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A STUDY OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES
TO THE LIFE OF THE NEGRO WOMAN OF THE SOUTH

By

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A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
in
The Biblical Seminary in New York

New York, N. Y.
April, 1938

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

A. The Statement of the Problem

Every tenth person in the United States today is a Negro. At least three-fourths of the Negro population live in the Southern states.¹ This group affects every phase of southern life, and its influence is of such importance that it cannot be ignored by any southern institution. The southern Negroes form a group that is growing in numbers, in education, in race consciousness, and in ability. It is a group that has the power to lower the civilization and standards of the South, or to build up a higher civilization. The progress of the Negro race has been phenomenal. Yet the Negro people still have a great need for spiritual, social, moral, and intellectual guidance.

This Negro group presents a tremendous challenge to the Christian Church of the South. In the light of Jesus' commission, "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth",² the Church must assume its

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1. Statistics from the United States Census of 1930, quoted in program material of the Department of Race Relations, Federal Council of Churches
2. American Revised Version Bible, Acts 1:8

responsibility for the people near at hand, the Negro men and women of its own parish.

In recent years the Presbyterian Church in the United States has made a great effort to meet the challenge of the need of the Negro group - especially of the Negro woman. It is the purpose of the present study to survey and evaluate the work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States for the Negro woman of the South, and on the basis of survey and evaluation to make suggestions for the future program of the Church among Negro women.

B. The Importance of the Problem

It has often been said that no race rises above the level of its womanhood. Surely then, if the Negro race in America is to be aided in its effort to rise to a higher level of economic, social, moral, and religious life, it is of the utmost importance that every effort be expended toward the highest development of the Negro woman.

Much of the work which the Presbyterian Church in the United States is doing on behalf of the Negro woman is quite unique. It has aroused interest among leaders of other denominations and its methods have been employed by others. A leader of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America stated:

"The efforts of church organizations to apply the principles of good will in interracial cooperation are illustrated in a movement fostered by the Woman's Auxiliary of the Southern Presbyterian Church. Over a period of years a series of summer conferences has been developed. . . . There is abundant testimony on the part of the participants to the practical and lasting results, material and spiritual, of these conferences."¹

The work has aroused interest not only in the United States but also in other lands. Miss Katherine Matthews of London, England, Secretary of the International Union, the woman's division of the Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the world holding the Presbyterian System, wrote:

"Occasionally I see a reference to the Conferences for Colored Women which leads me to think that it must be a very successful work and also most interesting."²

The work is therefore worthy of careful study.

Very little research has been made into the work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States for the Negro. As one of the leaders in the work of Negro evangelization has stated:

"The history of the work done for the Negroes by the Presbyterian people in the South forms a virgin field for research."³

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1. Information Service of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 1926
2. Quoted in mimeographed material from the office of the Committee on Woman's Work
3. Sikes, W.M.: Article "A Review of Our Negro Work for the Diamond Jubilee", Presbyterian Survey, September, 1926

C. The Method of Procedure

In approaching the problem of evaluating the work of the Church for the Negro woman, it will be necessary first to understand the Negro woman herself - her characteristics, her needs, and her problems. The first chapter of this study will therefore include a brief history of the life of the Negro woman in the southern United States from the time of her introduction to America up to the present day. This will be followed by a survey of the various phases of the life of the Negro woman in the South today.

The work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States will next be considered: first the history of the work from its beginning to the present time, and second a survey of all the work now being carried on.

The final chapter will contain an evaluation of the total contribution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to the life of the Negro woman of the South, with suggestions for a future program.

D. The Sources of the Present Study

There is available a very wide field of general material on the Negro in America. A number of books have been read for the purpose of gaining a general background and an appreciation of the best thought that has been given by both Negro and white authors to the subject of race relations in America.

All available books relating to the work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States among the Negroes have been read. A number of the annual missions study books have been found helpful.

Through the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, copies of annual reports of the entire Woman's Auxiliary and of the various Synodicals have been secured. Articles from the church papers have been consulted. Pamphlets prepared by various interracial agencies have been read. A great deal of valuable material has also been gained through correspondence and personal interviews with men and women who are actively engaged in the work of the Church among Negro women.

CHAPTER I

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF THE
NEGRO WOMAN IN THE SOUTHERN UNITED STATES

CHAPTER I
A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF THE
NEGRO WOMAN IN THE SOUTHERN UNITED STATES

A. The Introduction of the Negro
Woman into America

John Rolfe of the Jamestown colony, in his Journal of 1619, writes, "There came in a Dutch man of warre that sold us twenty negars".¹ This is the first clear record of the bringing of Negroes into America. Whether there were women in this group is not known, but surely this marked the beginning of a commerce which was to affect tremendously the destiny of Negro womanhood.

The first Negroes who came to America were accepted not as slaves, but as indentured servants. "They seem to have been accepted on much the same basis as the white indentured servants and probably were sold for a period of servitude only."² But gradually there came to be more and more of a distinction between Negro slaves and white servants. Voluntary servitude became involuntary. Negroes came to be treated as chattels or property to be disposed of at will.

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1. Cf. Brown, Ina Corinne: The Story of the American Negro, p. 4
2. Ibid., p. 27

Slavery was not a new institution to the Negro woman. Johnson says:

"A mild domestic slavery was a part of the social organization of many African peoples and there existed among them a profound and deeply embedded respect for the authority of the chief. These old tribal habits help to explain how the Negro fell into the pattern of slavery."¹

Slavery proved to be a very profitable institution in the southern United States, because

"The plentifulness and cheapness of land, the impossibility of developing a staple crop with labor bound only for a brief period of years, and the inevitability of losing hired help fixed the logic of slavery."²

With the invention of the cotton gin in 1793 there came a new impetus to the bringing in of slaves - both men and women. Despite the efforts of abolitionist leaders, the slave trade continued until after the beginning of the Civil War. The total number of Negroes landed in America from the beginning to the end of the slave trade cannot have been less than twelve million and was probably more.³

B. The Life of the Negro Woman

Prior to the Civil War

1. Her Work

It was for the heavy work of the fields that

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1. Johnson, Charles S.: A Preface to Racial Understanding, p. 6
2. Ibid., p. 22
3. Cf. Washington, Booker T.: The Story of the Negro, Vol. II, p. 106

the average Negro woman was considered most valuable. From early morning until sunset she labored, often side by side with the men, in the cotton field, the rice field, or on some other part of the plantation. As soon as she was old enough to work at all, she was given her place in the fields. It was often back-breaking toil in great heat. Yet she must go on giving her strength and her life to the task and making her contribution to the upbuilding of the agricultural South.

Fortunate indeed was the Negro woman who was chosen to work in her master's house instead of in the fields. She was usually chosen because of intelligence and good appearance. She was given the work of cook, laundress, children's nurse, or maid. Thus she came into daily contact with the white family and had many opportunities which were denied the field hands. She was trained carefully by her mistress. Indeed:

"Many a Southern home was a better model for an industrial school than some that have been established of late years for white and black girls. The training was individual, thorough, practical, and the result the finest domestic service that ever existed."¹

The work of the house servants was thus very similar to that of the domestic servants in many homes today.

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1. Helm, Mary: The Upward Path, p. 52

2. Her Home and Family Life

Slave quarters were provided on all the plantations. Generally they were rude cabins with very meager furniture. Many are the conflicting reports as to the type of family life which existed. It is undoubtedly true that in some cases families were separated; women had to endure the agony of seeing their husbands and children sold to other plantations. But as a general rule, families were kept together. Marriage relations were encouraged by the masters and counted honorable by them.¹

A deep affection existed within the slave families. From Africa the Negro brought with him a deep love and respect for his mother. A missionary says:

"Whatever other estimate we may form of the African, we may not doubt his love for his mother. Her name, whether dead or alive, is always on his lips and in his heart."²

There was little time for the family to be together as they were all working from dawn to sunset on some part of the plantation. But when evening came they congregated to talk and very often to sing together. They were not allowed to leave the plantation after nightfall

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1. Cf. Helm, Mary: Op. cit., p. 49
2. Wilson, Leighton, quoted by Washington, Booker T.: The Story of the Negro, p. 44

without a written permit from their master. So the cabin was their meeting place.

It is interesting to know what provision was made for mothers of young children:

"On most plantations expectant mothers and nursing mothers were guarded from overwork. On some plantations mothers were given no work that took them away from their small children; on other plantations all the children were placed under the care of one woman called a tender."¹

But in many cases little children were simply allowed to run wild until they were old enough to be put to work.

3. Her Education

The Negro woman in slavery days had very little opportunity for education. From early childhood she was set to work and forced to give her whole time to labor. As the number of slaves grew larger and there was increasing fear of insurrection, most of the states passed stringent laws, forbidding any teaching whatsoever.

"Yet laws were not always obeyed and each master could usually do pretty much as he pleased with his slaves as long as they were kept in order. The slave's opportunity for enlightenment and progress thus depended to a large extent on the character of his master and of course to a degree on the occupation to which the slave himself was assigned."²

Some masters did teach their slaves to read - especially

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1. Helm, Mary: Op. cit., p. 45
2. Brown, Ina Corinne: Op. cit., p. 53

those who were house servants. In connection with their Sunday Schools they were sometimes taught enough to read their Bibles.

The house servants, as has already been indicated, had many special privileges.

"The privileged women learned to spin, weave, and sew. They were cooks, maids, dairy maids, and laundresses. Some of them became excellent nurses, midwives, and even doctors after a fashion."¹

Thus even in slavery times was built the foundation of some of the achievements which have since been made by Negro women.

4. Her Religious Life

The Negro woman is by nature religious. She has a depth of emotion and capacity for worship which far surpasses that of the average white woman. So from the very first she turned eagerly to the teachings of the Christian faith.

In the early days of slavery there was opposition to Christianizing the Negroes because the institution of slavery was justified on the ground that the slaves were infidels. Later there was opposition because of the fear of insurrection. Yet through it all many masters were providing religious services and instruction

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1. Brown, Ina Corinne: Op. cit., p. 54

for their slaves. On most plantations regular religious services were conducted each Sunday in the barn or in some other place especially provided for the purpose. These services were conducted sometimes by the master, sometimes by a visiting missionary, and sometimes by one of the slaves. The practice of having separate galleries for the slaves in the white churches, introduced by the Cumberland Street Methodist Church of Charleston in 1787, was adopted by many other churches in the years preceding the Civil War.¹

In cases where the masters opposed religious services, the Negroes would meet secretly in swamps and cane breaks. They had a great hunger for knowledge of Christ which must be satisfied.

The reality of the religious life of the Negro slave is evident in the great Negro spirituals which grew out of this period. These spirituals, which are generally accepted as the production of the entire group, express the sincere religious experience, the worship, the simple faith, the utter dependence upon God which carried the Negro woman through the hardest days.

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1. Cf. Bowen, Trevor: Divine White Right, p. 116

5. Attitude of the White Race toward Her

The attitude of the white race toward the Negro race as a whole in this time was quite different from their attitude toward Negro women as individuals. Toward the race as a whole they felt an infinite superiority. The Negro was regarded as an inferior being, a chattel, one incapable of progress or achievement. Slavery had to be justified in some way. Hence attitudes were adopted which would best tend to justify it. White men said that it was all right to enslave the Negroes because they were heathen, their souls could not be saved. Later they based their actions on the philosophy that all Negro peoples are essentially inferior.

"They were sons of Ham, cursed from the earliest days, and hence fit only to be hewers of wood and drawers of water."¹

Constant fear of insurrection was felt. For this reason numerous laws were passed to restrict the slaves. Suspicion and distrust often prevailed.

On the other hand, when one considers the attitude toward the individual Negro woman, he finds a much brighter picture. No relationship could be more beautiful than that of the Negro "Mammy" and the white children placed under her care. For the servants who worked

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1. Brown, Ina Corinne: Op. cit., p. 13

in the home, the white family felt a real trust and love.

These servants were:

"... loyal to the last degree to the white family and its traditions, identifying themselves with it to the extent of feeling themselves a part of it in joy or sorrow, and having a sense of ownership in all that belonged to it."¹

On the better plantations the white mistress took a personal interest in the welfare of all the Negro women, visiting in the quarters, tending them when they were sick, teaching and ministering to them.

Booker T. Washington has beautifully expressed the individual relationship:

"The simple-hearted devotion of the Negro slave women to their masters and their masters' families was one of the redeeming features of Negro slavery in the South. When all other ties which bound the races together in the South have snapped asunder, this tie of affection has held fast."²

6. Contrasting Plantations

The life of the Negro woman prior to the Civil War cannot be pictured adequately by a description of any one plantation. Conditions differed very greatly.

Two widely varying plantations may be described in illustration of this fact. The first was that of a wealthy planter in one of the border states. Here the

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1. Helm, Mary: Op. cit., p. 52

2. Washington, Booker T.: Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 299

slaves were given comfortable, well furnished quarters in which to live. Families were kept together. Mothers were freed from work during the time when their children were small. They were permitted to plant gardens, raise chickens, make visits, enjoy holidays. The master personally supervised the work of the slaves, provided abundant food and adequate clothing, permitted no cruel punishments. The mistress visited in the quarters, nursed the sick, taught the women, and loved the children. The white children often visited in the Negro quarters and listened eagerly to the stories the women had to tell. Each Sunday a minister came to the plantation and held Sunday School and church services for the slaves. This is a true picture of conditions. Except for the shadow of bondage, the Negro women were happy.

The second plantation was in the deep South on a marshy stretch of land. The master did not live on the plantation and visited it only occasionally. No mistress was ever there. An ignorant and cruel overseer was in charge. The slaves lived in dirty, crowded quarters. The women were forced to work at all times and were often beaten. Family ties were disregarded, children were filthy and neglected. Sick persons received no adequate attention, clothing was insufficient, food was unwholesome. This too is a true picture. Needless

to say, the Negro women were desperately unhappy.

In between these two extremes lay hundreds of plantations of varying degrees of kindness and opportunity.

7. The Free Negro Woman

"Few people now realize the extent to which the free Negro figured in the population of the country prior to the Civil War."¹ The free Negro population in the South just before the Civil War has been estimated at over a quarter of a million.²

So we must take into account the part that the free Negro woman has played in our history. Washington says:

"To the twenty-five million dollars, which it is estimated the free Negroes accumulated before the Civil War, the thrift and industry of Negro women contributed no small amount."³

Many of the Negro women were freed by their masters in their wills. Other slaves were helped to buy their freedom. Many of the Negro men made heroic efforts to buy the freedom of their wives and children.

It is interesting to know that a number of the free Negroes owned slaves. In some cases they purchased them for personal reasons or benevolent purposes - in order to make their lot easier. An outstanding example

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1. Woodson, Carter G.: The Negro in Our History, p. 243
 2. Cf. Helm, Mary: Op. cit., p. 43
 3. Washington, Booker T.: Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 302

of the free Negro woman is Marie Louise Bitaud of New Orleans who in 1832 purchased a number of slaves for purely benevolent reasons.¹

Even the free Negro woman, however, could make very little progress. She was subjected to all kinds of restrictive legislation, was forbidden to go to school, was excluded from most occupations and was generally looked upon with contempt by the white race.

C. The Life of the Negro Woman

During the Civil War

1. Her Attitude toward Freedom

For many years before the conflict actually came, the stage was being set for war between North and South. Sectional differences became steadily sharper and more distinct. And the Negro became the center around which much controversy raged. In the North the abolitionists condemned all the South as corrupt because of the existence of slavery. In the South the slave holders, resentful of such bitter denunciation, considered the entire North as evil. There were many causes of difference between the sections. But none presented so fruitful and dramatic a subject for debate as the subject of

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1. Cf. Woodson, Carter G.: Op. cit., p. 246

slavery. Hence around the head of the innocent Negro broke a storm of angry controversy.

Through all this time the majority of the Negro women were going quietly about their work on the plantation. In most cases they were cut off from the rest of the world in a plantation world all its own. What was going on outside came to them only in rumors and vague reports usually brought from the great house by the house servants.

Always there was in the hearts of the Negro slaves a desire for freedom. Often this was vague and unexpressed, something to be dreamed of as a sort of paradise. This desire found its chief expression in the Negro spirituals in which they sang, "Freedom, Lord, Freedom".

To a small group the desire for freedom became so strong that escapes to the northern states and to Canada were attempted and often succeeded. Underground railroads were built to help in effecting escapes.

