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CONTENTS FOR JULY

THE SOUTHERN WORKMAN, founded by General Armstrong in 1872 and published monthly by the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, is a sixty-four page magazine devoted to the interests of the black and red races of this country, and to the work done for them at this school. Each number contains information about some of the school's 1031 graduates who have, since 1868, taught more than 130,000 children in 18 states in the South and West.

Our subscribers are distributed among 35 states and territories and we believe that the paper has had an important influence both North and South on questions concerning the Negro and Indian races.

Rev. H. L. Wayland, D. D., of Philadelphia said of it. "The SOUTHERN WORKMAN published at Hampton Institute, seems to me to give fuller and juster information in regard to the condition and wants of the Southern colored people than any other periodical."

It contains direct reports from the heart of Negro and Indian populations with pictures of reservation, cabin, and plantation life; local sketches; a running account of what is going on in the Hampton School; studies in Negro and Indian folk-lore and history; and editorial comment.

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LETTERS should be addressed:

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THE SOUTHERN WORKMAN

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Out from the One-room Cabin

After listening to the rather pessimistic views of the Negro race expressed at the Montgomery Conference, it was a comfort to get down to Calhoun in Lowndes County, Alabama, and see what a brave little band of workers had accomplished in the uplift of a black community that eight years ago was as discouraging as any that could be found in this country. Here the lien system of crops and the one-room cabin had produced their usual result of hopeless serfdom. Emancipation had brought to this community very little improvement over slavery days.

Two white teachers from Hampton, Miss Thorn and Miss Dillingham, were stirred by Mr. Washington's statements as to the needs of the Black Belt of Alabama, and went into one of the darkest spots of the whole South. They were looked upon with suspicion by both whites and blacks and had difficulty in finding a place to shelter them until the necessary buildings could be erected.

The school was started; houses were visited; the need of owning land and building better homes was pressed. But the people were discouraged and any change for the better seemed an utter impossibility. Some capital was procured, however, and a beginning made in the purchase of land in 1896. Forty acres were bought at a cost of $266. In December of the same year a Southern man, Mr. Chestnutt, sold the land company that had been formed at the school, a plantation of 1040 acres of land for $7280, and showed the greatest interest in getting the Negroes settled in their own homes. Twenty-three colored men and one woman settled on this piece of land. They have paid $3775, in spite of very low prices for cotton. There is still due on this tract, including interest, $5700. In the following year 2087 more acres were bought for $13,000. On this $4394 has been paid and $11,208, including interest, is still due. The total amount deposited at the school since 1896 is $9892.26. Seventy-four Negroes are now buying 3287 acres. Seven men have entirely paid for their land, four have proved unsatisfactory. Seventeen families live in one-room cabins; thirty-one in two-room cabins; sixteen have three rooms; seven have four; and three have five.

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A Madonna of the South

ARCHIBALD H. GRIMKÉ

MANY years ago I knew a mother who had two boys. The children were fatherless, and she was poor and illiterate, though not ignorant. She had no rich friends to help her, had nothing but two stong hands, and a much stronger heart. She was a woman of unusual native ability, and of a noble unselfishness and tenderness of disposition, and gifted withal with an unconquerable sense of honor and duty. As I have said, she was poor, poorer than some of my readers might believe. Her poverty and hard lot gave her no choice of neighborhood in which to rear her little family, in a far-away city on our South Atlantic coast. So with her two children, she was compelled to take a house of three rooms in a part of the city where there was a great deal of coarseness, of moral and social degradation. The atmosphere of this quarter, indeed of the whole city, was very unfavorable to the maintenance of the purity of her domestic life, and to the growth of virtue in the breasts of her little ones. But in the midst of such inimical forces aud influences, this brave woman planted her humble roof tree, and with perfect faith flung herself upon the Divine goodness for protection. She never doubted His promises, never despaired lest He might forget her and her children. Hers was not only a life of faith and prayer, it was also one of incessant labor and watchfulness. Keenly conscious of the evil things which surrounded her home, she strove as only a true woman can strive, to render it strong within to resist their deadly pressure. And she was wonderfully successful. But how did she succeed? I know not. I know only that she fought and prevailed. I can only tell the story of her pathetic and triumphant struggle.

