p. 116.

² *Minutes of General Assembly, 1892*, p. 18, Appendix.

³ *Johnson C. Smith University Bulletin*, Vol. I, No. 4, p. 15.

State no Negro leader was to be found. Booker T. Washington was later to electrify the nation with his Atlanta address, and Union, Shaw, Hampton, Lincoln, Fisk, Atlanta, and Talledega were under white leadership. Only the institutions of wholly Negro denominations, as Wilberforce and Livingstone, had Negro presidents.

Thus it is of tremendous historical significance, apart from other considerations, to find that the first Negro administration at Biddle University was an eminent success by any standard of judgment and from every point of view. Spurred by the challenge and the opportunity, Dr. Sanders and his associates labored at Biddle, ever lengthening cords, ever strengthening stakes: the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland provided a generous "African Scholarship Fund;" Carnegie agreed to give one-half of the entire cost of a library; the early adverse sentiment was soon transformed, near and far, to one of appreciation and warm encouragement.

Daniel Jackson Sanders, by his success at Biddle University, demonstrated convincingly the capability of the Negro as an administrator and his success was a vital factor in Negro progress. It was a fitting appraisal of his worth and influence that, on the occasion of his death in 1907, the General Assembly's Committee on Freedmen declared: "We have sustained no greater loss in the death of any one man since the work began."

UPWARD CLIMB OF THE WORK

As we travel through the years from 1890 towards the present day, it can readily be discovered that the patterns of policy and program had been in the main definitely established in earlier years. Variations there were, to be sure, and some of them important, but in the large the bases, which had been set at the beginning of the work among Freedmen and which had become settled as early as 1870, were closely followed. The training of ministers and leaders of the race in a system of schools and churches was ever the chief emphasis. The use of catechists was purely a temporary phase and had been rendered unnecessary because of the more nearly adequate supply of trained and ordained ministers. Thus the work continued to be erected, and extended, on the old foundations.

That a new impetus was given the work among Freedmen by the recognition of its leadership is decidedly apparent, and the decades which led over into the twentieth century were halcyon years. Scotia, still under the consecrated leadership of Dr. Satterfield, and Biddle were the apex of the educational work, though rapid advance was shown by other boarding schools. Mississippi and Alabama were entered by Mary Holmes and Barber Seminaries. A group of larger parochials came at Danville, Virginia, Danville, Kentucky, Madison, Georgia, and five places in South Carolina. McClelland and Billingsley Academies were established respectively at Newman, Georgia, and Statesville, North Carolina, while schools which

had been operated by outside enterprises, at Blackville, South Carolina, and Camp Nelson, Kentucky, were taken over.

Dark financial times at the beginning of the new century retarded the work for a time, but in 1902 enlargement came and the smaller parochial schools were strengthened and the school terms in general extended. The same year found the number of Negro Presbyterian communicants in the South exceeding 20,000 for the first time. Birmingham Presbytery, the tenth among the Freedmen, was organized with churches in Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi, the first Negro presbytery between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Great River. Dr. Payne, now resigned as field secretary and president of Mary Holmes Seminary, is the first stated clerk of the new presbytery.

An event of some significance took place in 1890, when William H. Weaver was chosen by the Freedmen's Board to act as its financial agent for Biddle University. Dr. Weaver, a Negro minister, had served as pastor of the Madison Street Presbyterian Church in Baltimore for sixteen years prior to his appointment. There is a considerable impression extant that Dr. Weaver succeeded Dr. H. N. Payne as field secretary. It is true that he was appointed the year of Dr. Payne's retirement but he was definitely assigned to the work of visiting the Northern white churches in the effort to secure funds for Biddle University. Lantern slides were later made for him and were used in connection with these visits. Further, in 1900, while Dr. Weaver was still employed, Dr. J. P. E. Kumler was chosen as field secretary by the Freedmen's Board. While it may be true that Dr. Weaver was given authority to act in a supervisory capacity for a time, it must be said that the report of his serving as field secretary is without verification.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MISSIONARIES

The impulse and energy engendered by the Sunday school missionaries have added immeasurably in numbers, strength, and influence to the work of the Presbyterian Church among the Freedmen. Starting in 1887 with two missionaries, the number was increased to eight by 1900, and to twelve by 1908. They were true Christian crusaders: hardy, daring, tireless, abounding with zeal for the work of the Lord. Of but few we shall write: George T. Dillard, the first to be chosen, great of voice and body, as great in mind and spirit, whose winsome ministry rescued hundreds in the lowlands of South Carolina, who afterwards became the first superintendent of Negro missionaries, serving many years. L. P. Berry, known afar as "Colonel" Berry; whose title was bestowed for meritorious service during the Spanish-American War; one of the early graduates of Biddle under Mattoon, who forewent the prospect of a bright law career to engage in his Master's service; who was probably the best known and loved of all the missionaries; who labored through North Carolina, Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee; of whom it was reported in 1900 that nineteen

churches had developed from mission Sunday schools organized by him in the space of seven years; who served continuously as a ruling elder for more than fifty years.

There were those like William H. Jackson, who labored memorably in North Carolina, and like the never-to-be-forgotten A. A. Adair, who died in the performance of duty. But the record would be far from complete without the name of Albert B. McCoy. Himself the fruit of missionary endeavor, who upon the completion of his education entered with full ardor into this service and for more than a quarter of a century has rendered conspicuous service to the Church and the race, Dr. McCoy has been the director of Negro Sunday school missions more than fifteen years.

PUBLICITY FOR FREEDMEN

Fortunate for the Church, doubly fortunate for the Freedmen's cause, was the absorbing devotion with which the men and women chosen to administer the work among the Freedmen addressed themselves to their great task. The Women's Department, organized in 1884 with Mrs. C. E. Coulter as general secretary, gave tremendous strength to the work. Churches and Sunday schools were kept aware of the needs of the Freedmen and gifts for specific objects were constantly sought. The activities of Miss Mary Holmes, Ph.D., of Illinois, were particularly outstanding. Serving without pay as secretary of the Northwest, for years Miss Holmes visited churches throughout the Middle West. Because of her rare devotion and unceasing endeavors, even during her life time the Mary Holmes Seminary was named in her honor. In 1896 Dr. Payne had an exhibit of Presbyterian work at the Atlanta Exposition, while the General Assembly at Philadelphia in 1900 was the occasion of an elaborate portrayal of activities among the Freedmen. During the long careers of E. P. Cowan and S. J. Fisher of the Freedmen's Board, publicity began to flower in behalf of the Negro. Their eloquent voices were rarely silent. That able leader of Sunday school missions, Dr. James A. Worden, and his beloved successor, Dr. Alexander Henry, spoke freely also for the Freedmen. The annual reports of Freedmen's work to the General Assembly, while perhaps holding unduly to a rather stereotyped groove, nevertheless had in them the note of sincerity and of earnest, urgent appeal.

In other church publications, however, articles were fresher, had greater variety, and were far more interesting. Pictures were often reproduced. In the Assembly Herald of 1904 are two pictures which give a striking contrast: one shows a Negro woman nursing a white child; the other, a ragged Negro boy and his baby sister. The titles tell the story. Under the first picture it says, "Tenderly cared for;" under the second are the words, "Left pretty much to themselves." The Assembly Herald of 1905 presents very able articles by both Dr. Cowan and Dr. Fisher. In 1907 Dr. Fisher's notable book, "The Negro: An American Asset," appeared. This was prob-

ably the first book on the American Negro to be written from the sympathetic background of the Presbyterian Church. Interesting, informing, it added much strength to the Negro cause wherever it was read.

Contributions from Negro Presbyterians too are occasionally found. Both W. H. Franklin and J. W. Holley have interesting articles in the *Assembly Herald* of June, 1908. Items of interest . . . notable achievements . . . bits of history . . . plans and changes of policies, all were sent out through the medium of Presbyterian papers to Presbyterian homes, with the earnest determination to make a way into Presbyterian hearts. And always, ever sounding, ever insistent was the appeal, and the note of urgency; always the iteration, "There is much land to be possessed" . . . "The fields are white and ready to harvest."