On the whole, however, the attitude toward freedom was simply a vague longing in the hearts of the Negro women.

2. Loyalty to the White Mistress

When the War actually began, slaves on hundreds of plantations throughout the South were called

together by their masters. The masters explained why they must go away to war and entrusted to their slaves the care of the plantation and the protection of the mistress and children.

The Negro women accepted their responsibility with great earnestness. They had some conception of the fact that their freedom was involved in this conflict; yet they could not look upon their own masters as enemies. They gave themselves to the service of their mistresses, trusting to God to bring good out of the conflict.

The story of the loyalty and devotion of the Negro slaves during the years of war is unparalleled. In that time of havoc and destruction, they might so easily have deserted their mistresses, seized their freedom, looted and robbed. But instead they stood true to their trust. Weatherford has expressed our debt to the Negro men and women of Civil War days in these words:

"Every true son of the South owes the Negro a debt of gratitude for his unselfishness, his faithfulness, and his devotion to the whites of the section during the dark and bloody days of the Civil War. Looking back at that period from the present unrest, one marvels that, during all those days of civil strife, no planter ever had the least fear in leaving his wife and daughters in the care of the trusted slave. So far as I have been able to learn, not a single slave ever betrayed that sacred trust."¹

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1. Weatherford, W. D. : Negro Life in the South, p.34

D. The Problems of Adjustment of the
Negro Woman During Reconstruction

"It is difficult to imagine more complete social and economic chaos than that which was found in the South following the war."¹ Four years of conflict on Southern soil had left the land waste, the cities in ruins, the people poor, the morale broken.

Into this chaos were released four million slaves - men and women, uneducated, dependent, utterly unprepared to care for themselves. "It was a change as bewildering and attended with as much suffering as that which brought them out from the African jungle into American slavery."²

Negro women found themselves and their families cut loose from the moorings which had always held them. They had longed for freedom in the past and dreamed of it as a sort of paradise. But in reality it brought to many only bewilderment and fear.

Many problems had to be faced. First and most pressing was the problem of securing food, clothing, and shelter - all of which had been furnished before. In close relation to this was the problem of employment.

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1. Brown, Ina C. : Op. cit., p. 82
2. Helm, Mary : Op. cit., p. 67

Formerly she had been under direct control and dependence upon her master. Now she was under the necessity of seeking employment in a time when white as well as black were destitute and scarcely able to support themselves.

It has been stated that the morale of the South was broken. There was almost no organization or control. Consequently vice was rampant. The Negroes, suddenly released from slavery and with no restraints, found themselves faced with constant temptation to theft, immorality, drunkenness, laziness. Is it any wonder that under the circumstances many yielded to such temptations?

To complicate matters still further, white men from other sections poured into the South and made the innocent Negro the tool of their own exploitation.

"The Negro was taught that the white man was his enemy, when he should have been taught to cultivate his friendship. He was told he was the equal of the white man, when he was not; that he was the ward of the nation, when he should have been trained to self-reliance; that the government would sustain him, when he could not be sustained. In legislation he was taught thieving; in politics to slavishly follow his leaders; in private life he was taught insolence. To these teachings may be traced most of the misfortunes of the Negro race, and indeed of the whole South since the War."¹

Negroes were forced into voting and holding office when they were in no manner prepared for it. For

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1. Page, Thomas Nelson: The Negro: The Southerner's Problem, p. 45 - quoted by Helm, Mary: Op. cit., pp. 81-82

eight years a number of southern states were partly, and three were wholly, under Negro control.¹ Naturally these Negroes were unable to govern wisely, naturally they were the tools of politicians, naturally bitterness and resentment resulted. The Negro women suffered constantly from the tension, the hatred, the uncertainty of the situation.

One bright spot in these dark days was the relationship which continued to exist between many slaves and their former masters. Many of the women preferred to stay on at the plantations and assist the white people in rebuilding. Many others were helped and protected by their former masters in their efforts to secure employment.

E. The Life of the Negro Woman in the New South

1. Attitude of the White Race

Gradually, through effort and through suffering, order was brought out of chaos in the South. The white people rebuilt their homes and institutions.

"It was inevitable that the Southern whites should regain control of the machinery of government and that in so doing they should seek to put the Negro

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1. Helm, Mary: Op. cit., p 84

into a place of subordination."¹

Because of all that they had suffered during Reconstruction, many of the southern white people felt resentment toward the Negroes who had been the tools of exploitation and injustice. Because the majority of the Negroes who had been given the vote and had been pushed into office were totally unprepared and unfitted, many white people assumed that the Negro must be by nature inferior. So the Negro woman in the new South faced estrangement from some white people who had formerly been her friends, bitter resentment from many, and an attitude of superiority from all. She realized that although freedom had nominally been given, a long and slow struggle still lay ahead.

2. Her Work

The problem of finding employment was not so great as during Reconstruction days. As social and economic conditions became settled throughout the South, there were many openings for menial work. A large majority of the Negro women found employment as house servants in the homes of white people - as cooks, laundresses, cleaners, maids, children's nurses, etc. Others were

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1. Brown, Ina C.: Op. cit., p. 91

employed in various forms of unskilled labor - as pressers in laundries, maids in stores, waitresses in restaurants and hotels, or operators in factories.

A number of the more progressive Negro women secured education so that they might become teachers of their own people. By 1890 there were 25,000 colored teachers at work and more than a million colored children in school.¹

3. Her Education

There was a great hunger for education in the hearts of the Negro women. Many of them "turned to education as the magic key that would unlock all doors."² Even old women longed to learn enough to read their Bibles.

Teachers from the North had poured into the Southern states during the Reconstruction days. The Freedmen's Bureau, organized in 1865, had founded numerous schools. "By 1870 250,000 persons were enrolled in night schools, day schools, Sunday Schools, industrial schools and colleges set up under its influence and supervision."³

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1. Cf. Brown, Ina C.: Op. cit., p. 99
2. Ibid., p. 95
3. Ibid., p. 95

"The South had to recover from the War and Reconstruction before it was able to do much for schools."¹ Indeed the white schools were very inadequate for a long period after the war. But gradually, as conditions improved, free public schools for Negroes were established in all the states. Many of these schools were poorly equipped and taught by ill-trained teachers. But at least an elementary education was available for Negro women throughout the New South. High schools and colleges were opened by various denominations. Many of these were co-educational; some were just for women. Thus hundreds of Negro women were able to continue their education and many of them prepared to become teachers of their own people.

4. Effect of the World War upon Her

The Negro women of the South, along with other groups throughout the nation, were affected by the World War. As the men of the nation were called away to fight in other lands, much of their work had to be taken over by women. "An opportunity was also provided during the World War to fill the places of immigrants whose services

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1. Sikes, W. M.: The Historical Development of Stillman Institute, p. 26

were needed in the fatherlands."¹ Consequently many more Negro women went into industry.

5. Migration Northward

The greatest movement in the history of the Negro in America took place during and immediately following the World War. Starting about 1914, Negroes from the South began migrating in great numbers to the cities of the North or the Middle West. Between 1914 and 1928 it is estimated that there was a migration of approximately 1,200,000 Negroes or about one-seventh of the Negro population in the South.²

"Women were among the last to join the migration, but ultimately many women and girls left the farms for work either as servants or as factory workers in the North."³

There were numerous forces behind this migration from the South. Johnson sums them up as economic and sentimental.⁴ Under the economic forces are included the opening up of industrial positions during the War, the pressure of poor crops in the South, and the competition with whites. Among the sentimental forces are rest-

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1. Johnson, Charles S.: A Preface to Racial Understanding, p. 9
2. Cf. Bowen, Trevor: Divine White Right, p. 63
3. Ibid., p. 47
4. Johnson, Charles S.: The Negro in American Civilization, p. 21

lessness, education with its accompanying vision and desire for greater achievement, the glowing accounts painted by employment agents who came in large numbers from the North, and the feeling that in the North there would be greater equality with the whites.

Despite this migration, however, by far the majority of the Negro women of America are still living in the southern states.

F. Outstanding Negro Women of the South

Most of the southern Negro women have lived in obscurity, making their contributions quietly and generally without recognition.

A few, however, do stand out. No history of the Negro woman would be complete without a tribute to some of these outstanding women. A number of them are in the teaching field.

"In the profession of teaching the work of coloured women has been, to a marked degree, one in which heroism has played a part worthy of record and remembrance. Were I asked to select an example of the best type of the Negro woman's work for the uplift of her race since freedom began, without a moment's hesitancy my choice would be the coloured woman teacher, especially the one who has borne the burden of teaching in the rural districts of the South, where she has had to labour, for the most part without the hope of material

reward or the praise of men."¹

Mrs. Mary S. Peake has the distinction of being the first teacher at Hampton, the first day school for the freedmen. She was an educated free Negro woman.

Lucy Laney in 1886 started Haines Institute, a secondary school for Negro boys and girls in Augusta, Georgia which was "long known as the best school of its kind in Georgia",² She had a kindergarten when such institutions were scarcely known in the South. She introduced manual training. It was she who brought about better housing conditions for the Negroes, and in many ways contributed to the betterment of her race.

Virginia E. Randolph, the first teacher under the Jeanes Foundation, began her work in Henrico County, Virginia, in 1907. The Jeanes Foundation was established for the purpose of helping the small Negro rural schools of the South. Miss Randolph was made supervisor of Negro rural education in Henrico County and did a splendid work in introducing the industrial arts into all of the schools. In 1926 she was honored with the Harmon Award in education. In 1937 a fund known as the Virginia Randolph Fund was established in her honor by southern

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1. Washington, Booker T.: Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 108
2. Ovington, Mary W.: Portraits in Color, p. 53

Negroes. This is the first permanent endowment fund of a general nature ever created to carry the name of a member of the Negro race.

Mrs. Janie Porter Barrett, as President of the Colored Club Women of Virginia, led in the establishment of the Richmond Industrial School for delinquent Negro girls. This school, at first supported entirely by Negro women, filled such a real need that its support was finally taken over by the state.

"All over the South, and in many parts of the North, wherever the Negroes live in large numbers, colored orphan asylums have been established to care for the neglected children from among whom Negro criminals are so frequently recruited. A number of these have been started upon the small savings and pious faith of some good colored woman."¹

Carrie Steele, a former slave, founded in Atlanta, Georgia, one of the best known of these orphanages. In order to raise money for establishing the orphanage which she felt was so greatly needed, she wrote a book, telling the story of her own life. The book found a ready sale and in 1890 her home was started. It began with only five children but has grown rapidly until today it is a large institution. It is supported partly by the Negro people of Atlanta and partly by the city.

Dr. Sadie Dillon, a colored woman, was the first woman physician who was ever granted a license to

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1. Washington, Booker T.: Op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 109-110

practice medicine in the state of Alabama.

Dr. Matilda A. Evans founded the Taylor-Lane Hospital at Orangeburg, S. C. It is an interesting fact that among her patients have been descendants of the family to which her grandmother and mother had belonged as slaves.¹

Mrs. Maggie L. Walker, a Negro woman and daughter of an ex-slave, is the founder and president of "St. Luke's Penny Savings Bank" in Richmond, Virginia, the first bank in the country founded by a woman and one of the very few that has a woman president.²

A number of Negro women from the South have won distinction as singers. Among them may be mentioned Ella Shepard, Jennie Jackson, Maggie Porter, and Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield.

These are only a few of many women who might be mentioned. But this brief list serves to show the unlimited possibilities of achievement on the part of Negro womanhood.

G. Summary

The account of the life of the Negro woman in America is a fascinating story of oppression, suffering,

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1. Cf. Washington, B. T.: Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 175
2. Cf. Hammond, Lily H.: In the Vanguard of a Race, p. 108

and struggle, of slow and painful progress, of loyalty, and of courage. There are many dark shadows in the story, many things which one wishes might have been different. Yet through it all God has been working and preparing the Negro woman to play an ever larger part in the uplift and destiny of her race.

"When we think how few generations ago these Negro women had to begin at the beginning, and of the ages through which our own women have been lifting our ideals, we must admit that the Negro women are entitled, not only to our sympathy, but to our respect, admiration and cooperation."¹

1. Hammond, Lily H.: Op. cit., Introduction, pp.XII-XIII

CHAPTER II
THE LIFE OF THE NEGRO WOMAN
IN THE SOUTH TODAY

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A. INTRODUCTION

Many of the same forces which influenced the history of the Negro woman in the southern United States are still at work, determining her life today. It is the purpose of this chapter to present an unprejudiced picture of conditions as they exist among Negro women in the southern United States today. Such a picture is of necessity a many-sided one. An attempt will be made to survey the various important phases of the Negro woman's life and to suggest the emotional forces and attitudes which surround her. It is only through such a survey that one can discover the problems and needs which must be met by any program that seeks to make a contribution to the life of the Negro woman in the South today.

B. The Home Life of the Negro Woman

The surest index to the progress of any race or civilization is to be found in the character of its homes. Undoubtedly there has been great progress in Negro home life from the days of the slave quarters to the present time. As Paul Douglass expresses it:

"The transfer of black mothers and daughters since emancipation from the kitchen or field to the fireside, with its privacy, sanctities, and graces, is perhaps the most radical revolution in the structure of Negro society."¹

The Negro woman holds a unique status in family life. She has vastly greater authority in the home than does the average white woman. In slavery days the husband could exercise no authority because his wife belonged to the white master. Through the years her earning power has been only slightly less than his. Thus she has had an important measure of independence which still exists today.²

The home is a greater social center for the Negro woman than for the average American. Barred as she is from amusement and recreation centers, she must find fellowship and enjoyment among her own people and in her own home. Consequently it is of utmost importance that the Negro homes be raised to the highest possible level.

Negro homes now show the same difference in standards as do the homes of white Americans. The race as a whole is seeking earnestly to make its homes neat and attractive. Houses are being painted, grounds kept clean, and rooms adequately furnished. Yet even the wealthy group is faced constantly with the problem of

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1. Douglass, H. P.: Christian Reconstruction in the South, p. 141
2. Cf. Johnson, C. S.: A Preface to Racial Understanding, p. 58

forced segregation.

"In the vast majority of places Negroes cannot choose their homes as do other Americans on the basis of income and interest; they must live in certain areas, almost always the poorest and most run down parts of the town."¹

Decent public facilities - lights, adequate water supply, paved streets, garbage collections - are often not supplied in Negro sections of a community.

Living conditions among Negro farmers and sharecroppers in the deep South are very poor. The women of this section are carrying on a desperate struggle to clothe and feed their families on the inadequate wage which they receive. They live in cabins of one, two, or three rooms, poorly furnished, poorly kept, and terribly crowded. Medical attention is almost unknown. The women do all the heavy house work with none of the modern conveniences, often work in the fields with the men, and bear more children than any other group of women in America.²

"Until the Negro's economic condition improves and the restrictions of forced segregation are removed, housing remains as one of the great unsolved problems."³

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1. Pamphlet: Glimpses of Negro Americans, p. 6
2. Cf. Pamphlet: The South's Landless Farmers, p. 5
3. Pamphlet: Glimpses of Negro Americans, p. 7

C. The Health of the Negro Woman

The health of the Negro woman is vitally related to her home life. As living conditions among numbers of Negroes in the South have been improved, the amount of sickness and death has been greatly lessened. Louis I. Dublin, who has made a careful study of statistics, states:

"The expectation of life of the Negro has increased almost twelve years since the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1900 it was only about thirty-three years; but now it has been extended to forty-five years. This means that virtually one-third has been added to the life span of a whole race in a period of less than thirty years - an amazing achievement."¹

Nevertheless the mortality rate among Negroes still remains far above that of the white race. Dublin states that it is fully two-thirds higher.²

Maternal mortality accounts for a great part of the high death rate among Negro women. Much of this mortality is due to venereal diseases which are dangerously prevalent among Negroes as a result of low moral standards aggravated by crowded, unsanitary living conditions.

It was formerly believed by many students that the Negro was racially susceptible to certain diseases. This theory, however, is being discredited through scientific study. For example, tuberculosis has long been considered the chief cause of death among Negro men and women. Yet as Bowen states:

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1. Quoted by Johnson, C. S.: The Negro in American Civilization, p. 407
2. Ibid., p. 406

"The physical conditions which surround the majority of Negroes would conduce to tuberculosis in any race."¹

There is a great need for health education among Negro women throughout the South. In many communities health programs are carried on actively among the white citizens but are not extended at all to the Negro groups. Many Negro women have no opportunity to learn of better methods of caring for their homes, of caring for themselves before and after child birth, or of nursing the sick. Public health clinics, dental examinations, and inoculations against contagious diseases are not generally provided in Negro sections.² There is a tremendous need for trained Negro nurses, especially for public health work.

