

# Africo-American Presbyterian

"AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—John viii:32.

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## ADVENTURES IN RACIAL UNDERSTANDING

By Mrs. A. H. George

Along with four others—Dr. Byrd Smith, Rev. Jesse Barber, Dean Cozart, Mrs. R. W. Boulware—I have the privilege and opportunity of representing the Negro work during the month of October as a speaker from the Board of National Missions. According to promise, I shall send through the paper some of my interesting experiences.

Preparation for the trip included more than an extra pair of stockings and a dress that would not wrinkle easily. It included the reading of many source books on the Negro, such as "Black Reconstruction"—DuBois; "Brown America"—Embree; "Black Manhattan"—Johnson; "Education of the Negro In the American Social Order"—Bond; "The Preface to Racial Understanding and Shadows of the Plantation"—C. S. Johnson; "The Story of the American Negro"—Ina Corrine Brown, with a rapid review of Negro poets and the Mission Study books for all age groups for the year. Mrs. Boulware and I have to teach the Mission Study books or review them when requested.

When I reported at the headquarters on the 25th and 26th of September for instructions, a brief-case of extra material was ready for me, all labeled. Among the material was Dr. Jesse Barber's book, "A History of the Work of the Presbyterian Church Among the Negroes in the United States of America," just off the press, and an invaluable help to one speaking in New York Presbyterials.

Luncheon with Miss Anne Elizabeth Taylor and a trip to Radio City formed a pleasant break in the duties of preparation. Then there was always the mastery of three subways to fill the odd moments. Mr. James Robinson met me and piloted me about for the first day and then left me with a little book of instructions to find my own way about, since he had to go out of town. Like the Indian, who never got "lost" but to whom the village was "lost," I realized the first day that the whole of 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue were lost. While poring over my little book of directions down under the earth one day, I spied another soul looking into a similar book. I drew nigh and found that my neighbor was looking for something. "I've lost the red lights, all of them," she offered. "You've nothing on me," I replied. "I've lost all of 42nd Street, movie fame and all." An exchange of the known facts proved that red lights are green lights on a return trip, while 42nd Street is also called Times Square. Congratulating ourselves upon being the only two sane souls on Manhattan Island, we went our separate ways showing up for our appointments not more than 25 minutes late—but very triumphant.

The Scotia Chapter had a meeting in the Kindergarten Department of the lovely Dunbar Apartments and several of us out-of-town Scotia girls were invited. The meeting was interesting, the spirit pervading the whole group so loyal that I was ashamed that being only 21 miles away from the school we do not take more interest in it. The ladies assumed responsibility for scholarship and beds, as a matter of course, and wondered if in any other way they might show their willingness to help.

My itinerary for the week of September 28th-October 3rd included meetings in the four districts of Champlain Presbyterial. Miss Taylor, who was going to be away all the week on a similar speaking tour, turned me over to one of her secretaries, Miss Greiner, who arranged reservations, train schedules

and even tentative bus connections without a flaw. The first meeting was in Mineville, a small mining town five miles from Port Henry, and included in the group the two churches of Mineville and Port Henry. The former, to my surprise, is being served at this time by a student-pastor of the Methodist Church. The loyal women are keeping the work going on the Sundays when there is no preaching. A "pot-luck" supper at Port Henry, the same evening, gave me an opportunity to see the Port Henry women at work. Rev. Mr. Bacon, the pastor, remembered the late Dr. George C. Shaw as a very dear friend in Auburn Seminary.

Mrs. Earl Henry, my hostess, drove me 52 miles the next day from Port Henry to Plattsburg, the place of the second meeting. Through her kindness I had a chance to see all the old historic places, Ausable Chasm, the noted camping grounds among and at the foot of the lovely Adirondacks, with White Face towering in the distance and covered with snow at the peaks, while all its base was a riot of Fall colors.