She was to those boys an incarnation of courage, and truth, and goodness. She created somehow about her hearth an air, a moral something which nullified instantly what was low and degrading in the life of the neighborhood. Profanity, obscenity, intemperance, the use of tobacco, were repelled from the very blood of her boys. They were taught not alone by precept, but as well by an indescribable raying forth or action of her mind that profanity and obscenity degraded not only those who uttered them but him hardly less who under any circumstances repeated them. Intoxicating liquors and tobacco she repulsed from her home by a feeling so reasonable, and healthy, and regnant, that the boys recoiled from both as they would have done from what was physically filthy. Then again she enveloped her children in the sanctities and sweetnesses of religion, as in a seamless garment. She developed in them reverence and obedience—reverence

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for God, for the aged, for law; and obedience to authority, to conscience, to her. She revealed to them the sacred purpose of life which was not intended to be lived for self, but for others. She herself was living her own life for them, absolutely, entirely, and they, in turn, tried in their childish fashion to live theirs for her.

She was a laundress. By some occult personal influence, the little fellows were taught to help her—to wash for her the stockings, the handkerchiefs, the collars and cuffs, and to cut the wood and carry the water—not because she required these services of them, but because they wanted to perform them, because they were happier for performing them. Well do I recall many an evening scene of this mother and her laddies, recall her in her plain little sitting room, with a child on either knee, as she talked in her simple, earnest, Christian way of heaven and hell. Her description of the future home of the good made virtue appear beautiful to the boys and greatly to be desired, while her portrayal of the future abode of the wicked made sin seem hideous to them and above all things to be shunned. How she did it, I fain would put into words, but cannot. It was not what she said so much as what she looked and breathed and lived each day of her life in the presence of the children.

Ah! those boys, how vividly do I see again after long years, their bright young faces, so rapt, so full of trust and wonder, so eloquent with aspiration and enthusiasm. They come back, those sweet and sacred moments in the lowly and strenuous life of that mother, those sweet and sacred scenes in the life of those children. Ah! I recall, as 'twas yesternight, the gentle divinity that was astir in the benignant countenance of that godly woman, as she ceased her homely converse on life, death, and the hereafter; embracing her children, and embraced by them, she was a priestess in her home. The evil world was without, but within, while the oak embers were dying on her hearth, and the tallow candle was glimmering low in its stick, the silences and the angels were with her, and that peace which the world could not give nor take from her. And then in the midst of it all, the boys, untwining their soft arms from about her neck, and slipping from her lap to their knees, with hands clasped and eyes uplifted to her face, would repeat, "Our Father who art in Heaven."

The prayer was no lip service, for the Father in heaven was the only father the lads had ever known. He was intensely real to them, very near and dear was He to those fatherless little ones. Strange love and reverence they felt for this almighty and everlasting parent of their childhood, albeit it was full of injustice and suffering. The mother toiled early and late. Oftentimes she did not lay her tired head on her pillow until the wee hours of the morning. She did all this hard work that her boys might go to school, might obtain that which a stern fate had denied to her.

Notwithstanding their poverty and struggle, this was a happy fam-

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ily, one of the happiest I have ever known. Each lived for God and all, and God and all lived in that humble home for each. And so the days, and months, and years came and went, until the elder boy was about eleven years old, when a great trouble visited the little household, broke up the home, and separated for a sad season the mother from her children. But of this tragic episode in their lives I may not now speak, it was so full of unspeakable suffering and misery and wrong. It must suffice therefore when I say that so alive was the mother's love and goodness in the breasts of her boys, that though sundered from them, she kept their feet still from the evil which surrounded them, to that time when they three were again reunited and happy in their old home.