Hospitalization facilities for Negroes in the South are totally inadequate. There is one hospital bed available for every two thousand Negroes in this country as compared with one bed for every one hundred and fifty of the white population.³ In many instances the lack of hospital facilities has caused death. One outstanding instance is that of Miss Julia Dericotte, Dean of Women at Fisk University. In 1931 Miss Dericotte was injured

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1. Bowen, Trevor: Divine White Right, p. 182
2. Cf. Pamphlet: Population Problems in the South, p. 8
3. Cf. Bowen: Op. cit., p. 198

in an automobile accident at Dalton, Georgia. The only hospital in the town was a white one which refused to admit her for treatment. Consequently it was necessary to move her thirty-six miles over very rough roads to a Negro hospital. She died the next day because treatment had been too long delayed.¹

Summing up the health situation among Negroes as it exists today, Douglass has asked:

"When one subtracts the deaths which are due to poverty, to bad sanitation and to preventable diseases; those which are due to social hardships which brotherliness may overcome; and those which are due to vice which the race may conquer, how much is left as a general racial residuum indicating inferior physical stamina in the Negro as such?"²

D. The Educational Opportunity of the Negro Woman

The educational progress of the Negro race in the past sixty years has been phenomenal. Whereas the illiteracy of the race in 1865 was ninety-five percent, it is today less than twenty percent.³ There is no doubt of the eagerness of the Negro woman to receive an education.

Throughout the South today there is a dual

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1. Cf. Watson, Frank D.: A Quest in Interracial Understanding, p. 17
2. Cf. Douglass, H. P.: Op. cit., p. 182
3. Cf. Padelford, Frank: Pamphlet, Christian Schools for Negroes, p. 4

public school system. The Negro schools are supported by taxes, but the appropriations for white and Negro schools are vastly different. The Southern states spend each year \$44.31 per white pupil and \$12.57 per Negro pupil. Thus the Negro pupil receives in public support of her education only about one-fourth that of the southern white child.¹

Negro schools in the cities are often overcrowded, new buildings are seldom erected, equipment is inadequate, and teachers are poorly paid. In rural districts, particularly in the deep South, school conditions are much more serious. In many cases the Negroes do not even have school buildings, but have to meet in churches or lodge halls. Hundreds of Negro schools have no desks for the children, no chair for the teacher, no blackboards, and very few text-books.²

Negro education in the South has been greatly aided in recent years through two funds established especially for that purpose. The first, the Jeanes Foundation, was established in 1907 by Anna T. Jeanes of Philadelphia to be used in providing supervision in small rural schools. The second, the Rosenwald Fund, was founded in

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1. Cf. Pamphlet: Every Tenth Pupil, p. 3
2. Cf. Pamphlet: The South's Landless Farmers, p. 8

1913 by Mr. Julius Rosenwald of Chicago to be used in erecting more adequate Negro school buildings.

There are many opportunities for Negro women to continue their education in colleges, industrial schools, and other institutions. Church denominations, both northern and southern, have established colleges in the South. The four types of Negro higher schools in the South today are: 1) Theological and Biblical, 2) College and Professional, 3) Normal, and 4) Industrial.¹ In most of these schools it is possible for students to pay their expenses through work scholarships.

The opportunities for adult education are limited. Few courses or forums are ever conducted for Negro women. They are not permitted to attend most of the educational programs presented in white auditoriums, schools, or theaters. They do not have the advantage of health education programs, or classes in cooking and child care to any such extent as do white women.

From this survey of Negro education, it is evident that although much progress has been made in the past sixty years, it is still necessary that great improvement be made in public school and adult education systems.

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1. Cf. Sikes, W. M.: The Historical Development of Stillman Institute, p. 107

E. The Place of the Negro Woman in
Domestic Service and in Industry

The Negro women of the South may be divided into four groups according to their occupations.¹ First is a very small leisure group - the wives and daughters of men who are in business, in professions, or in well paid personal service positions.

Second, there is a most active and progressive group in business and the professions. The large majority in this group are teachers, both urban and rural. The group also includes trained nurses and public health workers, a small number of social workers, librarians, poets, novelists, doctors, lawyers, and those engaged in various commercial enterprises. Those in business face constant discrimination from employment agencies and employers. "The last to be hired and the first to be fired" is a substantially true indictment.²

The third group consists of a large number working in the trades and in industry. For a great many years Negro women have been employed in certain definitely industrialized trades in the South - as tobacco indus-

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1. Cf. Locke, Alain: The New Negro, p. 370
2. Cf. Bowen, Trevor: Op. cit., p. 212

tries, peanut packing, and canning factories.¹ Many are employed in what Johnson calls "the border-line jobs"² between domestic service and industry - e.g. such occupations as chamber maids in hotels, workers in laundries, elevator attendants, and maids in stores.

The position of Negro women in industry has become quite precarious since the World War. This is chiefly due to competition with white women. Prior to the War, white women in the South did not generally seek industrial positions because they involved to some extent a loss of social status. Recently, however, white women have been seeking such positions and have in many instances crowded out Negro workers. A Negro woman in a typical Virginia community made the following statement in this connection:

"She (the Negro woman), in some cases, is well prepared to work, but has been crowded out. There is nothing for her to do. The places that she once held are given over to other races. She can't enter factories or shops of any kind. It is very hard for her to get on relief. She can't even register for relief. In my community there are many working who really don't have to work. It is a wonder to me that we don't commit more crimes because of our needs and, too, the unjust way we are treated. I doubt if we have one dozen Negro women and girls at work in my community. We haven't heard of checks being sent to unemployed Negroes. The thing we want most is a place to work

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1. Cf. Johnson, C. S.: The Negro in American Civilization, p. 190
2. Ibid., p. 390

and make an honest living."¹

The fourth and largest group of southern Negro women consists of those in domestic service. Bowen estimates that twenty-six percent of all employed Negroes are domestic servants.² In many areas their wages are as low as two to four dollars a week.³

Negro women play a vital part in the business, industrial, and home life of the nation, although they still suffer greatly from unjust discrimination based upon racial prejudice.

"Negro women who have always been obliged to work outside their own homes in much larger proportion than white women, have helped to pioneer the advance of all women in modern life."⁴

F. The Religious Life of the Negro Woman

The Church is the center of the life of a majority of the Negro women of the South today. It is estimated that the number of women thirteen years of age and over included on the rolls of Negro churches represents seventy-three percent of the total number living in the United States.⁵ The Church is for them not only a

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1. Personal correspondence
2. Bowen, Trevor: Op. cit., p. 390
3. Cf. Johnson, Charles S.: A Preface to Racial Understanding, p. 40
4. Pamphlet; Glimpses of Negro Americans, p. 5
5. Cf. Mays and Nicholson: The Negro's Church, p. 101

place of worship, but it is also the social center of the race, the place of amusement, and perhaps the greatest channel for the spread of adult education. The Church has a particularly strong hold upon the Negro woman because of the fact that her opportunities in other lines are so limited. She finds in the Church and its activities fellowship, opportunity for leadership and for service, and freedom from the tension of antagonism and discrimination which surrounds her in the outer world.

The religious life of the Negro woman is naturally more emotional than that of the white woman. It centers in worship which must be audibly expressed. The tendency in many congregations is to stress the other-worldly aspect of religion. Gradually the other-worldly, highly emotional type of preaching is passing. But its effects are still felt, particularly in the separation of religion from morals. As Weatherford has said: "This divorcement of religion and morals is perhaps the most serious phase of the Negro problem."¹

The Negro Church has been greatly weakened through the fact that many of its ministers are untrained. No set requirements are generally made and any man who feels a call to preach may organize a church. It has been

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1. Weatherford, W. D.: Negro Life in the South, p. 132

estimated that of the present ministry eighty percent are not college graduates.¹ A large percentage are not even graduates of high schools. This situation is slowly being remedied as the masses of Negro men and women are reaching higher cultural and intellectual levels and consequently are demanding better training; they no longer simply accept the authority of a man because he claims to be "called of God".

More than half of the Negro churches have indebtedness. Consequently their programs cannot be adequate. Ministers are poorly paid; and it is impossible to afford trained secretaries and religious education workers. This condition is partly due to the fact that the Negro is over-churched. In cities and towns there are many churches in one small neighborhood often with a spirit of rivalry among them. In the rural areas it is estimated that there is a church for every ninety-one Negroes.²

From this survey it is evident that the Church remains today the strongest force in the life of the Negro woman of the South. It is through the Church that she can best be reached. It is also evident that there is a tremendous need for active help to be given the

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1. Mays and Nicholson: Op. cit., p. 17
2. Ibid., p. 224

Negro woman in her efforts to improve her church life and to make her religion a practical force in everyday living.

G. The Social Position of the
Negro Woman

There is probably no group in the United States today which occupies a more difficult social position than does the Negro woman of the South. Moton, an outstanding leader of his race, has stated it thus:

"Upon no group within the Negro race do the discriminations of public sentiment react with more of hardship and injustice than upon Negro women."¹

From slavery days the tradition of a double standard of morality has existed in the South. "As things stand today in most places she (the Negro woman) is virtually without protection, either in the law or in public sentiment."² She has learned that the traditional Southern chivalry and respect for womanhood does not include Negro womanhood.

Racial segregation is the unwritten law of the South. Negroes are segregated in residential sections, in trains, street cars, and other common carriers, in theaters, churches, hospitals, schools, and recreation centers. In almost every case segregation is accompanied

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1. Moton, Robert R.; What the Negro Thinks, p. 206
2. Ibid., p. 207

by inferior accommodations and service. The Negro woman complains not because she is segregated, but because she is always given the worst place. As a general rule she has to pay as high a price for inferior service as does the white woman for the best service available. Segregation is often accompanied by embarrassment and ill-treatment.

In legal matters injustice still is apparent. Although under the Constitution the Negro woman is entitled to the right to vote, there are many grounds upon which localities succeed in disenfranchising her. When brought into court, heavier sentences are often imposed upon her than upon a white person convicted of the same crime. The attitude of a court is generally prejudiced against a Negro defendant, and very rarely do Negro plaintiffs win a case against white defendants.

In commenting upon the social position of the Negro woman, Elise J. McDougald, an outstanding Negro, said:

"We find the Negro woman, figuratively struck in the face daily by contempt from the world about her. Within her soul, she knows little of peace and happiness. But through it all she is courageously standing erect, developing within herself the moral strength to rise above and conquer false attitudes. She is measuring up to the needs of her family, community, and race, and radiating a hope throughout the land."¹

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1. Quoted by Locke, Alain: Op. cit., p. 382

H. Attitude of the White Race
toward the Negro Woman

One often hears southern white people saying, "We know the Negro woman. We understand her." This is generally spoken in all sincerity. Yet most white people fall far short of a true understanding of the Negro. They know only the poorer class of Negro women - the ones who are servants in their homes. And they know this class only superficially, for they rarely visit in the homes, schools, or churches of their servants. The average white person does not know the educated or professional class of Negro women at all. As Moton says, "There is a whole region of thought and feeling among them with which those outside the race are wholly unacquainted."¹

The great mistake in the attitude of the white race is its tendency to place all Negroes in one group. The whole race is judged by a few individuals, usually of the poorest class. White people fail to realize that differences in individual men and women within a race is of as great significance as differences between races.

Much is said among certain groups of white people about "keeping the Negro in her place". These people claim their willingness to help the Negro in every

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1. Moton, R. R.: Op. cit., p. 13

way just so long as she keeps her place. But when asked to define just what is her place, these people are forced to admit that it is one of unequal opportunity, of constant discrimination and injustice, and of very evident inferiority.

The white race's feeling of superiority often manifests itself in an attitude of condescending and tolerant amusement. Many white people look upon the Negro as a child to be humored but not to be taken too seriously. Humorous stories are often told having their point in the emotionalism, the naivete, the ignorance of some individual Negro. While these stories are told with no ill-feeling, they help to keep alive an intangible attitude of superiority and of condescension.

A factor which seems of relatively slight importance, but which means a great deal to the Negro is the refusal of many white people to give to the Negro woman the titles which she deserves. As one of these women said:

"Some white people deep down in their hearts hate to address us as Mrs. or Miss. In some of our newspapers in speaking of our leading educated women, they will publish her as Mary Jones, well-trained Negro woman; and below this will say, Mrs. John Jones (white) was arrested for being drunk. These things hurt us more than any of the other things we have to swallow."¹

The title Mrs. is one to which every married woman is

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1. Personal correspondence

entitled under the law. To refuse to recognize it is a blow to the pride and one which is bitterly resented by Negro women. It is indicative of the whole attitude of the one who speaks.

Despite these discouraging attitudes which are everywhere evident, the fact remains that the people of the South have a real affection for the Negro woman. Ties formed during slavery times have not been broken; the Negro woman has made her lasting place in the heart and life of the South. As one Negro woman expresses it, "The Southern people are not yet willing to give us the opportunities and advantages we want. Yet we feel that they love us more than people anywhere else in the country."¹

There are individuals and groups throughout the South today who are seeking to grow away from the traditional attitudes and to work with the Negro herself on a basis of equality and of constructive cooperation. Such groups are in colleges, young peoples' organizations, and women's clubs. Mrs. Ames, Secretary of the Interracial Commission of Atlanta, states:

"In the willingness they have shown to cut tradition, prejudice and habit, lies the hope of interracial accomplishment by Southern churchwomen who now have the Negro on their consciences. In the increasing

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1. Personal correspondence

scope of their activities lies the promise of effective action."¹

I. Attitude of the Negro Woman
toward the White Race

There was once a time in Southern history when the Negro woman considered a white skin the badge of superiority. She accorded to the white race as a whole a high position because of its superior advantages, wealth, and education. This attitude does not hold true today, however. The fact that members of the Negro race have made notable achievements in various lines of endeavor and the contrasting fact that white people have fallen down in many ways in their relations to the Negro have led the Negro women to state frankly their change of attitude. One of them has written:

"At one time I feel that we had more faith in them (the white race) than we have now. The fact that so many of us have been deceived in business transactions is hard to overcome."²

Moton, a leader closely in touch with the reactions of his people, has made an interesting appraisal of the attitude of the typical Negro toward members of the white race.³ The Negro recognizes at least three distinct

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1. Quoted by Bowen, Trevor: Op. cit., pp. 127-128
2. Personal correspondence
3. Cf. Moton, R. R.: Op. cit., p. 14

types. First are the white people of the most secure social standing and consequently the ones who are not afraid to be thoughtful and considerate of the Negro. From the time of George Washington, who used to speak as courteously to an old Negro slave as to a general in his army, down to the present day, it has been the finest people of the South who have treated the Negro most fairly. For people of this class the Negro woman has unconcealed admiration. She responds quickly to genuine friendliness.

The second grouping which Moton suggests is the "half strainers", the white people of a lower class who are aspiring for social position and recognition. It is this class of white people which is most aggressive in setting up racial discrimination. For this group the Negro woman feels a scarcely veiled contempt. She recognizes their weaknesses and foibles and often smiles at their efforts to rise socially.

The third group Moton classes as the "poor white trash". To this group the educated Negro woman feels infinitely superior.

There is a greatly heightened race-consciousness among Negro men and women throughout the country today. They are gradually growing in pride and respect for members of their own race. They feel keenly the injustices to which they have been subjected. They are ready to show

respect and admiration for members of the white race only when they genuinely deserve it.

J. Organizations at Work on Behalf
of the Negro Woman

The limits of this study make it impossible to discuss the contribution being made to the life of the Negro woman of the South by groups other than the Presbyterian Church in the United States. But the study would not be complete without listing some of the most important of these organizations and stating the fact that they are doing a constructive and worthwhile work throughout the South. The most active organizations at work on behalf of the Southern Negro woman are:

American Baptist Home Mission Society
American Missionary Association
Commission on Interracial Cooperation
(Woman's Division)
Federal Council of Churches of Christ in
America (Committee on Race Relations)
General Education Board
Methodist Episcopal Church
National Association of Colored Women
National Urban League
Playground and Recreation Association of
America (Colored Work Division)
Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.
Society of Friends
United States Government
Y. W. C. A. (Interracial Department of
National Council)

K. Summary

The Negro woman in the South today demands the

sympathetic and thoughtful consideration of all Americans, especially of southern Americans.