BENEFACTORS

A study of the record of the contributions made by the Church through the years to the maintenance of its work among the Freedmen reveals that it has given, as Herman C. Weber puts it, "very moderate support." And Dr. Weber very moderately describes it. The fact can well be stated here that had the work among the Freedmen been dependent solely upon the current gifts of the Church for its enlargement, as well as for its maintenance, much of the advance and progress would never have been made. That development has come quite beyond the proportionate measure of the gifts of the Church is due to that mysterious, and yet blessed quality so gloriously common to Presbyterians (we found it before in Presbyterian solicitude for the slaves): that warmth of personal interest which makes them, as individuals, rise far superior to the current levels of their Church.

There are examples like Matthew Scott of Ohio, who, though giving the first money for a building at Scotia Seminary, "was too modest to have his name attached to the school." Scotia was then named for his native land. Or Miss Laura Carter of Geneva, New York, for whom the capacious Carter Hall at Johnson C. Smith University was named. McGregor Hall at Haines was the gift of one person, as was the chapel at Scotia. Property was given by Miss Bertha L. Ahrens for Alice Lee Elliott Academy in Oklahoma; valuable land came to Johnson C. Smith from the daughters of Dr. Mattoon, and the daughter of Dr. Kumler gave a boys' dormitory to Brainerd Institute. A unique gift of this type came from a Negro and a former slave, Andrew Ferguson. Ferguson, after slavery's end, being industrious and thrifty, had saved up several thousands of dollars and, from a deep devotion to his Church and his race, gave of his savings to establish a modest Negro church in Louisville, Kentucky, which today bears his name.

⁴ Herman C. Weber, *Statistics of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.*, p. 136.

⁵ *Assembly Herald*, 1900, p. 782.

At times groups have united in their gifts. The beautifully-named Faith Hall at Scotia is the gift of the Home Missionary Society of Cincinnati, Ohio; Mary Holmes Seminary, it is reported, is the expression of gratitude of the people of the Middle West for the devotion of Miss Mary Holmes. It is interesting to find that Southern communities shared in the work also: the citizens of Crockett, Texas, donated a part of the land for Mary Allen, while the citizens of West Point, Mississippi, did likewise for Mary Holmes Seminary; land for a church at Decatur, Georgia, was given by the white citizens of the place, and a school at Chattanooga, Tennessee, was greatly aided by local friends. In the earlier days, around 1870, gifts to the work were received from the Freedmen's Bureau, although most of these funds went elsewhere. The Slater Fund later aided Biddle and a few other schools.

Beyond all doubt, however, the most generous benefactors through all of the early years were the Harbisons and Mrs. P. H. Barber, both of Pennsylvania. The Harbisons were largely interested in a single project, a school, first for boys in South Carolina, while Mrs. Barber's ardent interest and support were centered upon a school for girls in Alabama. In each case faith was sorely tried. The worst disaster the Freedmen's work has known came on March 17, 1910, when a boys' dormitory was destroyed by an incendiary fire, in which three students perished. But the interest of the Harbisons did not diminish; the school was moved to another section of the state, and an even better plant was provided by their substantial generosity, which still continues. Twice has Barber Seminary been burned to the ground, and each time another and better building has come. Mrs. Barber has erected in all three commodious buildings on the same spot, a truly noble hill in Anniston, Alabama, in an even more noble determination to establish a college for Negro girls.

The largest givers to Freedmen's work, their generosity converging on Biddle University, beginning in 1922, were Mrs. Johnson C. Smith of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and James B. Duke of Charlotte, North Carolina. Their beneficence, amounting to more than two million dollars, enabled that historic institution to expand far beyond the most roseate fancies of its founders. In gratitude for Mrs. Smith's benefactions the name of the school was changed to Johnson C. Smith University. Its respected leader, Dr. H. L. McCrorey, points out an interesting item: the first gifts, which made the school possible, came from Mrs. Mary D. Biddle of Philadelphia, who gave the money for the first building, and from Colonel William R. Myers of Charlotte, who gave the first land. Thus it is that Northern and Southern benevolence have been gloriously blended in the life of this great work.⁶

⁶ *Bulletin, Johnson C. Smith University*, Vol. I, No. 4, p. 23.

INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION AND FARM HOME PROJECTS

Mention was made earlier of important variations from the established pattern of Presbyterian Freedmen's work. One of these was an intermittent emphasis upon industrial education. As early as 1884 an industrial department was reported at Scotia, while the same year Brainerd boasted of both industrial and agricultural departments. By 1889 considerable emphasis is given it; the next year it is made a special feature, and in 1902, together with the story of such a building at Biddle, comes the proud announcement that "industrial education is taught in all of our schools." But the tide soon begins to ebb and after 1910 little is heard of industrial education except at Harbison, where attempts appear to have been continued.

Another variation, the Farm Home Plan, is of much more potential importance because of its large social and economic possibilities: the Board to procure a large tract of land suitable for farming, to divide it into smaller holdings and sell these on convenient terms to industrious and ambitious Negro farmers. Three projects of this kind have been attempted: at Anderson, South Carolina, in 1904; at Keysville, Georgia, in 1911, while the largest and most recent came in 1920, when the Harbison estate purchased 2,402 acres (later increased to 4,000 acres) in the vicinity of Harbison Institute at Irmo, South Carolina. The land was to be divided into parcels of twenty-five acres and sold. No definite report is available as to the outcome of these projects. It can readily be realized that their full development might easily lead into activities with which staid church agencies do not commonly consort, yet in the light of the rich potentialities such a plan is interesting, to say the very least.

STEPS OF PROGRESS

We have noted that at the beginning of the century the Presbytery of Birmingham was organized. While this presbytery covered a wide area, including the western portion of Tennessee, the churches in the eastern section, in which considerable Presbyterian strength had been gathered, were still united with white presbyteries. Following the action of the Church in 1905, when constitutional sanction was given to a separation of church courts by race, the relations between white and Negro members grew more and more distant, and it was made unmistakably clear that the Negro ministers and their churches were no longer welcome. Because of this condition, other Negro presbyteries were formed, and on October 25, 1907, the Synod of East Tennessee was erected, with three presbyteries, thirty-five churches, twenty-eight ministers and 1,459 members. The synod covered all of Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi, and parts of North Carolina and Virginia. The first moderator, Dr. W. H. Franklin, made clear the reason for the action: "It was the carrying out of the color line

which was demanded . . . no other alternative was left for the Colored churches and presbyteries.”⁷

(The action of the Presbyterian Church in 1905, to which reference was made, is of such significance as to demand further attention. Beginning about 1900, or even before, the question of race relationships in presbyteries and synods gave rise to considerable discussion, especially in the Southern part of the Church. The law of the Church then prohibited the existence of more than one presbytery or synod within the same territorial bounds; consequently all Presbyterian ministers and churches in the same territory were members of the same presbytery and synod without respect to race. There was a strong desire on the part of Southern presbyteries for a change in this law and agitation continued to increase until in 1903 the Assembly appointed a “Special Committee on Territorial Limits of Presbyteries” to study the whole matter and report to the next Assembly. Overtures, which had previously been presented to the Assembly from the Synod of Tennessee and from the Presbyteries of Hannibal, Holston, Kansas City, Kingston, North Texas, St. Louis, and Union, were turned over to the committee. These overtures all urged that the rule be rescinded, but the Presbytery of Cimarron, in the then Indian Territory, proposed that a separate African (or Negro) Presbyterian Church be organized. The Special Committee reported in 1904, recommending an overture which provided that “in exceptional cases a Presbytery may be organized within the boundaries of existing Presbyteries, in the interests of ministers and churches speaking other than the English language, or of those of a particular race; but in no case without their consent; and the same rule shall apply to Synods.”⁸ This overture was sent down to the presbyteries of the Church, and was by a sufficient number affirmed, so that, in 1905, it became the law of the Presbyterian Church.)

“West of the Father of Waters” the Rendall Presbytery was organized the same year, and shortly thereafter the last Negro synod, Canadian, came into existence. The list of synods now was complete, and largely that of the presbyteries. The Canadian Synod covered Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas (but with only a few small churches in Texas then and now). In churches, ministers, and members Canadian Synod was the smallest of the four Negro synods.