I have known them many a day in that old home when they had not enough to eat, when the mother was worn and worried, and the little fellows were hungry. But I never knew them to lose their faith in her or in God. They together, God and their mother, would somehow surely provide food for their children. Nor did she, in the wealth of her maternity, in her simple, unquestioning trust in the kind care of the Divine parent of herself and little ones, ever despair or surrender one jot of her spiritual life. She was always fast anchored to the eternal verities of her religion and morality. Never an hour did her firm hand relax upon the rudder with which she was guiding her sons from childhood to manhood. Poverty and adversity were powerless to weaken her love for the principle of right, for irreproachable and noble living. Her character never deteriorated under the heaviest stress of material want, or under pitiless arrows of affliction as heart-piercing as Niobe's.

The children grew, passing in and out, now within sight and sound of the sad degradation and wrong which environed them, hearing and seeing what they never heard nor saw within the holiness of their mother's presence and home. Immensely important at critical moments in the lives of those boys it was that they lost not a tittle of their belief in her—in her all-sufficing strength and goodness that at no time failed to attract and control them. Of momentous consequence to them it was indeed, that the domestic atmosphere of moral purity underwent at no period a change for the worse, did not in the slightest degree yield to adverse circumstances the smallest particle of oxygen or virility. This was, perhaps, the secret of that sovereign, motherful power for righteousneess which she flung like a shield about the children.

The boys increased in years. They were in their teens, and just beginning to hunger and thirst for knowledge. They could not find the food and the drink which their young minds craved, in the city where they had lived their childhood. So, like birds in the springtime, they stretched their necks towards the North, and felt strange yearnings and flutterings in their young hearts to be gone on their migratory quest for the sweet fruits of the tree of knowledge, and for the cool

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waters of a new and larger life. And the mother? She desired above all things that her sons might sail on their adventurous voyage, for she confidently hoped and believed that they would bring back on their return to her, the golden fleece of her dreams and prayers. And so together went out from her her boys, her darlings. They went out over the sea and under the stars, alone, unfriended, save by God and the omnipresent love of that woman, sublime in her motherhood.

They were now in a strange land among a strange people—first in one New England state, and then in another. They quickly found employment but no education. They quickly found care but no charity. They were industrious and self-reliant boys, for their mother's example had taught them to despise no honest labor, however lowly. Wherefore with willing hands and two stout hearts they helped themselves, became suddenly two little men, earning their daily bread by the sweat of their brows. But while they worked day by day with their boy's hands their boy's minds were feeling the old unsated hunger, the unslaked thirst for knowledge, strong within them. Oh! for an education! Oh! for an opportunity to pick up but the crumbs which were falling from the common table, to put their parched tongues to brimming cups, free to all children of poor or rich alike! And so, month after month, the boys worked and yearned in that strange land, and among that strange people, whilst the mother in her far-away home, was wrestling in prayer, day and night, with the Pity of heaven for a blessing for them, for the fulfilment of their heart's desire and hers. And lo! the children's Father heard her and sent, as if from the skies, his ravens to feed them and to hold to their eager lips that golden chalice filled with his morning dews, which the world miscalls chance, but which she knew was only another instance of His tender and watchful providence.

Well, the longed-for opportunity had come. The gate of the garden of knowledge was opened, and the boys were bidden to enter. They did so and found the honey in the flower but also the thorn and the bee. They pursued the devious way of the mountain brook, holding fast as best they might to her glistening fingers amid bush and rock, and climbed with her to the hidden spring among the hills. But the road was steep and the stones were hard, and bruised their soft feet. And then again they met Joy and Aspiration many a day under the tall trees of the garden, and many a day they met there Care and Struggle and Temptation. But in the midst of it all, like a guardian angel, there was ever present with the youths their mother's pure spirit, saying: "Do so, my sons," and again, "Do not so, my children." And they knew her loving voice, and heeded in their hearts its motherly admonitions.

Think not that those two lads belonged to the class of youthful prigs or saints. For they belonged to no such class. On the contrary, they were most genuine boys, as full of boyish pranks as they were overflowing with good health and animal spirits. They had as irre-

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pressible a passion for frolic and fun as any two boys I have ever known. But, if they dearly loved to play and to have a good time, and they certainly did, they loved also truth, honor, duty, purity, which were happily kept intact within their young breasts during the years covered by their education.