She has made remarkable progress in home life, health, education, and church life. She is making a courageous effort now to lift the moral, social, and physical standards of her race in the face of constant discrimination, segregation, and injustice.

The great needs of the Negro woman as revealed through this study are: improved housing conditions, more adequate health programs and better hospital facilities, an improved public school system and provisions for adult education, equal opportunity with white workers in business and industry, higher moral standards, better organized churches with better trained ministers, equalization of service in all public conveyances and meeting places, justice under the law, and most important of all sympathetic and unprejudiced cooperation from members of the white race.

"Above and before all else the greatest need of the Negro woman is spiritual. She must be known and understood as a woman striving upward out of a history black with tragedy and heartache, seeking a friendly world in which she may live free from the fear of humiliation for herself and violence for her children"¹

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1. Pamphlet, Ames, Jessie Daniel: The Church Woman Answers, p. 3

CHAPTER III

A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES FOR THE NEGRO WOMAN

CHAPTER III

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A. Work of Southern Presbyterians

Before the Civil War

Before reviewing the work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States as a separate organization, it is important to consider briefly the work of Southern Presbyterians prior to their separation from the northern Church. For this early work is an integral part of the total contribution of the Church to the life of the Negro woman of the South.

1. The Ministry of Samuel Davies

A leader of the Presbyterian Church in the United States stated recently,

"Our church has not done her full duty to the colored people. But if she has failed, it has been for no lack of shining examples of genuine devotion to the spiritual interest of that people."¹

The first Presbyterian minister to show, in an outstanding manner, his devotion to the interests of the Negro was Rev. Samuel Davies, who in 1747 began his ministry among the slaves at Hanover, Virginia. He did a

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1. Address of Dr. William C. McPheeters, quoted by Robinson, W. C.: Columbia Theological Seminary and the Southern Presbyterian Church, p. 122

great work, reaching about a thousand Negroes in that section. In 1755 he reported:

"A considerable number of them have been baptized, after a proper time for instruction, having given creditable evidence not only of their acquaintance with the important doctrines of the Christian religion, but also a deep sense of them in their minds, attested by a life of strict piety and holiness."¹

Inspired by Mr. Davies' example, other men devoted time to work among the slaves both in the towns and on the plantations of Virginia. Perhaps the greatest contribution of the Church at this period was in printing and freely distributing sermons and books among the owners, urging them to give religious instruction to their slaves.²

2. Plantation Missions

Another man who stands out in the history of the Presbyterian Church in the United States is Dr. Charles Colcock Jones, leader in the establishment of plantation missions for the Negroes.

Dr. Jones began his work in 1832 by erecting a house of worship on his own plantation in Liberty County, Georgia. In that section of Georgia there were four thousand five hundred slaves, whose great need for religious instruction appealed to Dr. Jones more than the

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1. Weatherford, W. D.: Negro Life in the South, p. 135
2. Cf. Helm, Mary: The Upward Path, p. 224

highest positions of leadership which the Church could offer him. It was his purpose, in cooperation with the plantation owners, to establish mission points on all the plantations of his section, with regular ministers to preach and give religious training. He himself travelled about constantly, organizing missions, conducting two or three services every Sunday, and fulfilling many engagements during the week.¹ Owners throughout Georgia, inspired by his example, established missions on their own plantations. Dr. Jones "is said to have outranked all others in the South on the religious instruction of the Negro."²

He organized "The Association for the Religious Instruction of the Negroes" which carried on a large work throughout the Church. A number of other Synods took up the work of plantation missions. Dr. Jones prepared a special catechism for the Negro which was widely used. He carried on a vast correspondence with leaders throughout the South, urging them to make more earnest efforts to promote the religious training of the slaves and to impress upon the people the duty of treating the slaves in a Christian way. His attitude toward the treatment

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1. Information obtained through personal correspondence with Mrs. W. K. Seago, granddaughter of Dr. Jones
2. Sikes, W. M.: The Historical Development of Stillman Institute, p. 15

of slaves may be summed up in these words from an address which he delivered before the Synod of South Carolina in 1833:

"Religion will tell the master that his servants are his fellow-creatures and that he has a Master in Heaven to whom he shall give account of his treatment of them. The master will be led to inquiries of this sort: In what kind of houses do I permit them to live? What clothes do I give them to wear? What food to eat? What privileges to enjoy? In what temper and manner and proportion to their crimes do I punish them?"¹

Thus we see that Dr. Jones had at heart the physical and social as well as the spiritual needs of the Negro.

The plantation missions thus established by Presbyterians throughout the South continued until the outbreak of the Civil War.

3. Zion Presbyterian Church - Charleston, S. C.

In most of the Presbyterian churches of the South before the Civil War, Negroes were allowed to worship with the white people. They sat in the galleries and were permitted to come into the main body of the church only occasionally for communion services. In some churches talks were given to the Negro members each Sunday and special services held for them at other times. But in many instances no provision was made for them and the services were not at all suited to their needs. Consequently a few leaders of the Church felt the necessity of establish-

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1. Quoted in letter from Mrs. W. K. Seago

ing separate churches for Negro members.¹

The most outstanding of these separate churches established before the Civil War was in Charleston, S. C., a city with a Negro population estimated at that time at from eight to ten thousand persons.²

When the Negro membership in the Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston increased to several hundred, Dr. John B. Adger was called as special pastor for the Negro members. He felt very strongly the fact that the regular services of the church were not meeting the needs of the Negroes. So he set to work to organize a separate church. At first he met with the Negroes in a lecture room in the basement. This soon became too crowded, and the Negroes decided to build a chapel of their own. Immediately a storm of opposition arose from the white citizens of Charleston, who claimed that having a church of their own would encourage the slaves to plots of insurrection. A long controversy followed. A committee was appointed to make inquiries throughout the South as to the results of religious instruction. When the committee came back with a report that such instruction had never resulted in any thing but good, the citizens were finally

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1. Cf. Thompson, E. T.: Presbyterian Missions in the Southern United States, p. 182
2. Statistics from Adger, J. B.: My Life and Times, p. 137

convinced and work on the chapel continued. It was completed and dedicated in 1850.¹

In 1853 Dr. John L. Girardeau took charge of the work. Under Dr. Girardeau's ministry the membership grew so rapidly that the chapel was soon outgrown. In 1859 a new church was erected for the Negroes by the white Presbyterians of Charleston at a cost of \$25,000. This was known as the Zion Presbyterian Church.

"It is said that this edifice was the largest of all the churches in Charleston, and that it was filled to its capacity every Sunday afternoon. Dr. Girardeau was a pulpit orator who drew tremendous crowds not only of Negroes but also of whites."²

During the Civil War, the church became disorganized and its members were scattered. But after the war Dr. Girardeau returned and build it up again. It continues today as a leading Negro church of the South. Although it is now connected with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. it is the work of Southern Presbyterians that made it possible.

Other Negro churches, though not so large, were erected by the Presbyterians in the South before the outbreak of the Civil War.

4. Work of Individuals for Individuals

The greatest work of Southern Presbyterians for

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1. Cf. Adger, J. B.: My Life and Times, pp. 178-185
2. Sikes, W. M.: Op. cit., p. 24

the Negro woman before the Civil War cannot be measured in reports or statistics. It is that work which was done day after day through individual contacts. On the better plantations throughout the South individual masters and mistresses had upon their hearts the religious welfare of their slaves.

"Notwithstanding the evils and wrongs of slavery, in thousands of kitchens, nurseries, and sewing rooms, the servants of the old days found God through their mistresses' lives and took up their predestined task of making Him real and lovable to their own people by living in His spirit from day to day."¹

B. Policy Adopted toward the Negro
by the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian
Church in the United States, 1861-1874

The Presbyterian Church in the United States met for the first time as a distinct organization in Augusta, Georgia, Dec. 4, 1861. Despite the chaotic conditions of that time, the General Assembly of the newly-formed Church was vitally concerned with the needs of the vast group of Negroes under its care. The resolution adopted by this Assembly in regard to the Negro was:

"That the great field of missionary operations among our colored population falls more immediately under the care of the Committee of Domestic Missions; and that said Committee be urged to give it serious and constant attention; and the Presbyteries to cooperate with the Committee in securing pastors and missionaries

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1. Hammond, Lily: In the Vanguard of a Race, p.XII - Preface

for this field."¹

Reports made to the General Assembly during the war indicated that religious instruction of the Negroes was continued throughout that period. In 1863 it was reported that more was being done for their spiritual welfare than at any former time. The Assembly's report of that year stated:

"The foreign mission problem is here reversed. Instead of having to send missionaries to the heathen, the heathen are brought to us, thus affording the opportunity of doing a foreign mission work on a gigantic scale, and under the most favorable auspices. A work altogether unique and which the Church in any other part of the world might well covet. The Lord hath set before us an open door; let us not fail to enter it."²

At almost every meeting of the Assembly plans were made for furthering the Negro work. The 1865 Assembly adopted a paper stating "that neither the Christian relationship of the Negroes nor the responsibility of the whites to give them the Gospel had been altered in the least by their new civil status."³

With the close of the Civil War there was a mass movement of Negroes away from the white churches. Having attained freedom politically, they desired freedom in all things - including their church affairs. At first the Presbyterian Church in the United States wavered in its

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1. Cf. Sikes, W. M.: Op. cit., p. 31
2. Cf. Morris, S. L.: The Romance of Home Missions, p. 136
3. Sikes, W. M.: Op. cit., p. 31

policy toward the freedmen. It opposed the ecclesiastical separation of the white and colored races. It refused to ordain Negroes to the ministry, but recommended that "wherever a Church session or Presbytery found a colored person possessed of suitable qualifications he should be licensed as an exhorter among the colored people."¹ In 1869 a report was made to the Assembly to the effect that the lack of a definite policy throughout the Church had led to needless complications and confusion. The Assembly therefore adopted a plan for branch congregations for the Negroes with colored elders and deacons but with white pastors.² This, however, did not solve the problem. Negroes continued to cut themselves off from the Church. A number went into the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. because they felt that in that Church there would be greater freedom.

C. Establishment of the Colored

Evangelistic Fund in 1874

During these early years of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, despite the wavering policy of the Assembly and the withdrawal of many Negroes, mis-

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1. Sikes. W. M.: Op. cit., p. 31
2. Cf. Thompson, E. T.: Op. cit., p. 193

sionary work was still being actively conducted. In 1874 when the General Assembly met, it received overtures from four different church courts in widely separated sections, urging it to provide means for carrying on the Negro work with greater vigor. As a result it adopted the following Resolution:

"Presbyteries and Sessions are recommended to encourage and aid in the formation of colored churches, having ruling elders duly chosen by the people, to be regularly ordained and installed by said Sessions and Presbyteries, with the view to forming these churches in due time into Presbyteries. When two or more such Presbyteries shall exist, they may unite to form a Synod."¹

The Presbyteries were to seek out men of approved character and take charge of their education, to assist the Negro churches in establishing and carrying on Sunday Schools and in erecting church buildings. This work was placed under the control of the Executive Committee of Home Missions, and a separate fund, to be known as the Colored Evangelistic Fund, was set aside for its use.

D. Early Efforts of the Executive Committee of Home Missions, 1874-1891

The reports of the Executive Committee of Home Missions for the next few years were not encouraging. When the reports came in from Presbyteries in 1875, it

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1. Sikes, W. M.: Op. cit., p. 31

was found that thirty-five of them were doing nothing at all for the Negro. Twelve Presbyteries reported a few Negro churches, a few Sunday Schools, and preaching to Negro congregations by a few white ministers.¹ In the years that followed there was very little improvement.

The year 1887, however, is of great importance in the annals of the Negro work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States because it marked the opening of Stillman Institute, a school for the training of Negro ministers at Tuscaloosa, Alabama. This school, the only Negro educational institution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, has exerted a great influence in the life of the Negro church of the South.

In the same year, 1887, the first colored Presbytery, that of North and South Carolina, was formed in pursuance of the policy adopted by the General Assembly of 1874. Though an independent Presbytery, it reported to the white Harmony Presbytery regularly and was aided through the Executive Committee of Home Missions. In 1888 another Presbytery was formed in Texas.

E. Organization of the Executive
Committee of Colored Evangelization (1891)
and Its Work (1891-1911)

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1. Cf. Thompson, E. T., Op. cit., p. 195

In order to place a greater stress upon the importance of the Negro work, the General Assembly of 1891 removed this work from the control of the Executive Committee of Home Missions and established a separate unit known as the Executive Committee of Colored Evangelization. Under the leadership of this central Committee, each Presbytery appointed its own Committee of Colored Evangelization and chairmen of the Presbytery committees became corresponding members of the Assembly's Committee.

Three new Negro Presbyteries were formed about 1891 - Ethel in Mississippi, Central in Alabama, and Zion in Louisiana. There was a growing feeling that the majority of the Negro church members wished to form an independent colored Presbyterian Church. So the General Assembly gave its sanction to such a plan and in 1898 the "Afro-American Presbyterian Church" was organized.¹

The story of the development of the Negro Church under its new organization is a discouraging one. Few new churches were established and the older churches grew very slowly. The white men who gave their lives to the evangelization of the Negro during this period met with constant prejudice and lack of sympathy from the white Church. In their reports they mention again and again the indifference and apathy of Southern Presbyterians toward their work. In

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1. Cf. Thompson, E. T.: Op. cit., p. 201

1905 Dr. Snedecor, Secretary of the Executive Committee of Colored Evangelization, wrote, "This is not a popular cause", and in 1906, "The church seems apathetic, many good people are prejudiced against this enterprise!"¹ Often men like Dr. Snedecor and Dr. Stillman suffered actual social ostracism because of their connection with the Negro people.

The indifference of the Church is further reflected in the insufficient financial support given to the cause of Colored Evangelization. Most of the Negro ministers had to support themselves by farming, teaching, or following some other occupation.² Thus they were not able to devote the time which really needed to be given to their churches.

The Presbyterian Church in the United States cannot be proud of its record during this period. Yet through all this time faithful individuals, both men and women, were ministering to the spiritual needs of the Negroes through mission Sunday Schools. It is estimated that in 1901 forty such Sunday Schools were being conducted.³ Individual ministers also conducted parochial

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1. Cf. Thompson, E. T.: Op. cit., p. 203
2. Ibid., pp. 203-204
3. Ibid., p. 209

schools in connection with their churches. Outstanding work has been done through the institutional missions of the Church, several of which were established during this period. The most successful is the Hancock Street Mission at Louisville, Kentucky, founded in 1898 by Rev. John Little. In 1900 the Pittsburg Mission was begun in Atlanta, Georgia, and in 1911 the Seventeenth Street Mission in Richmond, Virginia. The work of these missions will be discussed fully in the following chapter of this study.

F. The Negro Work Again Under the
Executive Committee of Home Missions (1911-1938)

In view of the inadequate support being given the Executive Committee of Colored Evangelization, it was decided in 1911 to transfer the Negro work once again to the control of the Executive Committee of Home Missions. As a result of this change, a slightly larger appropriation was made.

The Afro-American Presbyterian Church apparently was not proving successful. Consequently in 1915 the Executive Committee proposed to make of this Church an integral part of the Southern Assembly. The following year the Church was reorganized into an Afro-American Synod, connected with the General Assembly, with its Presbyteries represented on the same basis as those of any white Synod.

This newly-organized Synod was named the Snedecor Memorial Synod in honor of Dr. James G. Snedecor who had worked so faithfully on behalf of the Negro church.

"The erection of a Negro Synod as a part of the Assembly has developed self-government and initiative on the part of the Negro, at least to a limited degree; at the same time it guarantees to the Negro Presbyterian churches that support which it is still necessary for them to have."¹

In 1929 another institutional mission was established by Dr. U. D. Mooney - the Berean Center at New Orleans, Louisiana. The work of this mission will be discussed in the following chapter.

G. Opening of Stillman Institute to Negro Girls under Fourteen in 1897

All of the work of the Church reviewed thus far has been on behalf of the Negro race as a whole. In all of it, the Negro woman has been affected. Indeed women have composed more than half of the membership of the Negro Presbyterian Church throughout its history.²

The first measure distinctly on behalf of the Negro woman was taken in 1897 when Stillman Institute was opened to girls under fourteen who came in as day students.