The vigor with which the Sunday school missionaries explored and conquered new territory for the Church was strongly carried over into the Sunday school work of the organized churches. As a result of their zeal, synods, presbyteries, and churches, and Negro Presbyterians as a group began to be Sunday school conscious, and commenced with enthusiasm and energy the development that has made the Negro Presbyterian Sunday school work the acknowledged leader of all Negro church groups. The

⁷ *The Assembly Herald*, 1908, p. 135.

⁸ *Minutes of General Assembly*, 1904, pp. 141-147.

Sunday school conventions of district and presbytery which grew up during the first decade of the new century and which reached their full flowering in the great synodical conventions of Atlantic and Catawba, were mighty and thrilling assemblages, which engendered incalculable vitality and power for Presbyterian enterprise.

Nor should it be thought that the women were silent. Long before, the synodical groups of missionary societies had pledged \$1,500 to the work, and had kept their pledge. Now, immediately upon the organization of each presbytery or synod, a women's society would speedily follow, ready to engage in helpful service. In 1911 another advance movement was taken by the Freedmen's Board when James J. Wilson, an able and eloquent minister, was appointed by the Board as an evangelist. So greatly in demand and so productive of good were Dr. Wilson's labors, that the Board appointed another evangelist, Dr. James M. Ewing, whose services were equally effective.

A CONSTANT EMPHASIS

"The Bible and the Shorter Catechism." In reports, articles, and exhibits, almost everywhere, almost always, one finds this phrase. At the beginning, it was there; and it would not be greatly surprising to find it in last year's report. Through all the years it has been emphasized over and over again. Possibly until quite recently at Scotia a knowledge of the Shorter Catechism, in toto and verbatim, was essential to graduation. In all of the schools for Freedmen, the reports stress, it was meticulously taught. Perhaps the only variation was found in Chattanooga: there the children sang it! An example may be interesting: one of the features of the commencement exercises of Biddle University in 1905 was a Shorter Catechism contest between the students of the College and those of the Theological Seminary. Truly, the living foundation stones of Presbyterian work among the Freedmen have been "The Bible and the Shorter Catechism."

THE WORKERS' CONFERENCE; COUNCIL IN THE NORTH

In 1910 John M. Gaston entered the Presbyterian work among the Freedmen as associate secretary of the Board. Dr. Gaston, fresh from an important pastorate in Pittsburgh, became an active co-laborer with the valiant veterans, Dr. Cowan and Dr. Fisher, sharing their ardent devotion to the cause, a devotion and a service which in him the years have but deepened and enlarged. Three years later at his call a small group of Negro ministers and lay workers from the field gathered at Chattanooga to begin what has developed year by year into the annual Presbyterian Workers' Conference, probably the most important force in Negro Presbyterian work today. Hundreds gather for its sessions, and the problems of the work of the Church in the large and everyday procedures in community, church, and school are ably presented and thoroughly considered.

Besides serving as a bond for the Negro forces scattered throughout the Southland, it has helped increasingly in later years to bring the Negro work into a closer and mutually appreciative understanding with the other phases of Presbyterian activity.

The Afro-American Council, made up of Negro Presbyterian workers in the North, was organized during the same period. While built along the same general lines as the Workers' Conference, it deviates sharply in that it formulates and executes its entire program and activities. The number of its members and supporters, in proportion to the churches North and West, is probably not large, yet doubtless it serves very helpfully to unify its cooperating churches.

THE NEGRO MIGRATION

Some day the epic of the exodus of the Negro from the country of his fathers will be written. It should be as dramatic as the story of the flight of the Israelites out of Egypt. Who shall sing the story of the flight from Hattiesburgh, Mississippi? How the marvels of the North fired the imaginations of the black dwellers in alleys and on farms. How the flame of enthusiasm grew until it swept through the church meeting and carried the minister along with it, a black Moses to lead the way with his children. How the day was set for the disposal of possessions and what a pitiful price was received for beds and chairs and cherished household goods. How trains were boarded and crowded to suffocation. How, through all the discomfort, there burned the glorious hope of a great deliverance, of a land ahead overflowing with milk and honey. How, the Ohio river crossed, men and women got out, kissed the ground and returned to the train, to sing of "Beulah Land." How, Chicago reached at last, the townfolk clung together, took possession of four blocks, opened their church again, and brought Mississippi en masse to Chicago's South Side. The Negro poet has yet to come who shall recite this song.⁹

The vivid picture of Miss Ovington is itself an epic. As to the migration itself, space limitations prevent more than the bare presentation of the factual background and its direct connection with the extension of Negro Presbyterian work in the North and Middle West. The two tables which follow will demonstrate this:

TABLE I. *Showing the states and sections in which the Negro population most greatly increased, and rate of increase, between 1910-1930. In order to present a clearer picture, only those states which show an increase of at least 25 per cent in one of the two ten-year periods have been included.*

NEGRO POPULATION INCREASE PER CENT		
State	1910-20	1920-30
Connecticut	38.7	39.5
New York	47.9	108.0
New Jersey	30.5	78.3
Pennsylvania	46.7	51.5
Ohio	67.1	66.1
Indiana	34.0	38.6

⁹ Mary White Ovington, *Portraits in Color*, pp. 142, 143.

<i>State</i>	<i>1910-20</i>	<i>1920-30</i>
Illinois	67.1	80.5
Michigan	251.0	182.0
Wisconsin	79.3	106.5
Missouri	13.2	25.6
Florida	6.7	31.1
West Virginia	34.6	33.1
California	79.1	109.1

The table reveals that the heaviest rate of increase occurred in the Middle Atlantic States, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; and in the North Central States, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and that the rise in the rate of California was particularly impressive.

TABLE II. *Showing the churches organized in the North and West between 1914-31 and their locations.*

<i>State</i>	<i>City or Town</i>	<i>Name of Church</i>
New York	Long Island	Bethel
	New York City	Rendall
	Rochester	Trinity
New Jersey	Newark	Hill Chapel
	Atlantic City	Jethro
	Asbury Park	Calvary
	Bloomfield	Trinity
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	Reeve Memorial
	Pittsburgh	Bidwell Street
	Pittsburgh	Bethesda
Maryland	Baltimore	Knox
District of Columbia	Washington	Mt. Tabor
Michigan	Detroit	St. John's
Massachusetts	Roxbury	Gloucester Memorial
Ohio	Cleveland	St. Mark's
	Youngstown	St. Stephen's
	Toledo	Grace
Indiana	Indianapolis	St. Paul
	Gary	Grace
Missouri	Springfield	Gibson's Chapel
	Kansas City	St. Paul
Nebraska	Omaha	Hillside
West Virginia	Bluefield	Edwards Memorial
	Keystone	Whittico Memorial

Of the twenty-four churches listed as having been organized between 1914 and 1931, twenty are found in states which are revealed by Table I as receiving the highest rate of increase in Negro population. More-

over, sixteen of these twenty churches are found in the two sections which show the highest rate: the Middle Atlantic and the East North-Central. (It is possible that this number of churches may be even higher, for the list does not include the State of Illinois, in which several churches have since been organized.) Thus, it may be definitely seen that the increase in Presbyterian membership in the North was due, in a very large measure, to the migration.

Further, the influence of the migration is plainly seen in the large increase in membership of the Negro Presbyterian churches in the North which were in existence prior to 1914. The St. James Church of New York City alone recorded an increase of more than 1,200 members; the church in Newark gained almost 500, while established churches in Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, and other cities all showed substantial gains. In 1914, twenty-four Negro Presbyterian Churches in the North had a total membership of 2,958, while in 1931 the combined membership of these same churches had increased to 7,186.

Another positive factor in the growth and development of the Northern work during this period was the appointment in 1917 of John W. Lee, a Negro minister of long experience in the Northern work, as organizer in the North. Dr. Lee was greatly successful in his endeavors, gathering many congregations and organizing them into churches. In 1925 it was reported that he had organized twenty-five churches since his appointment in 1917.