The air of their rooms in college and in the professional schools which they attended never smelled of tobacco, nor their breath of the cup. There was never in their conversation any of those offenses against decency which arise from profanity, or obscenity, nothing which they might not have repeated, without a blush, in the presence of their mother. Her saintly image, the memory of their sacred home, a sense of duty early implanted, the rule of right firmly established, an instinct for the clean in persons and things which they drew into their blood with their mother's milk, a lively feeling of moral accountability for words and acts, and, last though not least, that mystic something of the Deity in every human soul, which most men have experienced at some period of their lives, but which no one has ever found the language to express, constrained and guided them, I know not exactly how. Nor have they, as they have often confessed to me, any clearer or more precise comprehension of the influences for good in their lives.

I recall, as it was told to me by the elder brother, a story illustrative of the singular tenacity with which habits formed in their childhood by the molding hand of the mother clung to them, long after they had arrived at manhood. Good manners they had learned at her knee, for she herself was in this respect a woman of rare native refinement and dignity. She wanted her boys not only to do the right thing, but to do it in a pleasing way. Her experience had taught her that good form has its function in life, as well as good feeling, and that true politeness is grounded in the one and expresses itself best by means of the other. So among their other childish accomplishments, she taught the boys the art of bowing becomingly to grown-up folks. This bow consisted in pushing forward the right foot and drawing it back with a slight scraping sound, accompanying the same with a rising movement of the corresponding hand until it touched the lips, when a barely audible kiss terminated the pretty little formality. If done with the blended freedom and innocency of childhood, I can asssure you, the effect is charming.

Now, in thhir humble home, the good God was the greatest of all personages, as He was the greatest of realities. He was certainly so to the mother, and as she thought and felt on this subject, so thought and felt in their way the children. Such being the case it will be readily understood what followed as a natural consequence from this vivid religious feeling. The good God was not only entitled to their obedience and reverence, but as well to that sweet courtesy which they were trained to offer to earthly friends and visitors. Wherefore they made to Him, their greatest friend and most honored guest, their

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charming little bow on the conclusion of their morning and evening prayers. In the morning it was as if their young hearts were saying, "Good morning, our kind Father in Heaven, we thank Thee for coming to see us at the end of the dark night," and in the evening, "Good night, our dear Father, until we wake to greet Thee, with Thy bright sun, on the morrow."

Their education in the schools finished, the two brothers separated and settled in distant parts of the country. And it happened that, as they had to struggle long and hard for a place for their feet and for bread in that fierce hurly-burly called the battle for existence, many years elapsed before they met again. When they did meet they were both married and approaching middle life. Well, at this first reunion, they lived over again their childhood and schooldays. It was first one and then the other. It was how the dear mother had done this at such and such a time, and how she had said so and so at such another time. There was laughter a-plenty, I can tell you, and unshed tears a-plenty too. For the mother, though then dead, was with her sons again almost as vividly as when she had smiled and wept with them in the flesh.

It chanced at night that the brothers occupied the same room, and it was then that the elder witnessed or experienced that which he related to me. At bedtime the younger knelt in silent prayer by the side of an arm-chair, his clasped hands rested on the seat, and his bowed head, then beginning to silver, leant lightly against the back. All at once, it seemed to the elder of the brothers, that the mother was actually in the room, and was seated in the arm-chair before which the younger was kneeling. His hands were, as of yore, folded on her knee, and his head was bent forward upon her breast. The old benignant light was on the aged face—a light which appeared to spread until it suffused the chamber with its soft radiance. In the deep quiet of the moment a sweet hush fell upon the spirit of the elder, as with bated breath and in a trance he watched the holy scene. Presently he heard a slight, scraping noise, as of the movement of a foot on the floor, and simultaneously there fell on his ears a faint, familiar sound as of kissing, and he awoke to find that the younger had arisen from his knees, and was in the act of making to the good God, the old sweet bow of his boyhood with the innocent grace of a little child. The brothers spoke no more that night, and the elder was thankful indeed that they did not speak, for his heart was full to bursting, and his eyes—well—with his face turned toward the wall, God alone saw the tears within them, or the gentle tumult of his surcharged breast.

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