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1. Thompson, E. T.: Op. cit., p. 205

2. Cf. Mays and Nicholson: The Negro's Church, p. 101

H. Work of the Woman's Auxiliary

(Now Known as the Committee on Woman's Work)

With the organization of the Woman's Auxiliary in 1912, there began a new era for the Negro womanhood of the Church. The Auxiliary was erected "for all women of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. of whatever race or color."¹

Work could not be begun immediately among the Negro women because of the difficulty in making contact with possible leaders among them. But from the very first, Mrs. W. C. Winsborough, Secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary, had upon her heart the need of this important group.

1. First Conference for Negro Women

In 1916 a step was taken by the Woman's Auxiliary which was destined to have lasting value for Negro women throughout the South. This year a weeks' Conference for Negro Women was held at Stillman Institute in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The plan of this Conference was originated by Mrs. Winsborough. "It represented a distinct advance in denominational work by white Christians for Negroes in the South, being the first Conference ever held by a denomination for Negro women."² Its purpose was to bring

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1. Winsborough, Hallie P.: Yesteryears, p. 141
2. Fifth Annual Report of Superintendent of Woman's Auxiliary, 1916-17, p. 10

help in practical Christian living to Negro women who desired to help their race and especially their neighbors to build up a better community life.¹

Mrs. Winsborough secured outstanding white and Negro leaders to serve on the Conference faculty. She wrote to Auxiliaries throughout the Church, asking them to make it possible for some representative Negro woman of their community to attend the Conference. These women were chosen regardless of denomination; Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians, as well as Presbyterians, attended. Some came from nearby towns in Alabama, some from as far away as Virginia and North Carolina. In the group were teachers, ministers' wives, extension workers, cooks, and home-makers. When the enrollment was completed, there were reported a hundred and fifty-five delegates from sixteen towns in six different states.²

The Conference proved an inspiration to all who attended, both white and colored.

"The foundation stone of the program was Bible study. The program also included inspirational addresses from both white and Negro leaders, and classroom instruction on practical Christian living, sanitation, food values, canning and preserving, and also care of the sick and of children."³

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1. Cf. Winsborough, H. P.: Op. cit., p. 143
2. Ibid., p. 144
3. Article by Gibbins, Rosa: "Christian Conferences for Negro Women", Presbyterian Survey, November, 1935

The tangible results of the Conference in practical community service were great. But far greater were the intangible results in a better understanding between Christian women of both races. The Negro delegates felt, some of them for the first time, that the white women of the Church really cared about them and wanted to help them. The white women gained a new respect and genuine affection for the Negro women with whom they worked.

2. Later Conferences (1917 - Present)

Because of the success of this first Conference, plans were soon under way for another Conference to be held the following summer. For four summers one central Conference of this type was held at Stillman Institute. Steadily growing interest was manifested by the various Synodicals. The Superintendent in her Report for 1917-18 stated:

"Our societies are realizing what the days of study and conference mean to the colored women in attendance and they are making a greater effort to send delegates from their communities."¹

New items were added to the program each year. Among them were classes in sewing, practical demonstrations in nursing, classes in community problems, demonstrations in playground methods, etc. A special effort was made to bring wives of colored ministers to the Conference. Mrs. Booker T.

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1. Sixth Annual Report of the Woman's Auxiliary for the Year Ending March 31, 1918

Washington started a fund for this purpose, stating:

"I do not believe a more important move could be made. These are the women who must lead. If the Conference did nothing more than help these Pastor's wives, it will have served a most valuable purpose."¹

The Synodicals, seeing the great values resulting from the Alabama Conferences, began to plan for individual state conferences. Georgia and Virginia led the way with conferences of their own in 1921. In 1923 North Carolina, Kentucky, Louisiana, and South Carolina followed. Since then Arkansas, Missouri, Appalachia, Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Texas have started Synodical conferences.

In the years of financial depression some of the Synodicals found it impossible to conduct their usual weeks' conference for Negro women. In their place one-day conferences were held in various Presbyteries. These have proven of great value also as follow-ups of larger conferences.

Some of the results of these Conferences may be summed up in the words of the Superintendent:

"Bible classes have been established; community centers started; sewing classes organized; "clean-up day" promoted; repairs on school and church building and many other forms of community betterment. The delegates have gone home inspired and informed as to practical means of carrying out such work. These conferences are acknowledged to be the most outstanding pieces of Inter-racial cooperation which the women

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1. Seventh Annual Report of the Women's Auxiliary for the Year Ending March 31, 1919

of any denomination are doing today in the South." 1

3. Montreat Training School

In 1931 a special conference for chairmen of the Synodical Negro Women's Conferences was held at Montreat, N. C., under the leadership of Mrs. Winsborough. This has been continued each summer.

4. Cooperation with Interracial Commission of Atlanta

Soon after the World War, a Commission on Interracial Cooperation was set up at Atlanta, Georgia, representing all denominations, and promoting a plan of cooperation between white and Negro races in states, counties, and cities throughout the South. This Commission was at first composed entirely of men.

In 1920, under the leadership of Southern Methodist women, a meeting of representatives of all Women's Church Boards was called in Memphis to consider organizing for the purpose of helping Negro women. Several Synodical presidents of the Presbyterian Church in the United States attended and took an active part in this meeting. During the meeting each denominational group elected one member for an interdenominational committee which later was to function as the Women's Division of the Interracial Commission.

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1. Thirteenth Annual Report of the Woman's Auxiliary for the Year Ending March 31, 1925, p. 7

In 1922 the Synodicals of the Presbyterian Church in the United States approved the work and plans of the Interracial Commission, and recommended the formation of local committees to carry out the plans of the Commission in each community. By 1924 each Synodical President was made a member of the State Commission on Interracial Cooperation while the general Auxiliary cooperated with the central Interracial Commission. ¹

5. Cooperation with Women's Interracial Commission of Federal Council of Churches

In 1926 the Woman's Auxiliary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was asked to send a delegate to the first Conference on Interracial Work among the women of the North. This request was made because of the outstanding work done by the Auxiliary in conducting Conferences for Negro Women. Mrs. Winsborough attended the meeting. Two days were spent in a conference which resulted in the formation of the Women's Interracial Commission of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. This Commission has done a constructive work in bettering race relations in the North. The Woman's Auxiliary cooperated with this Commission until the withdrawal of the Presbyterian Church in the United States from the Federal Council of Churches.

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1. Information for this section is from material especially compiled for the purpose by the Committee on Woman's Work, Atlanta, Georgia

6. Organization of Negro Presbyterials

One important result of the Conferences for Negro Women has been the desire on the part of these women to organize their own Presbyterials in order to carry forward more effectively the work of their churches. As early as 1916 an informal organization, known as "The Home Mission Sisters", was set up as auxiliary to the Negro Presbytery of Central, Louisiana. ¹ Many obstacles stood in the way of the establishment of Presbyterials - the territory of the Negro Presbyteries was so large, the Negro churches so widely scattered, and finances so inadequate. Negro ministers had to be convinced of the wisdom of such organization also.

In 1925 Negro women of three different Presbyteries, feeling that all these obstacles could be overcome, sent a request to the Auxiliary office for assistance in organizing. On December ninth of that year, the Presbyterial of North and South Carolina was set up, and on December fifteenth the Central Alabama Presbyterial was organized at Stillman Institute. The following year the Presbyterial of Central Louisiana was organized. Work is now under way for the organization of a Presbyterial in the Presbytery of Ethel. In each case the Secretary of

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1. Cf. Fifth Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Woman's Auxiliary, 1916-1917, p. 13

Woman's Work and the white Synodical Presidents gave a great deal of help to the Negro women.

The work of these Presbyterials has grown slowly in the face of many difficulties. The Negro women have shown real courage and initiative. In evaluating their work the Superintendent stated:

"We are rebuked by the faith and courage of these women when we realize the stupendous task before them and their pitiful lack of material resources for accomplishing it. The Presbyterian Church will grow among the colored people if only we will extend larger help and sympathetic understanding to its small beginnings."¹

7. Establishment of Women's Department of Stillman Institute

It was always a source of regret to the women of the Auxiliary that the Church had no school for Negro girls.

"Believing firmly the tenet of our Church that family religion is the cornerstone of all Christian training, they began to seek some way by which we might do our part giving Christian education to the future wives and mothers of the colored race."²

In 1915 a conference was held at Blue Ridge, N. C., under the leadership of Mr. Jackson Davis, Secretary of the General Education Board of New York, to consider the education of Negro girls in the South. At this time the

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1. Thirteenth Annual Report of the Woman's Auxiliary for the Year Ending March 31, 1925, pp. 9 - 10
2. Tenth Annual Report of the Woman's Auxiliary for the Year Ending March 31, 1922, p. 10

suggestion was made that the General Education Board would cooperate with any Church Board in establishing a school for Negro girls. The Home Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church in the United States started making plans to meet the requirements and take advantage of the offer. At first it was decided to establish a school at Abbeville, S. C. The Synodical of South Carolina became interested and raised \$2500 toward the proposed building.

It seemed best, however, to organize the girls' school in cooperation with Stillman Institute. Leaders at Stillman had themselves begun to feel the need of providing training for Negro women.

In 1918 a leaflet, "Plan of a School for Negro Girls", was prepared and sent throughout the Church. It said in part:

"The Church now feels that the time is at hand to extend help to the colored girls. No race rises higher than its womanhood. Of no people is this truer than of the colored people of the South. If the race is to be elevated and purified, the beginning must be in the homes of the people; and the mother sounds the keynote of the home. Educated Christian mothers will usually rear literate, moral children, and in planning to give Christian training to the future women of the race, the Church is making possible the moral training of the coming generation of Negro men and women." ¹

In 1919 the proposed school was made the object of the self-denial gifts of the Woman's Auxiliary. The Synodical of South Carolina donated the money which it

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1. Quoted by Sikes, W. M.; Op. cit., p. 60

had raised toward a school at Abbeville. The General Education Board supplemented these gifts to the amount of about twenty thousand dollars. The building was erected and dedicated as the "Winsborough Building" in 1922. In September of that year Stillman became a coeducational institution.

8. Bukumba Bible Training School

In the summer of 1924 a Bible Training School for both men and women was begun at Stillman, with the purpose of training lay workers for useful Christian service. It was named the Bukumba Training School in memory of a little African girl who had come to America with Mrs. Motte Martin, one of the Church's missionaries, and had died in this country in 1920. While here she had saved up a little money given her by friends with the request that it be used to give the knowledge of the Bible to her people. Her money became the nucleus of the fund for the establishment of a Bible Training School at Stillman. Her story made such an appeal that generous gifts were made toward this school, especially by the women of the Church. For three years the Bukumba Bible Training School was conducted as a summer session. In the fall of 1927 it became a part of the regular session of Stillman Institute. Its work is patterned after that of the

Assembly's Training School in Richmond, Virginia.¹

9. Establishment of Emily Estes Snedecor

Nurses' Training School

Those who are genuinely interested in the welfare of the Negro in the South have felt keenly the need of improving health conditions and of providing trained nurses and doctors for the Negro people.

When Dr. R. A. Brown became Superintendent of General Assembly's Colored Work in 1922, he began at once urging upon the Church the need of training practical nurses. He prepared a leaflet which he sent all over the Church on "The Training School for Practical Nurses". He said, "In the State of Georgia alone, 4000 Negro people were reported to have died in one year without the care of nurses or physicians."² This was presented as typical of many Southern states.

At the same time leaders at Stillman Institute were realizing the need for special training in the care of sick students there and for preparing the students to go out as practical nurses among their own people. The Woman's Auxiliary became interested, and in 1928 its "Birthday Offering" was given for the purpose of erecting

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1. Cf. Sikes, W. M.: Op. cit., pp. 63-64
2. Quoted by Sikes, W. M.: Op. cit., p. 65

a training school for nurses - "wherein the girl students might be taught the practical care of the sick, sanitation, nutrition, and allied subjects".¹ A brick building was erected almost entirely by student labor and was named "The Emily Estes Snedecor Nurses' Training School" in honor of Mrs. Snedecor, Dean of Women at Stillman Institute for many years. This building contains hospital rooms for the accommodation of Negro patients, classrooms, and other hospital equipment. It was opened to students in the fall of 1930.

10. Experiment in Interracial-Interdenominational Cooperation

Another valuable contribution of the Woman's Auxiliary to the life of the Negro woman has been its experiment in interracial-interdenominational Christian community service, originated in 1930 by Mrs. Winsborough. She knew that in order to make any real improvement in the living conditions of the Negro people of each community, it would be necessary to enlist the cooperation of local workers. Her plan therefore was to unite the social service agencies of the various churches in each community and to have them work together as a unit under the leadership of an interdenominational state committee.

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1. Winsborough, H. P.: Op. cit., p. 156

Since much of the Negro work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States centers in Stillman Institute, it was decided to try out Mrs. Winsborough's plan of co-operation first in Tuscaloosa Presbytery. This proved so successful that, at the urgent request of the Interracial Commission of Atlanta, Mrs. Winsborough agreed to carry out the same plan for the state of Alabama. Hence it has come to be known as the Alabama Experiment. In carrying out this experiment Mrs. Winsborough enlisted the cooperation of four other denominations - Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian, and Christian.

The State Social Service Secretaries of the cooperating denominations held two meetings at which plans were outlined. Each denominational Secretary then wrote to her local officers, urging their cooperation. The Presbyterian local secretaries were made responsible for calling together the secretaries of other denominations and setting up a Social Service Committee for each community.

A Community Survey questionnaire was compiled and sent to all the local committees. They were asked to make a careful survey of the community, enlisting the aid of intelligent Negro leaders in answering the questions.

Having completed the survey, each local committee was asked, in the light of its findings, to undertake

some constructive program for the betterment of conditions. Most of the committees formed a Negro Women's Bible Class and Community Club. Remarkable results have come through the work of these Community Clubs. This work will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.

The Alabama Experiment was watched with interest by women of other states and of other denominations. The Women's Board of the Southern Methodist Church officially approved the work and took the initiative in carrying out a similar plan in Georgia. Other Synodicals of the Presbyterian Church in the United States are now undertaking the same community social service in other states.¹

I. Summary

This review of the history of the work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States for the Negro woman falls naturally into three distinct periods.

In the period before the Civil War outstanding work was carried on by a few individuals, but no really organized efforts were made for the evangelization of the Negro.

In the years after the Civil War, the Church

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1. Information for this section is from material especially compiled for the purpose by the office of the Committee on Woman's Work in Atlanta, Georgia

failed to adopt any clear-cut policy toward the Negro work. Because of its wavering and indecision, its work was greatly weakened. The work also suffered because of the prejudice and lack of sympathy of a large number of the Church members. The most outstanding accomplishment of this period was the establishment of Stillman Institute for the training of Negro ministers in 1876, a step which indirectly affected the lives of the women in the Negro churches.

The really unique contribution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, however, has come in recent years through the activities of the Woman's Auxiliary.

This work has already proven of inestimable value, and has had far-reaching influence upon southern Negro women, not only of the Presbyterian churches but also of other denominations.

CHAPTER IV

A SURVEY OF THE PRESENT WORK OF THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES FOR THE NEGRO WOMAN

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A SURVEY OF THE PRESENT WORK OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES FOR THE NEGRO WOMAN

A. Introduction

In the preceding chapter of this study, an account was given of the history of the work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States among the Negro women of the South.

Much of the work which is being carried on by this Church today is a development and outgrowth of the activities already discussed. It is the purpose of this chapter to present a survey of the various activities being sponsored today by the Presbyterian Church in the United States on behalf of southern Negro women.

B. The Activities of the Committee on Woman's Work

1. Synodical Conferences for Negro Women

The outstanding contribution of the Committee on Woman's Work comes through the Negro Women's Conferences which are held annually by most of the Synodicals. Dr. J. H. Dillard, former administrator of the Jeanes Fund, has called these conferences "the finest piece of

interracial work done in the South".¹

In order to gain a comprehensive survey of the work of these Conferences, a description will be given of several which are representative.

a. Virginia

The Virginia Conference is held for one week each June at Virginia State College for Negroes in Petersburg. Women of potential leadership in their own communities are chosen as delegates and their expenses are paid by the Auxiliaries of local Presbyterian churches. Delegates represent at least four denominations - Episcopal, Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian.