CHANGES

Dr. E. P. Cowan, after thirty-five years of illustrious service, passes on. . . . Dr. J. M. Gaston assumes full charge as secretary of the Freedmen's Board. . . . Mrs. W. P. Larimer, Mrs. Agnes Bell Snively, Miss Roberta Barr and Miss Maud A. Kinniburgh compose the staff of the Women's Department of the Board. . . . The year of 1923 comes, and with it the last report of the Board of Missions for Freedmen before the merger of its work with the new Board of National Missions.

The last report of the old Freedmen's Board well served to present the growth and extension of the work through the years. As to area, Presbyterian Freedmen's work was found in all of the South Atlantic states from Virginia southward; all of the East South-Central states and in all of the West South-Central states, with the sole exception of Louisiana. In all, twelve states, commonly classified as Southern, had Presbyterian churches or schools. These states follow:

Virginia	Florida	Mississippi
North Carolina	Kentucky	Arkansas
South Carolina	Tennessee	Oklahoma
Georgia	Alabama	Texas

Moreover, in 1914 all of the Negro work in the other sections of the country was placed under the care of the Freedmen's Board, this action referring to the aided churches only. Even before the increase in numbers due to the migration had been fully felt, there were Negro Presbyterian churches scattered through eleven Northern and Western synods. The names of these synods, which will indicate the distribution of the Northern and Western work, are here given:

New York	Maryland	Minnesota
New Jersey	Indiana	Colorado
Pennsylvania	Illinois	California
Ohio	Kansas	

(The report of 1915 indicated that there were thirty-five Negro Presbyterian churches in these synods at that time.)

The work in the South was carried on in four synods and sixteen presbyteries; there were 260 ministers, 460 churches and missions, with 26,964 communicants. Four hundred fifteen Sunday schools and 24,177 pupils; 137 day schools, 476 teachers, and 18,487 pupils.

There were two boarding schools for males; five for females, while twenty were co-educational; all of the rest of the schools were parochial schools.

Johnson C. Smith University had just begun to expand and was more than ever the capstone of the Freedmen's educational work, while Scotia still led in schools for women.

Chapter 4

PRESENT-DAY WORK AMONG NEGROES

THE MERGER OF THE BOARDS

IN 1922, by authority of the General Assembly, steps were taken to consolidate the activities and the thirteen Boards and agencies of the Presbyterian Church into four great Boards. The consummation of this work, the most far-reaching and important in the history of the Church, took place by the end of 1923, and in 1924 the new Boards, National Missions, Foreign Missions, Christian Education, and Pensions, submitted their first reports to the General Assembly. The new Board of National Missions combined seven of these agencies, including, of greatest significance for this study, the Board of Missions for Freedmen.

It has been pointed out before that the question of uniting the Freedmen's work of the Church with the other Home Missions activities had come before the Assembly in 1870, 1874, and 1878, and again in 1888 and 1889. It is evident that through these years, and after, as well, there were those who sought to center all of the phases of Presbyterian Home Missions into one united enterprise, while there were others who as stoutly maintained that the various units of missionary service, and especially the Freedmen's work, should be kept and administered separately. One finds a suggestive analogy between these views and those of Hamilton and Jefferson with respect to the Federal Government. While it may be said that each view affords abundant ground for opinion, the action of the Assembly decided the matter, though it may not have silenced the discussion.

Under the Board of National Missions the Freedmen's work became first the Division, then the Unit of Work for Colored People, with Dr. J. M. Gaston continuing through these changes as secretary. Although most of the administrative activities of the Board have been centered in New York, the Pittsburgh office remains, as it has been since 1866, the headquarters of Presbyterian work among Negroes.

We take a glimpse at the work through the immediately ensuing years: Dr. Lee is still organizing churches in the North and Mid-West . . . the New Era Movement and the elevation of C. J. Baker from a successful pastorate in Birmingham, Alabama, to the field secretaryship for the four Negro synods, give fresh energy and spirit . . . a magnificent attempt to establish a college for Negro girls at Anniston, with the capable Miss

Maud A. Kinniburgh, formerly of the staff of the Freedmen's Board, as the guiding spirit . . . W. H. Franklin and Calvin M. Young, able veteran educators, give up their labors . . . J. D. Martin succeeds J. S. Marquis at Brainerd . . . youth begins to march as A. H. George, F. C. Shirley, A. H. Prince, and T. B. Hargrave press to the fore . . . the noble Lucy Laney sleeps in the place she loved and so greatly served . . . Savage and Dillard and Berry and Shaw—what an illustrious company!—finish their course.

CONFERENCES ON NEGRO WORK

The influence of two conferences held in 1931 is of such large importance that the year might well be viewed as marking a new period in Presbyterian work among Negroes. These conferences were called, one in the North and the other in the South, by a committee of the Board of National Missions that had been requested by the General Council to make a study of its Negro work. The membership of each conference was composed of the Board's committee and a selected group of representatives of each field and sphere of service. The Southern group had, in addition, Dr. Arthur D. Wright, President of the Jeanes and Slater Funds and Executive of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and two representatives of these agencies. In that Negro Presbyterian work in the Northern states is related almost wholly to church activity, the Northern conference confined itself to a consideration of churches and of ways for their development. The Southern conference, with its vastly enlarged scope, considered the entire program of the Church and the educational and Sunday school mission activities of the Board throughout the four Negro Synods. Because of the extraordinary bearing of the conclusions of this conference upon subsequent procedure, a review of its actions will be helpful.

Negro Presbyterian Churches in 1931. When the membership figures of the Southern churches and Sunday schools were presented, the disquieting fact was revealed that there had occurred, over a fifteen-year period, a net loss of 3,153 church members and a Sunday school loss of 3,112 members. Moreover, there were four fewer churches than in 1916. The following table pictures it:

	1916	1931	Net Loss
Number of Churches	414	410	4
Church Membership	26,034	22,081	3,153, or 12.1%
Sunday School Membership	22,972	19,860	3,112, or 13.5%

(We shall present later membership figures extending over a longer period.)

Various factors were proposed as contributing causes: (a) the migration from the South to the North, (b) the shift from country to city within the South, (c) the continuous shift in population from one rural section

to another, and (d) the absence of strong churches in all of the cities of the South. A standard church program was proposed, to be based on the following elements:

1. A service of worship and Sunday school every Sunday.
2. Some form of suitable community service.
3. Systematic pastoral visitation.
4. A vacation Bible school and weekday religious instruction.
5. The development of local financial support, including an every member canvass and the support of the benevolence budget.

Other recommendations were: a more effective re-grouping of the churches, the provision of manses so that a minister might live on his field, a minimum salary limit with the insistence that a minister devote his full time to his work.

Negro Presbyterian Schools in 1931. One hundred three boarding and day schools in the South were reported as being supported by the Board of National Missions. The list, with the distribution of these schools by state and type, follows:

	<i>Day Schools</i>	<i>Boarding Schools</i>
Virginia	12	1
North Carolina	9	5
South Carolina	34	6
Georgia	10	4
Florida	2	0
Alabama	2	1
Mississippi	0	1
Arkansas	1	4
Oklahoma	3	1
Texas	0	1
Tennessee	3	1
Kentucky	0	2
	—	—
Totals	76	27

That the South has experienced "a very great development in the public school system for Negroes" was clearly revealed. It was estimated that there are about two hundred state accredited high schools in the South for Negroes, North Carolina alone having ninety-eight. However, it was brought out that twenty-five per cent of the Negro population of the South live in counties which have not any Negro high schools. Better teachers and longer terms contribute to the marked progress made in elementary education. A comparison of church schools with public schools with respect to educational standards brought out the fact that as to the general quality of their influence the church schools lead but that in elementary school work the public schools are generally superior.

Dr. Arthur D. Wright, in emphasizing the need for fewer and better schools, stated that "there are more Colored schools now than the available resources can adequately support." An important conclusion of the conference was that day schools be discontinued in all sections where the state, city, or county has made provision for the elementary training of Negro children. Some form of community service was proposed to serve as a substitute program. The establishment of a standard college for Negro women was urged.