In Plattsburg, I shared the platform with two missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Linse, on a furlough from Peiping, China. This was the largest of the groups and was well attended. Rev. Mr. Armstrong, the pastor, has been there a long time. My hostess was still out at her cottage on Lake Champlain, so I had the pleasure of motoring around Cumberland Drive to the New Roosevelt Ferry and enjoying a steak supper on the beach. The following morning I saw the white caps on the water during a storm.

Districts three and four of the Presbyterial were in Fort Covington up on the Salmon and St. Lawrence rivers across the border from Dundee, Quebec, and Saranac Lake. Although I had been in Canada before, I could not resist the temptation to walk past the Customs' House and step on foreign soil. Tailors' Store is divided diagonally by the line so that the back of the store is in Quebec, while the front is in New York. Some interesting tales are told of this and other stores during the days of Prohibition. To me this was my most interesting meeting. Sixty per cent of the people of Fort Covington are of French descent and the Catholics make many inducements for the people.

The meeting at Saranac Lake was held in the Presbyterian church at which Calvin Coolidge used to worship. There is a modern Parish House which takes care of the many Scouting activities which are connected with the Lake, and Lake Placid which is very near.

Many and varied are the questions I am asked. Some of them are: "What will be open for your boys if they finish college?" "How is the Negro going to vote?" "Is the Negro communistic in thinking?" "What are Negroes doing to help themselves?"

Some of the comments are: "I was ashamed of my race (white) when you were speaking." "Negroes are certainly forgiving." "We've got a lot to answer for."

"Alcohol enters the blood in its fiery biting state, thus the brain cells are exposed to direct contact with alcohol. A short circuit takes place and this results in confusion, loss of brain power, affecting all five of the senses. One sees less, hears less, tastes less, feels less, and becomes less active than before taking the poisonous beverage."

"Booze ruins one internally, externally and eternally."

## SUMMERING IN THE ADIRONDACKS

By Ruth N. Freeman

### Article VI.

Now that I have given you a fair description of the Adirondacks as I have found them—of the life and activities of the people, I know you have said within yourselves that this is a rich man's country, and you ask the question, How could one with only a very small income, who can hardly get the bare necessities of life, ever get the benefits of this beautiful heaven on earth?

I shall explain. I know of no other State that offers the free advantages in education, health and recreation that New York State does. In this particular section of which I write there are two large, free camping grounds for the public, furnished by the State. They are made or built by the clearing away of the underbrush and top soil, which give a floor of sand along the lakes of course.

These camps are equipped with picnic tables, fire places, rubbish barrels, and a caretaker. One is required to bring his own camping equipment, and you have the privilege of the ground and lake for two weeks. Then if you have a longer vacation you may go to another one for two weeks. This gives all a chance for a healthful vacation of out-door life if one is interested in such.

Now you ask about being safe from wild animals. Yes, there are bears, deer, woodchucks, wild cats, foxes, and perhaps others, but all of these I have seen, and raccoons. These animals seldom come out in the open. One considers it a great thrill to see one of them. They are very fleet of foot so there is no fear of being

But there are three disagreeable pests that interfere greatly with one's pleasure. They are black flies, deer flies, "punkies" and, of course, the common mosquitoes. The black and deer flies are poisonous to some systems, and those who fall the victims are usually great sufferers for a while. Their bites causes a swelling for some, an only itching for others. Either is very disagreeable.

For the benefit of those who do not know what "punkies" are I wish to say they are species of the gnat family. They are very small and can hardly be recognized by the natural eye, but they have an irritating sting. One's joy is, however, that they last only three months of May and June.

There are guides all through the mountains for the benefit of fishermen and hunters during their seasons. The hunting seasons are very short because of the Law to preserve the animal life of the woods, and the fishing seasons also are short.

Do you wonder what the favorite food is in this section? I can tell you. The deer go in droves and they tramp a place down for sleeping purposes and huddle together to keep warm. They feed upon the young twigs of trees and underbrush.

Aside from the camping grounds of the mountains, there are hundreds of parks and playgrounds all through the State so there is no excuse for even the working class of persons to not getting some out-door recreation during the summer months.

We get a great thrill from riding out in the country and seeing this time.