The program for the 1937 Conference is so typical of the work being done by all of the Synodicals that it is copied here in its entirety:

Seventeenth Annual Meeting
of the
Christian Conference for Negro Women

State College for Negroes, Petersburg, Va.
Thursday, June 10 to Wednesday, June 16, 1937

Theme: "Advancing with Christ"
"They went forth,
The Lord working with them."

Daily Schedule

6:30. Rising Bell
7.00. Morning Watch

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1. Personal Interview - Miss Carrie Lee Campbell

7:30. Breakfast
8:30. Bible. Exodus - Mrs. R. I. Roop (White)
9:30. Friday - "In My County" - Miss India Hamilton (Negro)
Saturday - Health - Mrs. Emily W. Bennett
(State Board of Health)
Monday - Health - Miss Vance (State Board of Health)
Tuesday - Health - Miss Vance
10:30. Handicraft - Mrs. T. C. Diehl (White)
Saturday - Chair bottoms
Monday - Woven bags
Tuesday - Rugs
Wednesday - Cotton toys
11:30. Open Period
12:30. Lunch

Afternoon

2:00 to 3:00. Quiet
3:00 to 4:30. Sewing - Directed by Mrs. Mary Cousins (Negro)
4:30 to 5:00. Recreation - Led by Miss Lilly Epps (Negro)

Evening

7:00. Vespers - Guided by Squad Leaders (Negro)
8:00. Thursday - Welcome by Dr. John M. Gandy (Negro),
President of State College
Greetings and Introductions of Delegates
"Why We Are Here" - Miss Carrie Lee
Campbell (White)
Friday - Missionary Address
Saturday - Pictures: "A Study of Negro Artists"
From the Harmon Foundation, New York
Monday - Pictures: "Behind the Shadows"
From Virginia Tuberculosis Association
Tuesday - Pageant; "Passers-by" - Prepared and led
by Mrs. Ella Carter (Negro)

Sunday

10:00. Bible Study: Exodus - Mrs. Roop (White)
11:00. Worship - Sermon by Rev. J. Thomas Reid (Negro)
8:00. Worship - Sermon by Rev. J. Thomas Reid

b. Arkansas

The Twelfth Annual Conference of the Arkansas
Synodical was held June 26 - July 2, 1937, at Philander-
Smith, a Methodist Negro College in Little Rock. The

chairman of the Conference stated as its purpose: "to promote better understanding between the races, Christian fellowship, and leadership training."¹

The Conference was held during the summer school session of the College and was open to students. In this way a number of Negro teachers from all parts of the state were reached. The Bible hour was taught at the Chapel Period each morning so that both students and faculty of the College might attend. The School for Rural Pastors was also in session at the time of the Conference, and the Negro ministers had an opportunity to attend the Bible hour and all evening services.

Negro leadership was used to a large extent. A Conference Committee, composed of leading Christian women from the different Negro churches, met with a committee from the Synodical to plan the programs. The morning watch was under the leadership of delegates. The morning devotionals were led by outstanding Negro Christian women of Little Rock. The Vespers were led by the young people of the different denominations in the city and many interested people of Little Rock attended.²

The program was similar to that of the Virginia Conference.

c. Texas

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1. Personal Correspondence - Mrs. J. W. Parse
2. Cf. Report of Conference for Negro Women sent to the Arkansas Synodical by Mrs. J. W. Parse, Chairman

The Texas Synodical has been conducting in recent years a unique type of conference.

Each year since 1927 the Texas Conference has been held at Prairie View Normal School in close cooperation with the faculty and students of the school. In 1935 it was decided to suspend the usual Conference for Negro Women. The suggestion was then made by officials of Prairie View Normal that a special conference be conducted for students of the Senior Class of that institution.

So in May, 1935, convened the first Student Conference ever held under the leadership of a Synodical. Ninety-seven young men and women registered - representing Baptist, Methodist, Christian, Presbyterian, Catholic, and Adventist denominations.¹ This plan has been continued and has proven very satisfactory. All Senior students are excused from regular classes to attend the Conference, which is now known as the Leadership Institute for Senior Students. Practical programs are offered - including Bible study, classes in Sunday School methods, discussion of social problems, and of personal youth problems. It is a splendid way of enlisting youth for Christian service.

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1. Cf. Minutes 31st Annual Meeting, Woman's Auxiliary, Synodical of Texas, August 13-15, 1935, p. 36

d. Additional Conference Features

A special Institute for Leaders of Negro conferences is held at Montreat every summer in connection with the Auxiliary Training School.

Careful publicity work is carried on in each Synodical for several months before the time of Conference through correspondence, articles in Church papers and newspapers, and addresses.

In several Synodicals a system of credits for Bible study has been introduced. Delegates are required to prepare assignments and hand in papers in order to receive units toward a certificate, accredited by the Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication. In Alabama the name of the conference has now been changed to "Leadership Training School for Negro Women".¹

The United Presbyterian Board brings many of its teachers who are engaged in work in Alabama, North Carolina, and Tennessee to receive the benefit of the Negro Women's Conference of Appalachia Synodical.²

Each year more delegates are being sent to Conferences by Negro organizations.

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1. Cf. Minutes, 27th Annual Meeting, Woman's Auxiliary, Synodical of Alabama, Nov. 20-22, 1934, pp. 24-25
2. Cf. Minutes, 18th Annual Meeting, Woman's Auxiliary, Synodical of Appalachia, Sept. 21-29, 1932, p.28

Courses in Parliamentary Law have been introduced and have proven quite popular. Other special courses added by various Synodicals are Mission Study, Sanitation, Food Values, Canning, Preserving, Care of the Sick and of Children, Church Entertainments, Community Problems, Housing, The Employer and the Employee, Basketry, Wood Work, Millinery, and many others.

In many instances missionaries at home on furlough, especially those from Africa, are secured as inspirational speakers.

2. Conference Follow-Up Work

The Negro Women's Conference is not a matter of only one week. It is "an every-day-in-the-year work".¹

The most practical values from these Conferences come through the follow-up work carried on by the delegates. Definite planning is done by the leaders during the Conference so that delegates will be prepared to make a vital contribution in their own communities. In some cases classes are given in "Follow-up Work". Reports are made by delegates about things that they have accomplished during the preceding year. Throughout the group a spirit of eagerness for real service, of interest in their own people, and of consecration to God's work prevails.

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1. Cf. 15th Annual Report of Woman's Auxiliary for Year Ending March 31, 1927, p. 19

After the Conference a list of the delegates from her territory is sent to each white Presbyterian president. She is asked to give the names to the local Auxiliaries with the request that all aid and encouragement be given these delegates in their community work and that delegates be asked to speak at white Auxiliary meetings. A letter from the Synodical President is sent to each of the delegates, encouraging her in her work and offering aid.

Among the many activities which Negro women have been inspired to undertake as a result of their Conference experiences are:

1. Organizing Community Clubs and Bible Classes
2. Conducting Vacation Church Schools
3. Teaching in Sunday Schools
4. Forming Local Interracial Commissions
5. Establishing Community Centers
6. Organizing Parent-Teacher Associations
7. Introducing Health Education into Schools
8. Establishing Playgrounds
9. Establishing Baby Clinics and Health Clinics
10. Establishing Libraries
11. Sponsoring Clean-Up Days
12. Visiting in Jails, City Homes, and Hospitals
13. Sponsoring Foreign Mission Programs and Sending Gifts to African Missions
14. Organizing Prayer Bands
15. Establishing Family Altars
16. Teaching Handicraft to Neighbors
17. Sewing for Needy Families

Follow-up work by white leaders includes:

1. One-Day Conferences
2. Active Cooperation with Negro Auxiliaries and Clubs
3. Correspondence with Delegates

3. One-Day Conferences

An interesting outgrowth of the Synodical Conferences has been the holding of one-day conferences, some in local communities and others presbyterial-wide. These conferences have reached thousands of Negro women all over the Southland.¹

The one-day meetings sometimes serve as feeders for the Synodical Conference through arousing interest and enthusiasm. Having had a taste of what the programs and the fellowship can mean, women are eager to send delegates or to go themselves to the larger conference. They also serve as echoes of the Synodical Conference. Through one-day meetings the message of the larger conference is carried by delegates to women all over the state. In many cases a compendium of a whole week's conference is packed into a day's program. One-day conferences for Negro women are often held also in connection with the meetings of Negro Presbyteries.

An interesting account has been given of the one-day conferences held in Tampa, Florida, where there are over forty Negro churches.² Five years ago the women

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1. Cf. Article by Gibbins, Rosa: Christian Conferences for Negro Women, Presbyterian Survey, Nov. 1935
2. Cf. Article by Carrell, Leah: "Interracial Work in Tampa, Florida", Presbyterian Survey, June, 1937

of the white Presbyterian churches of Tampa determined to reach this large group of Negro women through a one-day conference. A comprehensive program was worked out by white and Negro leaders, based upon suggestions from the Committee on Woman's Work. The program included a demonstration by a Negro Home Demonstration Agent and a talk by a Negro nurse. White leaders presented a variety of subjects - a Bible lesson on the book of James, a class in Sunday School methods, suggestions on "Home Betterment", a talk by the County School Superintendent on "Character Building", a talk by the Judge of the Juvenile Court on "Juvenile Delinquency", a talk by the State President of the Parent-Teachers' Association on the relation of home and school, and a talk by the County Physician on health. The President of the Florida Federation of Negro Women's Clubs told of her extensive club work, with its motto, "Lifting as we climb". Thus the delegates were brought into contact with leaders in many fields and found their own horizons broadened.

About three hundred, representing twenty-six of the Negro churches of Tampa, attended that first conference. They asked that one be held the next year. So the work has continued. As an outgrowth of these conferences there was held, at the request of the Negro women, an Institute for training workers in Vacation Church Schools.

This conference in Tampa is typical of work that is being done in communities and presbyterials throughout the Church.

4. Bible Classes and Community Welfare Clubs

In the preceding chapter an account was given of the experiment in interracial-interdenominational co-operation conducted first in the state of Alabama and then carried to other states. Out of this experiment have grown scores of Bible Classes and Community Welfare Clubs. The women of the Presbyterian Church in the United States joined with the women of the Southern Methodist Church in an effort to advance the program of community survey and club organization throughout the South. In 1935 every state in the South reported Bible Classes and Community Clubs.¹

The Committee on Women's Work is very active in cooperation with these clubs. Mrs. Winsborough has prepared a "Suggested Constitution for Community Clubs and Bible Classes" to serve as a basis for local clubs in planning their activities. The Committee on Woman's Work also sends out mimeographed material with directions as to proper parliamentary procedure and suggestions as to the work of various committees.

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1. Cf. Ames, Jessie Daniel: Pamphlet, Friends and Neighbors, p. 17

The Clubs meet weekly. An outstanding white teacher is secured to take charge of the Bible study period. In most cases the International Sunday School lesson is used, and is taught a week in advance so that the Negro Sunday School teachers may be aided in their own preparation. Sunday School teachers and ministers of all the Negro churches are urged to attend.

The white teacher is responsible for securing the cooperation of white citizens in any community enterprises which the Club undertakes. Each Club has some definite project in community betterment for which it is working. Some of the projects now being carried on by various Clubs are:

1. Improvements in School Buildings and Grounds
2. Sewing Classes in the Negro Schools
3. Playgrounds
4. Recreation Centers for Young People
5. Flower Planting
6. Annual "Clean-up" Days
7. Day Nurseries
8. Vacation Church Schools
9. Visiting¹

The Clubs keep in close touch with the Negro Women's Conferences. Club delegates are sent to the Synodical Conference. The Clubs cooperate in One-Day Conferences.

5. Help to Negro Auxiliaries

In the preceding chapter an account was given of

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1. Cf. Pamphlet: Suggested Constitution for Community Clubs and Bible Classes

the organization of Negro Presbyterials in connection with the Presbyteries of Snedecor Memorial Synod.

The year 1937 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the organization of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. During this year a particular effort was made to enlist all the women of the Church in the activities of the Auxiliary. The Committee on Woman's Work devised a very practical plan of reaching local Negro Auxiliaries. In each community where there was a Negro Presbyterian Church, the Committee selected the Auxiliary of some white church as a "big sister" organization. A member of the white Auxiliary was chosen as "contact woman" between the two groups. She was given prepared material, "Important Information for Woman's Auxiliaries of Snedecor Memorial Synod", containing an outline for simple organization, for the conduct of meetings, and for various activities. In addition she was given a set of five programs to be used in Auxiliary meetings. Letters were also written to presidents of the Negro Presbyterials, outlining the plan and enlisting their cooperation.

The aim of this plan, as stated by the Secretary of Woman's Work, was threefold:

- "1) To give help to small and weak Auxiliaries
- 2) To help to reorganize Auxiliaries that are not now functioning

- 3) To organize Auxiliaries in every Presbyterian Church that does not now have one"¹

The white "contact woman" sought out the President of the Negro Auxiliary if the group was organized or some key woman in the Negro Church if there was no organized Auxiliary. She went over with her the printed information and program material and discussed problems of organization. The actual leadership of the Auxiliary was given to the Negro women themselves. But the "contact woman" and the "big sister" Auxiliary stand ready to cooperate at any time. Often they are called upon to take part in programs or to help solve practical problems.

A great effort has been made to provide programs which are suited to the needs of the Negro groups. Stress is placed on the Negro Synod and its work, on outstanding Negro missionaries, and on ways in which the Negro women themselves may serve. Suggestions are made as to practical activities to be carried on during Circle meetings - as making quilts and other articles for Stillman Institute, sewing for needy people in the community, making bandages, learning first aid, exchanging recipes, flower and vegetable seed, and many other things. Thus the Circle Meeting is planned to bring enrichment socially and mentally as well as spiritually.

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1. Letter of Miss Janie W. McGaughey to Negro Presbyterian Presidents

C. Woman's Department of Stillman Institute

The educational center of the Negro work of the Church is Stillman Institute at Tuscaloosa, Alabama. This is the only school for Negroes conducted by the Church, and is under the control of the Executive Committee of Home Missions. Stillman is definitely a Christian institution. Its primary aim is to turn out Christian men and women who will be leaders in advancing the Kingdom of God among their own people. ¹

There are six departments in Stillman - High School, Junior College, Theological, Nurse's Training, Music, and Modern Language. All of these departments are now open to women. Students of other denominations are admitted on the same standing with Presbyterians. Since Stillman became coeducational in 1922, about two hundred girls have been enrolled annually, representing many different states and denominations. The school is accredited by the Alabama State Board of Education.

In writing of Stillman Institute, Dr. Branch, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa, spoke of the six pillars which support its work. ² The first is the pillar of a strong faculty. It is the

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1. Cf. Catalog of Stillman Institute for 1937-38, p. 9
2. Branch, Harold Francis: Pamphlet, Stillman Institute, p. 3

policy of the school to maintain a mixed faculty, with the belief that there is a definite contribution to be made by leaders of both races.

The second is the pillar of a splendid curriculum.

One of the distinctive characteristics of Stillman has always been the prominence given to the study of the Bible which is required of all students. A thorough academic training in line with the requirements of the Board of Education is offered in the High School and Junior College Departments. In addition there is a Domestic Science department.

Third is the pillar of a fine practical training.

The Stillman student is prepared to work with her hands as well as with her mind. The girls learn how to prepare meals and serve them, how to select clothes, how to make garments and how to repair old garments.

Fourth is the pillar of low expense. Stillman provides its students a complete year's training for \$137.00.¹ There is an opportunity for much of this amount to be paid through work scholarships. In addition several cash scholarships are awarded - one by the Negro Women's Conference, one by the ladies of the Missionary Society of Jacksonville, Florida, and one by Alabama Synodical.²

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1. Branch, Harold Francis: Pamphlet, Stillman Institute, p. 3
2. Cf. Catalogue, Op. cit., pp. 37-38

A fifth pillar is that of a normal home life. Men and women students are associated in a natural way under the finest Christian influence and learn respect for one another.

The sixth pillar is that of a great faith and hope in the Negro race. Stillman believes that the Negro race has a definite contribution to make to the Kingdom of God. It teaches students "to honor their own race, to serve their own people, to take pride in their own life, and to mold it - individually and racially - after the pattern of Christ."¹

The varied extra-curricular activities of the school develop personality, leadership, and Christian fellowship. Many of the students teach in the Sunday School or help with the other activities of the Negro churches of Tuscaloosa. A definite effort is made to lead students to take up as their life work some form of Christian service among their own people.