Presbyterian Sunday School Missions among Negroes. The general development of the South has served to lessen the need for as much pioneer extension as in past years. While there is still much religious destitution, there are not so many "lost communities" as formerly. It was stated that the increasing need of the present is to "emphasize the development of the Sunday schools attached to the churches."

Thus the Conference of 1931 served to provide a full and graphic picture of the Negro work in the South as a whole, unrestricted by presbyterial or synodical boundaries or differences in types of service. It served as well to adopt definite standards and objectives from experience and united judgment. Most of all, it gave opportunity, never before experienced, for Negro Presbyterians to participate in planning for the development of a mutual enterprise and prepared the way for fuller cooperation.

The next year, 1932, began the clearly-foreshadowed reduction in the number of schools. During the year over forty per cent of all the schools, or in actual numbers forty-one schools, were either cut off or consolidated with others. In 1933, thirty-nine schools were closed. The result was that in two years seventy per cent of the schools that had been in operation in 1931 had been closed. There were left in operation a total of fifteen boarding schools and eight day schools. While the closing of some of these schools was fully in harmony with the principles enunciated in 1931, there can be no doubt that the continued shrinkage of operating funds materially hastened the action.

The National Missions Manual was put into effect in 1933, and as its standards of service are basically authoritative for all of the churches which receive aid from the Board of National Missions, it should serve to bring the Negro work, ministers, and churches, to higher levels of efficiency. While the time of operation under the Manual has been altogether too brief for a complete appraisal, there are unmistakable indications of its quickening influence.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Schools of Methods. A mighty force swept through the Negro synods in the early twenties in the Schools of Methods. Possessing much of the dash and fire of the Sunday school conventions of former years, they were designed to provide a fuller training in Sunday school and church methods,

as well as to quicken the life of the church. They were usually held for a week in each of the Negro synods. The teachers of these Schools of Methods were recruited in the main from the ministers and lay workers of the local churches, while the Sunday school missionaries, under the energetic leadership of Dr. A. B. McCoy, were active in promotion and guidance. From these larger schools smaller units, or Junior Schools of Methods, have been organized in recent years in many of the presbyteries. To Dr. J. M. Somerndike, Secretary of the Unit of Sunday School Missions, is due the distinction of originating these Schools of Methods, and to his enthusiasm and support much of their success can be attributed.

One of the major emphases in recent years has been the work for young people. In this work, too, Sunday school missionaries have taken an important place in organizing and developing a suitable program. Groups within the bounds of presbyteries have been formed into Young People's Leagues, and the Schools of Methods are being very largely developed now as young people's conferences. The influence of the Interboard Commission on National Missions and Christian Education has been particularly effective in bringing to these Leagues and conferences the resources of materials and experience of both Boards.

Johnson C. Smith University. It is now time to tell of the very significant advance made by this institution in recent years. On the death of Dr. D. J. Sanders in 1907, Henry Lawrence McCrorey was elected to the presidency of the then Biddle University. His life story, too, is interesting. Born in South Carolina, he learned from his mother the Catechism and a few hymns, and was privileged to attend school from the ages of ten to sixteen years, but only about one month in each year. Of his own early efforts and struggles let Dr. McCrorey himself tell: "The first money I ever possessed was fifty cents which I spent for an arithmetic, and studied during the next six years, mostly at night, after a hard day's work, without a teacher, with a poor light and scarcely elbow room, for there were twelve of us around one fireside—father, mother, and ten children." Entering the preparatory department of Biddle University at the age of twenty-three, he passed through to the college and seminary, graduating in 1895. He later attended the University of Chicago and studied Hebrew under Dr. Harper. Even before his graduation he had served as an assistant instructor, and in 1895 he began, first as a teacher, then as dean of the theological department, and then as president, a career which now has extended beyond two score years of faithful, meritorious service.

Brief reference has already been made of the magnificent gifts received by the institution, but the story merits fuller attention. Between 1921 and 1929 Mrs. Johnson C. Smith of Pittsburgh donated to the school a total of \$702,500 for endowment, buildings, and equipment. In recognition of her generosity the name of the school was changed in 1923 to Johnson C. Smith University. In 1924 James B. Duke, a distinguished capitalist of

Charlotte, gave to the University an endowment estimated at \$1,300,000. This is said to be probably "the largest single gift ever made to a Negro institution." These magnificent gifts have effected the utter transformation, within the space of a single decade, of a minor, desperately-struggling school into one of the very finest and foremost Negro colleges in America and has afforded it membership in the highest educational councils and associations.

A step of historic moment was taken in 1932 when there was affiliated with Johnson C. Smith University, Barber-Scotia Junior College. Barber-Scotia Junior College was brought about earlier in the same year by the transfer of the college activities of Barber College for Women at Anniston, Alabama, to Scotia Seminary at Concord, North Carolina. A touch of beautiful significance may be perceived in the erection of Barber-Scotia Junior College, even in the name. In it have been preserved the precious traditions of "Old Scotia," known and revered among Negro women throughout the land, and those of Barber, that radiant memorial to a glorious example of true womanhood, Mrs. Phineas M. Barber, fearless, yet faithful, dauntless, and yet devoted to her noble purpose to establish a college for Negro girls. It is fitting that both names are there. L. S. Cozart, splendidly trained and with large educational experience, serves the important post of dean.

Lincoln University. While it may appear that a consideration of Lincoln is beyond the scope of this study in that Lincoln is not sponsored officially by the Board of National Missions, the great weight of its influence since its beginning has been preponderantly Presbyterian. All of its presidents and most, if not all, of its teachers have been Presbyterians. Too, the theological school of Lincoln is under the direction of the General Assembly. We have traced the beginnings of Ashmun Institute, the progenitor of Lincoln, from the impelling desire in the mind of its founder, John Miller Dickey, through the actual beginning of its work to the point at which, after the death of "the Great Emancipator," the school took the name of the martyred President. From 1865 far over into our own day, even until 1924, much of the growth and progress of Lincoln was entwined about one name, Rendall, for it is true that the noted "Rendall dynasty," uncle and nephew, guided the affairs of Lincoln University for fifty-nine years!

The coming of Isaac Norton Rendall to the presidency of Lincoln in 1865 accomplished two very fortunate things, immediate in effect: John Miller Dickey was able to give his energies to the great task of securing funds for the maintenance of the work, while Dr. Rendall could devote his entire time to the scholastic side. Forty full years did the elder Rendall serve Lincoln; upon his retirement in 1905, his nephew, whom he had trained for the task, took his place. John B. Rendall gave fifty-four years there, and teeming, telling years they were, nineteen of which were spent

as president. William Hallock Johnson, Professor of Greek at Lincoln since 1903, followed Dr. Rendall, being elected in 1926. His retirement took place during the present year, 1936, and he was followed by the greatly beloved veteran Professor of Mathematics, Dr. Walter L. Wright. In that they will serve to give light on the present-day period we shall present some of the achievements of Lincoln during Dr. Johnson's term of service.

During the ten-year period Lincoln received nearly one million dollars in gifts and legacies, one-half of which went for endowment and the remainder for new buildings and current expenses. Among these new buildings is a magnificent dormitory, said to be one of the finest in Negro colleges. It is interesting to discover the source of those gifts: two Foundations, the General Education Board and the Rosenwald Fund were responsible for \$500,000 between them; the Delaware School Foundation; and the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The Presbyterian Board of Christian Education contributed an unnamed amount; the alumni of the school gave \$40,000.

In view of the fact that since its founding the president, professors, and trustees of Lincoln have always been white men, it is of moment to record that in the last ten years three Negroes have been made trustees, while one has been chosen as full professor. Another fact of even greater interest to Presbyterians is the appointment of Frank T. Wilson, who had performed a notable service as Young Men's Christian Association executive, son of Dr. James J. Wilson, who was mentioned as an evangelist earlier in these pages, as dean of men at Lincoln.