Last week we drove to Old Forge, said to be the central section of the Adirondacks, and the beginning of the great chain lake region. The chain lakes are numbered 1st, 2nd, and so on, and can be reached from one to another by boats. Boat races are famous in this section at a certain time of the year. There are many hotels for the summer health-seekers. The village itself is surprisingly small, considering the name, but a wonderful place for a view of the mountains. Every direction offers a beautiful view and every one is different.

On our way out here we passed several smaller lakes, among them, Pine Lake and White Lake, so named because this is the only one in the Adirondacks to have white water. We crossed the Black river. On its banks I saw trees growing upon rocks. This may seem impossible but it is true. The roots must have been quite long so as to get the nourishment from the ground, and the river was filled with huge black rocks. The water looked black as it rushed over the rocks, on its never ending course to somewhere.

At Otter Lake we stopped and were taken for a ride across the lake in a very fine speed motor boat. On the other side was a beautiful camp owned by some party. We went in and were served with tea and cake. Then roamed around the camp ground, through beautiful flower beds, rock gardens, and lily ponds. We were told that in winter when the lake freezes over, the people clear the snow away and drive their cars across on the ice. This, too, may seem impossible to many, but not to me, because I know the temperature here.

After roaming around the camp for a while we made our departure to the other side, and again resumed our journey through the wooded section, drinking in the balmy air filled with the odor of balsam and white pine. Upon reaching Old Forge and First Lake, the boats were just coming in so we took advantage of a boat ride through the lakes, between the mountains, shrubs and flowers. This was very refreshing to our souls, and beautiful to the eyes. When the time came for our return we started back for home with happy hearts after having spent a wonderful day of out-door life, and its pleasant experiences shall never be forgotten.

### DR. R. R. TAYLOR, TRUSTEE OF FAYETTEVILLE NORMAL

The appointment by Governor Ehringhaus of Mr. R. R. Taylor as a trustee of the Fayetteville Normal School marks the first time that a colored person has been appointed to the board of control of a State college in North Carolina during the present century. Dr. Taylor is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and is one of the leading architects of the Negro race.

Under his direction were erected the present buildings upon the Tuskegee campus. Recently, the construction of a new building for the African American in the State was started. Since retiring from such places have supervisory positions of Tuskegee, so that all are safe and may be at ease at all times. There are many farms, and food can be purchased at small cost.

Now as I have said before, this is the most beautiful month of the season in this section of the State. Friends of the institution consider this a decided step toward racial group. Friends of the liberal attitude thus demonstrated by Mr.

N. C. Newboki, Director of the Division of Negro Education, and by Governor Ehringhaus.

The Fayetteville institution, after closing the largest summer school in its history, and the largest this year among all the Negro colleges in the two Carolinas and Virginia, commenced a very promising fall term on September 8. The course of study has been lengthened from two years to three years. It is expected that the curriculum will be raised eventually to the level of a four-year teachers college, accompanied by the granting of the bachelor's degree.

New members of the faculty are: Florence R. Beatty, social science; Jennie L. Douglass, physical education; Ellen C. Wiley, music; Minnie N. Calloway, office assistant; and Annie M. Houston, training school.

### DISCUSS FARM PROBLEMS IN ARKANSAS

Hot Springs, Ark., Oct. — (ANP) Federal aid, education of children, substitution of land ownership for tenant farming, birth control, and sterilization of the unfit, as well as co-operation between share-cropper and landlord were advocated as remedies for the 70 year old farm problem by the 57 members of a special commission holding a two day meet here last week at the invitation of Gov. J. M. Futrell.

"Complete annihilation of tenancy is a dread," Gov. Futrell said. "We may as well bear in mind the fact that worthless people cannot be helped. The ultimate end to be obtained is the substitution of farm owners for farm tenants as far as possible. The federal government must have a hand in carrying out a policy of enabling would-be owners to purchase land at reasonable prices and on terms which an industrious tenant farmer can meet while making a good living for himself and family."