D. Emily Estes Snedecor Nurses'

Training School

The Emily Estes Snedecor Nurses' Training School has made great progress since its opening in 1930. For

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1. Branch, Harold Francis: Op. cit., p. 3

the session 1937-38 there have been eighteen students enrolled. The primary objective of the Training School is "to offer service to humanity".¹ It gives a two-year course in practical nursing and is open only to high school graduates.

Students of Stillman Institute are treated in the hospital by the student nurses under careful supervision. The hospital is also open to Negro patients from the community. There is a well outfitted operating room for the use of Negro surgeons. The girls are given courses in Personal Hygiene and Public Health as well as all the usual Nurses' Training courses.

E. Negro Missions under the General Assembly

1. Hancock Street Mission, Louisville, Kentucky

On February 6, 1898, a group of six students from the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Louisville started a mission Sunday School in a Negro tenement district of that city. Dr. John Little, one of the original group, has remained ever since as Director of the Louisville Colored Mission. He himself states:

"The only reason why we started a Colored Mission in

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1. Cf. Pamphlet: The Stillman Bulletin, Dec. 1937, p.1

Louisville was that we found eleven churches for white people in connection with the Presbyterian Church U. S. but no one was lifting a hand for the Evangelization of the 40,000 negroes living in Louisville and we felt that someone ought to do something. I had no idea of making this my life work but from time to time it seemed imperative that someone should be willing to work for the colored people."¹

The Mission started with twenty-three ragged colored children meeting in a shack. Today it has two large institutional churches in different sections of the city with over two thousand people attending its services, clubs, and classes which are carried on under the direction of one hundred and ninety-seven volunteer teachers seven days each week.² The Mission is now controlled by the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches of Louisville. It is a member of the city Community Chest which guarantees its budget.

The pre-eminent aim of the Mission is character building.

"The unusual character of this work lies in the fact that its basic religious activities are marvelously interwoven with a program of vocational, recreational, and educational training."³

The program has been built on the plan of meeting each need as it has been expressed by the group or discovered by the workers.

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1. Personal Correspondence
2. Cf. Pamphlet: 36th Anniversary Presbyterian Colored Missions, Feb. 4, 1934, pp. 2-3
3. Gaines, Miriam: Pamphlet, The John Little Mission, p. 1

Seven services are conducted by the Mission each Sunday - two church services, a Sunday School, and four different Young Peoples' Groups.

The program during the week is varied enough to meet the needs of all ages and groups. For the women the greatest single contribution comes through the sewing classes. Over five hundred women attend these classes each week. Cooking classes are conducted once a week at both centers. The women at both centers are organized into a Woman's Auxiliary functioning under the Woman's Work Committee, and stressing community service work.

After investigation disclosed the fact that there was only one bath tub in the entire residential radius of the Mission, a bathhouse was equipped at the Mission. This is open two days a week for women.

The Negro women find joy in the fact that the lives of their children and young people are enriched through the Mission. The Public Health Nursing Association conducts Baby Clinics each week. Active Boy Scout Troups are organized in both centers. The City Recreation Department directs playground activities. Many of the boys receive training in the carpenter and shoe-repairing shops and the girls in sewing and cooking classes. A Vacation Church School is conducted in both centers during the summer. Boys' and Girls' Clubs and Service Groups meet each week.

The Louisville Mission has become a model for similar work throughout the country. It is:

"an institution of such remarkable religious and civic value to its own city that it has achieved national eminence. Representatives from many cities of both North and South have been sent to Louisville to study its unique methods of operation with the purpose in mind of establishing similar lines of work."¹

2. Seventeenth Street Mission, Richmond, Virginia

In 1911 two students of Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, in cooperation with the white Presbyterian churches of Richmond, organized a mission center in "Hell's Bottom", the most notoriously dirty, crowded, and corrupt Negro section of the city. The work began in an old shack, but it has grown steadily until today it is housed in a splendid brick building erected by the Presbyterian League of Richmond.²

The whole program of this mission is religious. There are no paid workers except one Seminary student who acts as Superintendent. There are volunteer workers from Union Theological Seminary, the Assembly's Training School, and the various white Presbyterian churches. Regular church services are held each Sunday and each Wednesday night, and a graded Sunday School for all departments is conducted on Sunday afternoon.

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1. Pamphlet: Presbyterian Colored Missions, p. 2
2. Cf. Thompson, E. T.: Presbyterian Missions in the Southern United States, p. 213

One of the greatest contributions comes through the visits made in the Negro homes by students from the Seminary and the Training School.

"Every Friday afternoon at least thirty students from the two schools go down into the mission district to visit in the homes, seek out sick folks and absentees from Sunday School, and carry the Gospel in a personal way."¹

A remarkable transformation has been wrought in this section of Richmond since the establishment of the Mission. The very name that used to be given to it has been forgotten.

3. Atlanta and Decatur Colored Missions

An active work for Negroes is being conducted by the Pittsburg Mission of Atlanta, Georgia, with a joint mission in Decatur. The Pittsburg center originated about 1900 as a mission Sunday School, but was organized as an institutional mission in 1918. It is located in one of the most destitute and churchless sections of the city. In connection with it there is a church of more than a hundred members under the charge of a well-trained Negro minister. The work of the mission includes:

"all of the activities of an organized church with preaching services, a Sunday School taught by volunteer white teachers from the Atlanta churches, a Christian Endeavor Society and Woman's Auxiliary, together with programs for community service and betterment. There

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1. McMillan, Homer: Near Neighbors, p. 69

is a kindergarten with an average attendance of 150, and a Daily Vacation Bible School is held in June each year with an enrollment of over 500, and is the largest in the state of Georgia."¹

The Decatur Mission was opened as an outgrowth of the Atlanta Mission in 1927. In addition to the distinctly religious work, the Mission holds a Medical Clinic, under the supervision of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Decatur Presbyterian Church, which ministers to hundreds of Negroes each month.

4. Berean Community Center, New Orleans, Louisiana

The most recently established institutional mission of the Church is the Berean Community Center at New Orleans, opened in April, 1930, by Dr. U. D. Mooney.

"In the city of New Orleans there are 130,000 Negroes, probably the largest Negro urban population in the South, whose physical surroundings and spiritual condition are little better than those living in a pagan land."²

The work of the center is carried on in cooperation with the Presbytery of New Orleans and the local Presbyterian churches. It has a regular staff of four paid workers - a Director, a Girls' Worker, a Boys' Worker, all white, and a graduate visiting nurse who is colored. There are volunteer workers from both white and Negro churches of New Orleans.

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1. Macmillan, Homer: Op. cit., p. 67
2. Ibid., p. 69

The Center is open every day in the week from nine A. M. to nine P. M. Many of its activities are especially planned for the Negro women. Among the most outstanding are: Sunday School classes, sewing classes each Friday afternoon at the beginning of which there is always a period of worship, classes in Adult Education, Home Making, and Gym Instruction held in cooperation with the W. P. A. Every Friday night Community Night is observed with special programs for each age group. On these nights the building is thrown open to the community and hundreds of Negro men, women, and children come in for hours of wholesome entertainment and fellowship. An employment service is conducted through the Center for the purpose of bringing together unemployed Negroes and white Presbyterians who desire employees in their homes. Members of the staff pay a great many visits in the homes of the Negro women.

It is estimated that this Center reaches more than two thousand people each month.¹

5. Outpost Sunday Schools

A small number of Negro outpost Sunday Schools are being conducted by Presbyterian Churches in different sections of the South. An interesting example is a Sunday School class at Signal Mountain Church near Chatanooga, Tennessee. This class is composed of about fifty Negro

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1. For this section Cf. Pamphlet: Berean Community Center

men and women who are employed in the homes of the community. The Executive Committee of Home Missions furnishes free Sunday School literature for this class, which is taught by a member of the Signal Mountain Presbyterian Church. The greatest contribution of the class is its building up of better understanding between the races. As the teacher said:

"A mutual love for Christ draws us together. Such a bond banishes race prejudice and cements hearts which are striving to live for Him."¹

During the conferences at Montreat each summer a similar class is conducted for all Negro employees.

In addition to these Sunday Schools for Negroes who are isolated from Negro churches, help is often given by white Presbyterians in the Negro Sunday Schools. A vast unoccupied field is still open for such work.

F. The Young Peoples' League of Snedecor Memorial Synod

In the spring of 1935, one hundred and forty young Negro men and women representing various churches of the Synod, met in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and organized the "Young Peoples' League of Snedecor Memorial Synod." Local Young Peoples' Groups have also been formed in the various churches. The local Young Peoples' Groups in each

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1. Article by McLaughlin, Henry W.: "An Interesting Sunday School Class," Presbyterian Survey, Jan. 1936

Presbytery form a Presbyterial League. These local organizations are carrying on active programs under the leadership of the Synod's League.

G. Efforts for Promotion of Better Racial Attitudes

No matter how great the outward activity of a Church or group may be, it is of little avail unless it is prompted by a spirit of love and respect for the Negro people. Consequently it is of the utmost importance that the membership of the church be led to the best possible racial attitudes.

The women are leading in efforts toward this end. A special Auxiliary program on interracial work was prepared for the month of June, 1935, and used in all the local Auxiliaries. At the Montreat Auxiliary Training School messages are given concerning the Conferences and the work of the institutional missions.

Occasionally programs for Young Peoples' Groups include discussion of race relations. And occasionally some mention is made of Negro children in the Children's quarterlies.

H. Summary

From this survey it is evident that the Committee on Woman's Work continues to take the lead in the work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States for the Negro women. The Committee through its sponsoring

of Conferences, its careful Follow-up of Conference delegates, its cooperation with Negro Community Clubs and Presbyterials, is doing an exceedingly practical work. It has gone beyond the bounds of denomination and brought together Negro women of many different churches. It has cooperated wisely with civic and governmental agencies. Its contribution is to the abundant life of the Negro woman - physically, socially, and mentally as well as spiritually.

Stillman Institute is a Christian school, definitely committed to the task of producing leaders proud of their own race and ready to serve their own people in a practical Christian way. Stillman is a very small institution to be the only school sponsored by a church as large as the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

The institutional missions of the Church are doing a unique and exceedingly practical work. Many more such missions should be established in other cities.

CHAPTER V

AN EVALUATION OF THE WORK OF THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES FOR THE NEGRO WOMAN
WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

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A. Introduction

It has been the purpose of this study to discover the contributions which the Presbyterian Church in the United States has made to the life of the southern Negro woman. The work of the Church must therefore be evaluated on the basis of actual life needs which have been met.

In the chapter entitled "The Life of the Negro Woman in the South Today", the various phases of her life were studied and the needs and the problems indicated. The evaluation of the work will follow the same plan, indicating contributions which have been made toward meeting definite needs in each phase of the life of the Negro woman. Suggestions for future work will be made on the basis of needs which have not yet been met.

B. Evaluation

1. The Contribution to the Home Life

The most vital problem of the Negro woman today is her home. The Church is making a real contribution to Negro home life through providing the women with instruc-

tion in the proper care of their homes and of their families.

At the Negro Women's Conferences practical classes are held in Sanitation, Food Values, Canning, Preserving, Care of the Sick and of Children. Demonstrations are given in the planning and furnishing of homes. Delegates to the Conferences are encouraged to use the knowledge thus gained in improving their own homes and communities. Conference follow-up work includes transformation in the delegates' own homes, teaching to others the lessons learned, and sponsoring Clean-up Days in their communities.

The Community Clubs sponsor definite projects for the improvement of home conditions; among these are Clean-up Days, flower planting, and instruction in sewing and cooking. In the programs prepared for the Negro Auxiliaries, suggestions are made in regard to sewing, first aid, gardening, and cooking.

The various institutional missions include classes in sewing, cooking, and home making. Practical articles for home use are made in the sewing classes of the Missions, such as sheets, pillow slips, towels, and curtains. Garments are made by the women for themselves and for their children.

It is evident that the Church is making an exceedingly practical contribution to the home life of the Negro woman.

2. Contribution to Health

In the survey of chapter two, it was discovered that there is a need for health education among Negro women throughout the South. This need is being directly met through the Negro Women's Conferences, Community Clubs, Auxiliaries, and through the institutional missions of the Church.

At the Conferences health talks are always given, often by representatives of the State Health Boards. Demonstrations in child care and the care of the sick are presented. Delegates on their return home are active in introducing health education into the schools and in establishing baby clinics and health clinics. Cooperation in this work is given by Community Clubs and Negro Auxiliaries. In the missions health clinics and baby clinics are held, through which hundreds of Negroes are aided.

A need for trained nurses and for better hospital facilities was also discovered through the survey. The Emily Estes Snedecor Nurses' Training School was established to meet this need. Through this school Negro girls are being trained as practical nurses. Many are going out into the public schools as teachers of sanitation and hygiene. Others are going as practical nurses into needy communities. The hospital at Stillman Institute is open to the use of Negro patients from the community.

3. The Contribution to Education

The chief educational needs discovered through the survey are a more adequate public school system and a system of adult education.

The public schools need well-trained teachers with a broad culture and sympathy. Stillman Institute is training such teachers. A large number of the graduates of Stillman have gone out as teachers in the public school system.

Through the Negro Women's Conferences delegates are prepared to contribute to the improvement of the public school systems of their own communities. Among the contributions which they have made are: introducing health education in the schools, establishing playgrounds, cleaning up school grounds and buildings, and establishing Parent-Teacher Associations.

A great deal is being done in the matter of adult education. The entire program of the Negro Women's Conferences is essentially educational. Study of the Bible, classes in Sunday School methods, handcraft classes, and discussions of community problems are all included. Women are educated for leadership through classes in parliamentary law. They are brought into contact with the world through missionary addresses, and through contacts with leaders of civic and governmental agencies.

Many classes, similar in nature to those of the Conferences, are conducted by the missions. The Community Bible Classes are very effective agencies for teacher training. The programs planned for the Negro Auxiliaries are rich in educational material.

The educational work of the Church centers, of course, in Stillman Institute. This institution is an accredited junior college and is making an important contribution to the education of southern Negro women.

4. The Contribution to Industrial Life

In the study of the "Place of the Negro Woman in Industry and in Domestic Service", it was discovered that a great deal of unjust discrimination still exists in these fields. The Church is doing very little to meet the need for equalization of opportunity for Negro workers.

The one direct contribution being made is through the Berean Community Center which conducts an employment service for its members.

5. The Contribution to Religious Life

The most essential contribution made by the Church is to the religious life.

"Educational and sociological means are indispensable but entirely inadequate unless accompanied by the power of the Gospel of Christ issuing in changed lives."¹

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1. Morris, S. L.: The Romance of Home Missions, p. 137

Several outstanding needs in the Negro Church were revealed through the survey in chapter two. First is the need for a closer relation between religion and morals. Religion must be made a matter of practical every day living and not a matter of emotion only. The practical aspect of religion is constantly stressed in the programs of the Conferences, Community Clubs, and of the Missions. The highest ideals of family life are presented to the women in these groups, and are held constantly before the students at Stillman Institute.

Another need is for a better trained ministry. Stillman Institute was founded to meet this need. It provides a three-year theological course. Completion of the high school and junior college work is required before entrance to this course. Each year when Snedecor Memorial Synod meets, the Executive Committee of Home Missions provides a week of Bible lectures, mission addresses, and conferences on the work of the Church. Thus the Negro ministers are kept in touch with the best thought of the Church. The influence of this training and of the doctrines of Presbyterianism are evident in the churches of Snedecor Memorial Synod.

"It is agreed by all observers that the Presbyterian Church is usually the dominant Negro church in the community in orderliness of worship, in its emphasis upon religious education of youth, and in its participation in Christian service. Although it is usually

the smallest in numbers, nevertheless it is the most commanding in influence."¹

The need for better organized churches is being partially met through the training which the women receive in their conferences, clubs, and classes. In these groups prominent Negro women are taught to use their Bibles, to teach Sunday School, and to conduct Vacation Church Schools. Thus they are prepared to go back to their churches and lead in the organization of the work. The movement for organization of Negro Women's Auxilia~~r~~ies is quite significant. This movement is so recent that it is difficult to evaluate its worth, but it is certainly an influence toward effective organization.