The conclusions of various studies made recently afford full basis for the judgment of the United States Bureau of Education, given in its "Survey of Negro Colleges and Universities": Of Lincoln it is said, "The institution for many years has been a strong factor in the development of leadership in the Negro race, and many of its graduates are churchmen, educators and professors, men who have achieved prominence in their chosen fields." It may be observed that of the persons holding undergraduate degrees in "Who's Who in Colored America" more are graduates from Lincoln than from any other school, while a study sponsored by the General Educational Board shows that of the Negro ministers who have bachelor's degrees more than one-third were trained at Lincoln.

Coulter Academy. This is one of the outstanding Negro Presbyterian schools of this period. Named for Mrs. C. E. Coulter, the first secretary of the Women's Department of the Freedmen's Board, Coulter was founded and has been directed for more than twenty-five years by the able George W. Long. Located at Cheraw, South Carolina, it is co-educational and serves a wide area in which there is a large Negro population. Coulter is accredited by the state. The students of Coulter are trained in a varied type of community service, manual, and domestic arts, while there is a

farm for experimental purposes. In the class room, a high type of scholastic work is maintained.

Mary Allen Junior College. The first Negro Presbyterian institution to be rated in class "A" by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Mary Allen, under Byrd R. Smith, its first Negro president, is notable as well for the rare business acumen of its executive. Situated in Crockett, Texas, it is said to dominate an exceptionally wide area. The school is one of the best organized and directed in Negro work. It celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year.

Gillespie-Selden Institute. In the middle of the famed "black belt" of Georgia, Dr. A. S. Clark is conducting a vastly important enterprise. The school, co-educational, of elementary and high school rank, is the only one of consequence in the area around Cordele, Georgia. It maintains an exceptionally large enrollment, especially of day school students, some of whom travel many miles each day to attend its classes. We shall refer to this school again in connection with a development of unusual value.

Harbison Industrial and Agricultural Institute. At Irmo, South Carolina, Harbison presents several features of unusual interest. It still emphasizes agricultural and industrial training and is the center of the largest Farm Home Plan, to which reference has been made. The interest of the Harbison estate is a vital factor in the life and work of this school.

Boggs Academy at Keysville, Georgia, in the heart of a rural section, combines with its activities both a Farm Home Plan and a Larger Parish.

Mary Holmes and *Margaret Barber Seminaries.* Located at West Point, Mississippi, and Anniston, Alabama, respectively, these are now the only Presbyterian schools for Negroes in which the executives are white. Both schools are co-educational; the work of each is accredited by its state; each has a large enrollment of day students. Splendid equipment and staffs make it possible for each of these schools to carry on a superior type of work.

*Alice Lee Elliott Academy.** Valliant, Oklahoma, has had a long and interesting background of service, first to the Choctaw Indians and their slaves, and now to their sons and daughters. Although located in a section that offers bright prospects for enlarged service, the school faces the difficult obstacles of poor equipment and inadequate resources.

Swift Memorial Junior College, Rogersville, Tennessee, with a record of almost a half century of notable service, fronts the ever-recurring task in remote Rogersville of securing sufficient students with which to maintain its junior college activities.

Some of the combined educational units are novel: Oxford, North Carolina, serves as the headquarters of three formerly separate schools which

* After this was written, the educational work at Valliant was turned over to the county, the mission building being used. Missionaries remained on the field to conduct a religious education program in the school and an extension program, including religious education and health, in the community.—ED.

have been united into the *Mary Potter-Redstone-Albion Academy*, under the brilliant leadership of Herman S. Davis. Mary Potter at Oxford serves as a boarding school, while Redstone at Lumberton and Albion at Franklinton are operated as day schools. A happy feature is that the state pays the salaries of both groups of day school teachers. Ingleside, at Burkeville, Virginia, and Fee, formerly of Nicholasville, Kentucky, have merged, under the direction of Dr. H. W. McNair, to form the *Ingleside-Fee Seminary*. As a result of this merger, Ingleside-Fee has become co-educational for the first time. Consolidation of schools in Arkansas has resulted in the emergence of *Arkadelphia-Cotton Plant Academy*, at Cotton Plant, Arkansas, with L. W. Davis in charge.

Two other schools deserve special attention: *Haines Institute* at Augusta, Georgia, and *Brainerd Institute* at Chester, South Carolina. Haines, after the death of its founder, Miss Lucy Laney, found itself facing dire straits when the Board decreed that it could no longer maintain the institution because of the acute shortage of funds. When it became officially known that the school would be forced to close her doors, a group of Negro citizens of Augusta, headed by former students of Haines, met and pledged themselves to exert every endeavor to keep the school open. The citizens agreed to assume a considerable share in the financial support of the school, and a request was made to the Board for permission to operate it. This the Board granted, and the work has been carried on splendidly. Dr. A. C. Griggs, long a teacher at Haines, serves as executive of this singular project. A similar situation obtained at Brainerd, and with the same resolute determination a small group of alumni and friendly citizens became active. At Chester they were able to interest the influential white citizens in their efforts, and a plan was developed by which the city and county assumed sufficient financial responsibility to permit the continuance of the work at Brainerd.

Day Schools. A chart, showing the type, number, and location of Presbyterian schools among the Negroes in 1931 has been shown previously in these pages. It will be recalled that of the 103 schools in 1931, seventy-six were day schools, scattered through twelve Southern states. At a later point it was shown that seventy per cent of all of the schools which had been in existence in 1931 had been either discontinued or merged in 1934. But even this does not give the full story of the situation as it applied to the day schools in 1934. Let us compare the actual figures for the two years, 1931 and 1934.

	1931	1934	Net Loss
Number of Boarding Schools	27	15	12, or 45%
Number of Day Schools	76	8	68, or 89%

Thus it can be seen that while the total loss in schools in 1934 was seventy per cent, that of the boarding schools was only forty-five per cent,

while the day schools suffered at the same time a loss of eighty-nine per cent.

Let us now examine the eight remaining day schools as to type and work. Two of these day schools are found near Charleston, South Carolina, on *James* and *Edisto Islands*. Cut off from the civilization of the mainland, separated from their island neighbors, life on these islands is almost a perfect example of the retardation which results from isolation of communities. In habits, customs, even in speech and language, these islesmen are at least three generations more backward than their mainland neighbors a few miles distant. These schools represent a distinct type of service as essential, as imperative, as any within the realm of our missionary enterprise.

Dr. William L. Metz has served as minister, teacher, example, and friend to the people of Edisto Island for twenty years, and a marvelous transformation has been wrought by his kindly ministry. He knows and loves these islands and their strange people, and they love and honor him. Dr. Metz gives us something of the beginning of Presbyterian work there. Before the end of the Civil War, a Negro, Ishmael Moultrie, a former slave, unschooled, commenced to preach and to gather congregations on three islands: John's, James, and Edisto. How it came to pass that he became inclined to the Presbyterian Church is not related, but in 1866 (or 1867) we are told that Catawba Presbytery met in Charleston and that Ishmael Moultrie went before it and was ordained, the first Negro minister to be ordained by this presbytery. The churches on the three islands were received by the presbytery, and Ishmael Moultrie was assigned to them as minister. In recent years, at the inspiration of Dr. Metz, a tablet has been erected on Edisto Island and dedicated to this pioneer churchman.

The next type of day school is found in the *Goodwill Community* at Mayesville, South Carolina. This section, largely Negro, agricultural and somewhat remote from outside contacts, is predominantly Presbyterian, with a lineage which extends back almost to the dawn of freedom. In a passage of letters between S. C. Logan, the first Freedmen's secretary, and J. L. Wilson, Secretary of Sustentation of the Southern Presbyterian Church, the latter complains December 10, 1868, that "more than one hundred Colored members of the Salem or Brick Church had withdrawn their letters to form the Goodwill Church." Today the same church has the largest membership of any Negro Presbyterian Church in the South. In such a community, with educational advantages severely restricted, the day school has an important and continuing place. The *Ebenezer School* at Dalzell, in the same state and section, is of much the same type as the Goodwill School. A large church is there also. A unique feature of the field here is that a large and attractive recreational park, with a lake for fishing and boating, is a part of the church and parish enterprise. A wider range of parish activities is being developed in this interesting field.