The governor pointed out, however, that a large percentage of the several million sharecroppers, many of them Negroes held in virtual peonage, cannot be helped because "the average tenant has the mentality of a 12 year old child." He advocated birth control and sterilization of the mentally deficient as a partial solution for the problem.

Getting back to federal aid, Gov. Futrell said, "Long terms of payment with a low rate of interest are necessary to enable the program to succeed. The United States will not lose one penny. It will not for years to come be necessary to consider the breaking up of large landed estates by processes of law. The federal government can now buy vast acreages of cleared and uncleared fertile land at reasonable prices, based on earnings and productive value. Resale should be made to purchasers at cost, with a small interest charge to cover administrative expenses."

He added there was no legal way to compel a landlord to pay fixed wages or to accept a fixed share of the crop produced.

Gov. Futrell was apparently influenced in his talk and charge to the commission to face facts and see things as they really are by a 26 page pamphlet distributed to all 57 members immediately before the meeting began by the Interracial Southern Tenant Farmers Union which gave a 10 point solution for the problem.

W. L. Blackstone of Wynne, a white sharecropper and father of 10 children, who said he was the official representative of the union, did not think highly of the federal aid as proposed by the Bankhead-Jones bill.

"This bill is fine, but we are just 75 years too late in taking basic remedies," he said. "We will just get from but one to another until mutual respect

and harmony is restored among the people involved. Arkansas has thousands of tenants who may never be reached by the Bankhead bill.

"The first principle of the nation is confidence and respect. Classes involved in the share-cropper problem are going to have to come together and cooperate. We have lost confidence in each other as we have lost respect."

Blackstone also said there was enough good rich land in Arkansas to give every man a good farm on which to make a decent living. There is no incentive for the average tenant to buy his land because "so many small farm owners lose their property."

According to J. O. E. Beck of Hughes, one of the largest cotton farmers in East Arkansas, "It's going to take a long time program of education and supervision to solve the situation. Nothing can be done as long as the planter 'cusses' the tenant and the tenant 'cusses' the planter with night meetings going on and all this outside publicity."

Children of sharecroppers can be educated to be landowners and business men, Beck said, adding, "More can be done through such a program than with those who have always been sharecroppers. I cannot see much to be done with the present sharecropper other than to give him a helping hand and to help him on his feet."

Major proposals put before the commission called for a federal farm ownership program, unionization of field laborers, industrial development of the South, revision of educational systems, low cost housing and farm mechanization.

The commission allowed 10 days for filing specific proposals to be studied by a committee and acted on at subsequent sessions. Futrell said definite ideas were wanted about a plan, both state and national. An all-Southern conference is to be held later.

While the commission held its session, a county grand jury and a federal grand jury were meeting at Little Rock to investigate charges of peonage in Eastern Arkansas, site of the recent strike marked by violence, the disappearance of at least one Negro farmer, Frank Weems, and the flogging of a white minister and a social worker.

### PROF. E. A. BENSON DEAD

Prof. E. A. Benson, of the class of 1915, Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, passed away suddenly between 10 and 11 o'clock Saturday night, Oct. 3.

The body will lie in state in the Trinity Presbyterian church of St. Petersburg, Fla., Monday afternoon, Oct. 5, 1936. The body will then be sent to Tuskegee, Alabama, the home of Prof. Benson's family. There funeral services will be conducted, and the interment will be made.

Prof. Benson was actively engaged in the teaching profession. He was one of the very efficient and highly appreciated instructors in the Gibbs High School of St. Petersburg. He was also an active worker in the Trinity Presbyterian church of St. Petersburg.

Mrs. E. A. Benson and their little daughter, Mrs. Benson's brother, and two friends arrived in St. Petersburg, Sunday afternoon, Oct. 4. These friends, including the mother of Mrs. Benson, had arrived in Tuskegee from Cotton Plant, Arkansas, about six hours before the sad news of Prof. Benson's sudden departure was received.

Rev. O. M. McAdams, of St. Petersburg, a college classmate, and also pastor of the deceased, will attend the funeral services to be conducted in Tuskegee.

O. M. McADAMS.