Still another type is found in the *Lincoln School* at Due West, South Carolina. No school building for Negroes is provided by the county, but the county, and a Reformed Presbyterian College located there, contribute towards the salaries of teachers and maintenance of buildings. A need and an opportunity, while temporary, yet quite actual, is definitely found here.

The *McClelland* and *Selden Day Schools* respectively at Newman and Brunswick, Georgia, present still different forms as to origin and basis of present need. The first, as McClelland Academy, long rendered exceptional service to a community in which the educational opportunities were severely limited. Such a condition has not been materially improved and, because of this continuing need and of the well-maintained facilities, this school continues to occupy a rich sphere of service. Selden at Brunswick, too, was formerly an academy, placed on what is said to be one of the most attractive sites in the Negro work. Upon its being merged with Gillespie, a small school was left, mainly for the protection and conservation of the property.

ADVANCED TYPES OF SERVICE

If one were to begin from the present moment and look back upon the course of the Negro Presbyterian work in the South for the last five years, one would make a most interesting discovery. The work, instead of continuing its flow in the channels it had dug out and followed from generation to generation, appeared, as from some hidden impulse, to ramify and to force branches and rivulets through their barriers and out over into new fields. Quite a number of these venturings are to be found: some of them have vital bearing on the whole program of Negro work.

Larger Parish Experiments. The most significant of these are found in connection with work, other phases of which have been presented. One of these is the Cheraw parish, made up of the Cheraw church and four outlying missions, directed by Dr. George W. Long. A preaching service is held at each mission at least once a month, and during the same period all of the members of the various missions are brought in for a service at the central church. A member of the session supervises the work of each mission, and at its meetings the work is viewed as a whole. By the use of one or more theological students (from Johnson C. Smith University) this parish has been able to develop an effective program of activities for its young people. The students of Coulter Academy render assistance also.

The Goodwill parish is larger, having six missions which radiate from the central church of 630 members. The entire enterprise is under the ministry of Dr. W. J. Nelson, whose gifts peculiarly fit him for this important work. The same plan as that of the Cheraw field is followed, but the elders here have even more active responsibility for the missions. The

teachers in the day school have direction of the activities for young people. The large possibilities of this inviting field make the development one of marked interest.

Distinctive possibilities are noted in the parish at Keysville, Georgia, because of the presence there of Boggs Academy and as well a Farm Home Plan. Dr. J. L. Phelps has done a notable work in founding the school and in organizing five missions. The teachers and students of Boggs Academy aid greatly in stimulating and serving these outlying stations.

The Charles Helm Hospital. Here is one of these modern ventures revealing new areas of enlargement and service. Though having but five beds and one graduate nurse, this unit of the Gillespie-Selden Institute offers the only hospital facilities available to Negroes within a radius of two hundred miles. It is needless to say that its facilities are utilized to the fullest extent. This modest activity has tremendous possibilities in that it touches the most neglected phase of Negro life in the South today.

The Bowling Green Home in Kentucky is another and very interesting experiment. Formerly a boarding school, it seeks to provide a home for girls attending the public schools and to give them a Christian environment and opportunities for helpful service. The Home is the center of considerable activity in music, pageantry, and community service.

Community Centers and Community Work. There has been a large drift of the Negro population from rural communities to the larger cities of the South. This was brought out previously in these pages as one of the causes of the decline in membership of the Southern churches. This tendency toward concentration by Negroes in the larger cities and towns of the South, which still continues, gives rise not only to problems of church membership, but to the more immediate problems of community adjustment and service.

In the light of these changed conditions that the cities and larger towns of the South make up the major battlefront for Christian conquest among Negroes cannot with wisdom be denied. And as it obtains today, so it seems destined to continue for a long time. Recent activities, therefore, designed to cope with and in some measure to serve in the name of the Church some of the many needs of a complex Negro city life, have primary importance.

The Community Center is rapidly coming to the front as the outstanding medium for Presbyterian activity in cities. The very excellent work of the well-established centers, the Woodland Center in Cleveland, Ohio, and the work at Gary, Indiana, has done much to demonstrate some of the wide and fruitful possibilities of this type of service. As for the South, the oldest and probably the farthest advanced is the Newton Community Center at Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Newton, formerly a Presbyterian day school, anticipating by several years the diminishing need of such schools, secured the approval of the

Board to attempt a program of activities more suited to the present-day needs of its people, and in 1932 it undertook community work. From the beginning its program has been based on three main objectives:

1. A Kindergarten and Day Nursery. For children between two and five years of age, this division has developed from an average daily attendance of thirty-five children to that of seventy-five. While children from every social level attend, special encouragement is offered to those of parents who work away from home during the day.

2. Clinic. One of the most helpful features, the Newton clinic, is also interesting in its set-up: the city has furnished the medicines; Negro physicians and nurses give their services without charge, while Newton provides the building and its facilities. Over a period of years, from three to five hundred patients have been treated at Newton clinic each month.

3. Community service. This has taken a wide range through the years. Regular meetings of church groups . . . young people's activities and missionary societies . . . civic and political clubs . . . employment for men and women . . . provision of food, clothing, and fuel for needy families . . . a working agreement with official social agencies for mutual cooperation . . . classes from Bible to cooking and home making . . . neighborhood and community visitation. In recent years Federal relief and work agencies have increasingly utilized the facilities of Newton, at times as many as five separate projects being carried on during the same day and employing the service of one hundred fifty persons.

While the Board has provided the salaries of two workers and a small sum for maintenance, much of the support of the project has come from local sources. Churches of all denominations and people of every race have materially shared in the project, and as an agency through which to concentrate a wide variety of helpful interests from a far-extended source range this is particularly significant. Locally, it has received: free bread from a large bakery . . . ice from an Episcopalian . . . milk from a Hebrew Temple . . . tables, chairs, stoves, and an annual shower from three white Presbyterian Churches . . . a group of prominent Negro men and women have united in a movement called "Friends of Newton" . . . a white woman and a Negro man each give a baby bed . . . patrons bring jelly, fruit, vegetables, and even dust rags. From afar, Ohio, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania have shared, and especially the Presbytery of Newton, for which the school was named.

This rather extended presentation indicates something of the great range and possibilities of this type of service. And such possibilities are increased when consideration is given to the numbers reached by its varied helpfulness. At Newton, for example, for eleven months during the year an average of five hundred persons, young and old, pass through the doors each week; and when to these are added the home contacts and other ways of approach, the total numbers rise to an almost incredible figure.

Similar activities have come, on a more limited scale, in other sections of the South, but they offer no significant variation of the work of Newton. An appreciable number of community workers have been reported during the last few years, though it is difficult to discover their procedure and the result of their labors. One of these workers, however, in Birmingham, Alabama, has organized a group of classes in cooking, sewing, and home making with unusual results.

ENLARGED HORIZONS

It is far too early, even though more than a decade has passed, to essay a full evaluation of the Negro work of the Church under the Board of National Missions. It is still too recent. The task of integration, of synthesizing the widely-divergent elements of program, policy, and procedure into unity, was not small. And then . . . the Depression! The Negro work cannot, nor can any other unit of the Board of National Missions, in wisdom, justice, or intelligence, close the page of evidence and open the book of judgment and proceed to pronounce a verdict, either for or against,—now.

Some advantages, however, altogether without precedent, have come to the Negro work and to Negro Presbyterians since the erection of the Board of National Missions in 1923 and these we shall present:

1. Membership on the National Staff. By the Form of Organization of the Board of National Missions all of the synods of the Church are entitled to representation on the National Staff, and also certain field representatives. Thus the present Negro members of that body are: Dr. F. C. Shirley, of Catawba Synod; Dr. E. J. Gregg, of Atlantic Synod; the Rev. G. E. Caesar, of Canadian Synod; the Rev. J. B. Barber, of Blue Ridge Synod, and the field representative, Dr. L. B. West.

2. Field Representatives of the Board. Previous mention has been made of the appointment of Dr. J. W. Lee to organize churches in the North. He served in that capacity until the formation of the new Board, when, in 1924, he was made a field representative, the first Negro to be so chosen, and served in that capacity until 1932. The same year Dr. L. B. West was chosen as field representative, with responsibility within the bounds of the four Negro synods, and continues in that position.

3. The Advisory Committee on Negro Work. In 1932 a Committee on Negro Work was created by the Board of National Missions. The Committee is made up of Negro men and women, from the South and from the North, and representatives of the Staff of the Board. The Committee has to do with the policies and program of the Board with respect to the Negro work. The names of the Negro members of the present Advisory Committee follow:

Dr. E. J. Gregg, Jacksonville, Florida
Dr. Byrd R. Smith, Crockett, Texas
Rev. H. S. Davis, Oxford, N. C.
Mrs. J. C. Porter, Irmo, S. C.
Mrs. H. W. McNair, Burkeville, Va.
Mrs. R. W. Boulware, Irmo, S. C.
Dean C. H. Shute, Charlotte, N. C.
Dr. J. W. Manoney, Chester, S. C.
Rev. J. B. Barber, Chattanooga, Tenn.
Dean L. S. Cozart, Concord, N. C.
Dr. T. J. B. Harris, New York City
Dr. C. B. Allen, Pittsburgh, Pa.

4. Membership on the Boards of the Church. The first Negro to be chosen as a member of a Board of the Church was Joseph W. Holley, a distinguished educator and churchman, who was elected by the General Assembly in 1932 to membership on the Board of National Missions. In 1933, Henry Lawrence McCrorey, President of Johnson C. Smith University, was elected a member of the Board of Christian Education.

As one, in a thoughtful mood, considers these experiences, all taking place within so brief a time space, coming since the merger of the Boards, they appear most clearly manifest, not as victories hard won but as an attestation of comradeship and as a pledge and token of faith. Whatever else may take place, two far-extending and fundamentally-important results have already come from the merger of the Boards:

1. It has served to "unpocket" the Negro. Before the merger his contact with his Church was definitely circumscribed; the whole Church to him was, in great measure, one Board out of thirteen Boards and Agencies. Through one eyelet only was he able to glimpse the width and breadth and wonder of his Church. Now through his various representatives he can envision infinitely more of his own work and of the vaster work of his Church throughout the land.

2. He has been enabled to participate in the larger work of his Church. He can share, now, through his representatives, in planning his own work and the whole work. He can know of problems other than his own; he can seek, with others, better ways of loyalty and of service through his Church. These things have definitely come, and as the result the Negro Presbyterian today faces a wider area of his Church and of its manifold work than ever before. Truly his horizons are extending and have become enlarged.

A STATISTICAL RECORD OF FREEDMEN'S WORK

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Contribution For Work</i>	<i>Contribution of Freedmen</i>	<i>Churches</i>	<i>Members</i>
1875	\$ 43,689	\$ 8,246	123	9,952
1880	46,134	19,482	150	11,108
1885	90,120	17,254	198	11,372
1890	176,325	30,464	245	16,502
1895	173,050	63,385	306	17,083
1900	155,033	33,981	339	19,588
1905	189,654	42,884	366	22,189
1910	207,799	63,459	401	23,872
1915	288,480	76,697	431	26,376
1920	429,560	215,150	448	26,706
1925 .....	.....	206,229	418	23,528
1930 .....	.....	179,084	426	22,875
1935 .....	.....	130,233	394	23,953

In addition to these sums, the Freedmen gave the following amounts to the schools: in 1900, \$37,781; 1905, \$63,270; 1910, \$72,023; 1915, \$72,797; 1920, \$155,373. The separate record of school contributions is not given prior to 1900 or after 1920.

The incompleteness of this table is apparent. Moreover, there are large variations between different sets of figures in both the financial and membership records. The table can only be taken as indicative of the general trend of the work, and the accuracy of the figures here given is not vouched for.

These figures, nevertheless, serve to bear witness to those periods of growth: those "halcyon years" from 1895 over into the new century; the period of the New Era Movement, and that strange, inexplicable period of arrested development, out of which, apparently, it has not yet completely emerged.

Chapter 5

SOME CONCLUSIONS, AND A PROFESSION OF FAITH

WE come to the closing pages of this study. We have followed the course of the Presbyterian Church in word and action with respect to the Negroes of America from the beginning. We have seen how Negro slavery antedated even the existence of the Presbyterian Church in America, and how its economic importance came later to dim her moral and religious ideals. We have noted how, with rare greatness of spirit, men and women gave themselves to helpful endeavor for the Negro. The challenge of the emancipation; the beginning of organized activity; the growth and spread and upward climb . . . have been revealed. The pioneers of faith and vision and dauntless resolution, men and women, young and old, black and white, all sharers in a new and glorious enterprise, have marched across these pages. One very poignantly regrets that so few names have actually been mentioned and that the stories of so many have been unrecorded here, for countless others there have been, whose labors have been fraught with great blessings and whose memories are precious.

Through all the years from 1865 until today the dominant emphasis of Presbyterian work among Negroes has been upon education, as we have had frequent occasion to point out, and it is of highest importance to find that in education has come her greatest success, her fullest and most effective contribution to the Negro in America. This contribution has been three-fold: First, she has educated her own leadership in her own schools. It is well known that as a group the Presbyterian Negro ministers have the largest proportion of trained ministers in the race, and it is of tremendous significance that even more than ninety-five per cent of them were trained in Presbyterian schools. It is true that some have been trained at Union, Princeton, Western, and notably Auburn (because of its matchless breadth of spirit). But even these are exceptions and the vast body of Negro Presbyterian ministers received their preparation at Lincoln and Johnson C. Smith seminaries. Second, it is not unimportant that she has educated much of the leadership of other churches. This, too, is generally conceded, but it is even more important to find that not only ministers and leaders but a substantial body of the rank and file of the race have received enlightenment from Presbyterian parochial schools, acad-

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emies, and seminaries. A survey of the Presbyterian educational work among Negroes in 1931 revealed the fact that upwards of seventy per cent of the students in Presbyterian schools belonged to other churches. Another contribution of important value has come from the influence of Presbyterian church and Sunday school activities. These have definitely aided in elevating the standards of worship and of religious education in Negro churches and communities. In religious education especially, the Presbyterian Church has made a large contribution to Negro church life.

It is so easy to find flaws . . . and yet certain other conclusions stand definitely clear also, and are inescapable. The first is that somewhere along the path from the intrepid vigor with which the work began, along the "halcyon years" of high adventure and magnificent daring at the beginning of the century; even along the journey fifteen years after; some time between those days and the present, the Negro Presbyterian group "lost the way." It lost something of its buoyancy, its boldness, its enterprise, something of its light and fire. It began to grow stolid and static and satisfied, to become critical and content. The sober fact, increasingly apparent through the latter years, is that the Negro Presbyterian Church as a whole has seemingly been willing to accept a place greatly subordinate to her schools. The relative failure of the Church to adapt itself to the changing needs of its people with a definite, positive, and developing program, as contrasted with the progress achieved in the educational field, has been a conspicuous and fundamental weakness. Individual exceptions there have been which, by the excellence of their achievement, emphasize all the more the need for the Church to recapture the adventurous pioneering zeal it seems to have lost. The second conclusion is that the undergirding of the work has been woefully inadequate. Financially, it has been pointed out that the Negro work has received "very moderate support." And Negro Presbyterians have not been overly generous. But the problem lies even deeper. The weakness has been in the planning and planting and developing; in conception and execution; in unifying and energizing the whole structure. Concretely, the problem here has been to discover an avenue through the labyrinth of Presbyterian ponderosity of procedure by which competent and vigorous guidance might be applied and directed. And such an avenue has not yet been found.

The future is not without hope. The enlarged orbit of Negro Presbyterian Church life provides strong incentives for energetic and determined endeavor. Negro Presbyterians are not unaware of its challenge. No one can say that the Negro harvest fields have all been garnered. There still remains "much land to be possessed." And there are those who have the undimmed faith to believe that the Negro, through the Presbyterian Church, can greatly share not alone in the lifting of his own people to Christ, but in that larger enterprise which envisions and presses . . . even "toward a Christian America."

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