The Conferences have contributed greatly to the deepening of spiritual life among the Negro women. Some of the contributions mentioned by delegates are:

"I have a new vision of what it means to be a Christian!"
"I am going to do more for my Master than I ever have".
"I will pray more about the problems of my life and work."
"I have been to many conferences but none that helped me more spiritually."²

6. The Contribution to Improvement of Social Position

The Church has not taken an aggressive stand in the matter of improving the social position of the Negro woman. Perhaps its greatest failure is here. The princi-

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1. Article: "Our Work for Negroes", Presbyterian Survey July, 1937
2. Cf. Smith, Mrs. Frank: Report of the Georgia Conferences

pal contribution which has been made is through the improvement of racial attitudes. This contribution will be discussed in the following two sections.

7. The Contribution to Improvement of the Attitude of the White Race toward the Negro Woman

The great mistake in the attitude of the white race has been in placing all Negro women in one group, and judging the entire race by a few unrepresentative individuals. This mistake can be overcome only through direct contact with representative Negro women. The Church has done much to improve racial attitudes especially through its Negro Women's Conferences, Clubs, and Auxiliaries. In these groups white leaders come to know outstanding Negro women. As they talk and work with these women, they gain a new sympathy and respect for individual Negroes and through individuals for the entire race. The traditional attitudes of superiority, condescension, and amusement cannot hold toward a cultured Negro woman with whom one serves on committees, plans programs, discusses problems, and whom one hears speak with force and ability. As one leader has said:

"What have the conferences meant to the white leaders? A growth of interest in the Negro women's problems, a desire to ameliorate them; an enlarged conception of the increasing value to the Church and to the world at large of an educated and informed Christian Negro."¹

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1. Article by Gibbins, Rosa: "Christian Conferences for Negro Women", Presbyterian Survey, November, 1935

The Church is undoubtedly doing much to improve the racial attitudes of its leaders. The problem of the attitudes of the mass of church membership will be considered in the latter part of this chapter.

8. The Contribution to Improvement of the Attitude of the Negro Woman toward the White Race

From the survey of chapter two, it is evident that there has been among Negro women a feeling of distrust for members of the white race. This feeling, which has grown because of injustice and discrimination, is being broken down wherever the Church shows itself sincerely and earnestly seeking to contribute to the lives of Negro men and women.

The finest result of the Negro Women's Conferences is the improvement of feeling between the races.

"A fine spirit of fellowship, understanding, and Christian love characterizes the conferences."¹

As one delegate writes:

"We found out for the first time that the white women really do care about us and are willing to help us in every way."²

Another delegate writes:

"The Southern Presbyterian Church has done more to bring about friendly relations between the races than

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1. Parse, Mrs. J. W.: Report of the Arkansas Conferences
2. Personal Correspondence

any other group that I have ever known."¹

This same improvement of feeling is true in contacts through Community Clubs, Missions, and Auxiliary groups. As one representative Negro woman said:

"I believe it will not be long before all of my people will have faith in these Christian workers."²

As faith in these individual members of the white race increases, there will be correspondingly an improvement in attitude toward the white race as a whole.

9. Further Contributions

There are other contributions which do not come under any of the indicated headings, but which are of vital importance.

a. Pride of Race

The Church has done much to promote among Negro women pride in their own race. This is greatly needed, as Johnson, one of the Negro leaders, states:

"It (constant discrimination) has developed an inescapable sense of inferiority, an attitude of apology, a sense of guilt over the fact of color and its unpopular connotations. It has tended to develop oversensitiveness."³

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1. Personal Correspondence
2. Ibid.
3. Johnson, Charles S.: A Preface to Racial Understanding, p. 12

A constant effort is made to educate for leadership in conferences and clubs. The women are challenged to take much responsibility into their own hands. They are encouraged to undertake projects at home on their own initiative. Through their programs they learn of the work of the Negro Synod, the lives of great Negro women, and the value of the Negro's contribution to the Church and to the nation. They are receiving practical proof of the fact that they are not, as a race, inferior.

b. Interdenominational Fellowship

The Church has brought about a feeling of fellowship among various Negro denominations. As women of five or six denominations meet together in conferences or in club or in mission, they gain respect and understanding for one another. There is no room for rivalry or jealousy. The Presbyterian Church has contributed greatly to the lives of Negro women of Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal, and other denominations.

c. Intelligent Citizenship

The Church has brought Negro women into contact with leaders of civic organizations and of governmental agencies. This contact tends to break down any attitude of distrust or fear. It makes of the Negro woman a more intelligent citizen.

10. Representative Negro Women of the Presbyterian
Church in the United States

An interesting way of evaluating the work of any church is through discovering its influence upon the life and character of the people whom it serves. There are a number of Negro women whose lives have been transformed by the work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and whose Christian service and witness are outstanding.

The institutional missions of the Church are essentially character-building. In commenting on the work of the Berean Center, Dr. Mooney said:

"Those of us who have been with the work from the beginning can notice the change in these people . . . , a change in bearing, in manner, in expression, and attitude, and outlook."¹

Many women and girls have been given inspiration and guidance into lives of worthwhile service. Among the women trained in the Louisville Mission are some in high positions - one is director of music in a southern college, one is teaching the cooking classes at the Mission, another the sewing classes. Another is the Jeans Supervisor of all forms of handwork in the rural schools in Jefferson County, Kentucky.²

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1. Pamphlet: Berean Community Center, p. 4
2. Cf. Article: "Louisville Mission", Presbyterian Survey, December, 1936

Graduates of Stillman Institute have gone out as leaders among their own people. A large percentage are teaching in the public schools. A few are doing social work.

In the African Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the United States there have been eleven Negro missionaries. One of the most distinguished and one who had the longest record of service - thirty-five years - was Mrs. Althea Brown Edmiston. Her most outstanding contribution was the reduction of the Bakuba language to writing, and the composition of a Grammar and Dictionary of the Bakuba language. This is of basic value in all the missionary work among the Bakuba people. Mrs. Brown's own words express her spirit:

"My one desire is to spend and be spent in the service of God and my race. Had I a thousand lives to give I would sacrifice them all on the altar of Christian service."¹

One of the most interesting characters in the missionary annals of the Church is Miss Maria Fearing, Negro missionary to Africa. Born a slave in Alabama, she began her education in Talledega College at the age of thirty-three. When she was fifty-six years old, she was inspired by an address of Dr. Sheppard, pioneer missionary of the Church in Africa, with a great desire to

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1. Winsborough, Hallie P.: Glorious Living, p. 286

go out as a missionary. She applied to the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions and was refused because of her age. But she was not discouraged. With the aid of friends in Talledega she raised sufficient funds to pay for her own passage. At Luebo she established the Pantops Home for Girls. Into this home hundreds of orphan girls and many girls rescued from kidnapping tribes were brought. Here Miss Fearing taught them the laws of sanitation, cooking, sewing, housekeeping, care of children, reading, writing, and arithmetic. The girls took part in all the religious services of the mission and a large majority of them became members of the church. The missionaries of her station have paid her this tribute:

"Above all we believe that her work will not only live in the lives of the girls she has trained in the Pantops Home, but it will endure through many generations in their descendants. Her girls are known by their faces and attitudes in all the villages in which they are to be found."¹

These are only a few of the outstanding Negro women of the Church. Surely all that has been contributed to their lives has borne fruit in Christian love and service.

C. Suggestions for Future Work

The evaluation of the work of the Church has

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1. Winsborough, H. P.: Op. cit., p. 317

brought to light many worthwhile contributions. It has also revealed certain needs which still remain. All of the present activities are indispensable. The suggestions which follow are for work in addition to that now being done.

1. Transformation of the Racial Attitudes of the Mass Membership of the Church through an Educational Program

The mass mind is still largely untouched by the interracial movement. Despite the fact that leaders in the Church are having their attitudes transformed, the old prejudices are keeping their grip on the majority.

The first suggestion for the future is, therefore, that the Church undertake an aggressive program for the improvement of the racial attitudes of its entire membership. Since these attitudes are to a large extent due to ignorance of the true facts concerning the Negro, they may be improved through an educational program, including study of the Negro and contact with representative Negroes.

This program must be begun in the children's department of the Sunday School. Stories of the Negro and information about the Negro must be presented in the children's lesson material with the same interest and enthusiasm that is shown for foreign mission stories.

The fine characteristics of the Negro must be stressed and the children led to see the ways in which Negro children are like themselves instead of the ways in which they are different. As often as possible children must be brought into actual contact with Negro children through participating in programs, pageants, and games with them. All such contacts must be carefully planned and supervised so that they will develop a feeling of fellowship and will not be carried on in a spirit of superiority or condescension. All interracial teaching with children must be on the Christian basis of brotherhood with other children of a common Father.

An active educational program must be continued with the young people in Sunday School and in societies. They are interested in race relations. Programs must be presented to them which face the vital issues, which give accurate information, which stress the cultural values and civic contributions of Negroes, and which interpret race relations in a Christian way. Discussion groups must be held in which Negro leaders and young people are invited to participate. Active community projects must be planned in cooperation with Negro young people.

In order that the educational program may be effectively carried out, careful teacher training is essential. Teachers must be educated in race relations through reading, discussion, and contact with Negroes.

The adults are the most difficult group to influence in the matter of race relations. But there are many ways in which they may be educated. The minister should take every opportunity in his sermons to stress the importance of a Christian attitude, to bring out the best features of race relations, to stress the cultural and religious contributions of the Negro race. Many members of the Church know nothing of the work which is being done in the Negro Women's Conferences, Clubs, Missions, and at Stillman Institute. They should be told about these activities through reports, articles in church papers, and special addresses. The adults need contacts with representative Negroes just as much as do children and young people. Opportunities must be provided through inviting Negro speakers to the churches, hearing Negro singers, and sponsoring community projects in cooperation with Negro groups.

2. A More Aggressive Social Program

The Church must go a step further than education. She must demand that the knowledge gained be carried over into action. The attitude of the Church has been too much 'laissez-faire' in matters of social and legal injustice.¹ There is a vast field of activity for the

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1. Cf. Bowen, Trevor: Divine White Right, p. 156

Church in arousing its entire membership to a feeling of personal responsibility for the welfare of the Negro.

The Church is not an economic institution. It cannot enter into the field of business. Yet it possesses the power to mold attitudes and establish principles which carry over into all spheres of life. The Presbyterian Church in the United States should take a more aggressive stand in relation to the problem of Negro employment.

The Church numbers among its membership thousands of employers. It must say to those employers, "Give the Negro an even chance; do not bar her because of her color."

It must make this demand concrete and definite, in terms of actual people and actual situations.

The women of the Presbyterian Church U. S. have Negro servants in their homes. It is the duty of the Church to make these women aware of their responsibility as Christians for these servants - the responsibility of paying just wages, of showing respect for personality, and of giving every possible encouragement and aid in the struggles of these Negro servants toward a better life for themselves and for their race. As Weatherford says:

"When all the women in the South take a genuine interest in the Negro women and girls in their homes, there will be the dawning of a new day in the condition of the servant."¹

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1. Weatherford, W. D.: Negro Life in the South, p. 38

"In the interests of common justice and civilized humanity the Church should preach the obligations of Christianity between man and man, thereby creating a sentiment in favor of extending to the Negro his God-given rights as a man created in the image of God: the protection of his rights in Courts of Justice, the protection of his health and moral character in housing conditions, and above all the protection of his life in the hands of infuriated mobs. " 1

3. Increased Financial Support

Never in its history has the Presbyterian Church in the United States adequately financed its program of Negro evangelization. As Dr. Little has said:

"The Southern Presbyterian Church has done pitifully little, yet I know of no investment of money that has paid larger returns." 2

At present there are many needs which can be met only by a generous increase in financial support.

a. Stillman Institute

Stillman Institute is greatly limited in resources. It needs to be enlarged and its equipment improved in order to fulfill its task. One of its most pressing needs is for a new chapel building. The school attendance has outgrown the present chapel and they are forced to hold meetings in the Negro church building. As Mr. Jackson, the principal, states: "This is not satisfactory in every respect, and a chapel of our

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1. Morris, S. L.: Op. Cit., p. 127
2. Personal Correspondence

own is badly needed." 1

Another pressing need at Stillman is for scholarship funds.

"More than two hundred and fifty students were turned away last year because of lack of scholarship funds to meet their school expenses. Most of them are paying a very small proportion. The remainder must be provided by the gifts of the Church." 2

Local churches, presbyterials, synodicals, or individual members should contribute to this scholarship fund.

The theological department of Stillman Institute is greatly in need of endowment. Dr. Sikes, the head of the department, states:

"The institution could greatly increase its usefulness by the addition of more funds for the enlargement of this department of study." 3

And Dr. Branch, a teacher in the department, states:

"Somebody ought to endow the Theological Department with a fund sufficient to maintain it in an adequate way." 4

b. Institutional Missions

The institutional missions all need more adequate

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1. Article, by Jackson, A. L.: "Progress at Stillman Institute", Presbyterian Survey, July, 1937
2. Branch, Harold F.: Pamphlet, "Stillman Institute", p. 3
3. Sikes, W. M.: Pamphlet, "The School of Theology and Stillman Institute", p. 2
4. Branch, H. F.: Op. Cit., p. 4

financial support. Quoting Dr. Little:

"We have never had enough money to operate the work as fully as it should be done. I am still longing to see the day when some of our well-to-do Christian people will recognize the value of our Christian Institutions for the Colored people and will dedicate their means to provide complete equipments and to give to those who have consecrated their lives to personal service for the Negro a more liberal and deserved support." 1

Dr. Little's report deplores the deterioration of the buildings of his Mission because of budget cuts which leave no provision for upkeep, repairs, and improvements.

Dr. Mooney of the Berean Mission reported at the end of 1936:

"Our support this year has not been enough to enable us to meet our very modest budget." 2

4. Increased Number of Paid Workers

Throughout the history of the Church there have been outstanding leaders who have given their lives to the cause of Negro evangelization. But never have there been enough workers to carry forward an adequate program.

"It must be said that while our Church has done a commendable work for the Negroes, yet our labors have not been commensurate with the needs of this people. The amount of money expended and the number of laborers employed among the Negroes should be doubled, and even

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1. Article: "Louisville Mission", Presbyterian Survey, December, 1936
2. Pamphlet: Berean Community Center, 1930-36

trebled, and the prayers manifolded, without delay, in order to meet adequately our obligation to these brothers in black." 1

More paid workers are needed in the missions. Similar missions should be founded in cities throughout the South. Consecrated men and women are needed for this task.

A worker is needed to give full time to the sponsoring of Negro Women's Conferences and the supervision of Follow-up Work. 2

The program of Stillman Institute needs to be enlarged and new members added to its staff.

5. A Four-Year College

Stillman Institute provides only a Junior College course. There is no institution maintained by the Church which can give a college degree. Negro women must go to other institutions to receive their final training. As Dr. Little states:

"We have had to depend on the products of another school for all colored women in Africa who have rendered outstanding services." 3

Mrs. Edmiston, for example, received her training at Fisk University.

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1. Article, by Sikes, W. M.: "A Review of Our Negro Work for the Diamond Jubilee", Presbyterian Survey, September, 1936
2. Personal Interview with Miss Janie W. McGaughey
3. Personal Correspondence

There is undoubtedly a need for an accredited Senior College which can give Negro young people complete preparation under the auspices of the Church and in the same spirit as Stillman Institute. Dr. Sikes states:

"The needs of the Negro people and the demands for an adequately trained leadership make it imperative that the Church provide the means and establish such a college as early as possible." 1

6. A Larger Number of Negro Ministers

There are not enough Negro ministers in the Church to supply the demands of Snedecor Memorial Synod. Many of the ministers now working in the Synod are nearing retirement age. Very few young men are candidates for the ministry. Dr. Sikes writes:

"Too long already the work of the synod has been at a standstill, no new fields being opened up and no aggressive steps being taken to overcome the spiritual destitution among the Negro people of the South. I feel that the burden of this appeal rests very definitely upon the white Presbyterian people of the South." 2

The Church should make a definite effort to present the challenge of the Gospel ministry forcefully to outstanding Negro men. This may be done through individual contacts with Negro employees and students, through correspondence, and through visits to Negro schools and churches. The Church must bring these men into contact

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1. Sikes, W. M.: The Historical Development of Stillman Institute, p. 122
2. Article, by Sikes, W. M.: "A Review of Our Negro Work for the Diamond Jubilee", Presbyterian Survey, September, 1936

with Stillman Institute. It must also give financial support through individual scholarships and through endowment of the Theological Department of Stillman Institute.

7. A Little Montreat

Stillman Institute is already a religious center for Negro Presbyterians. Conferences of several types have been held at Stillman - for women, for young people, and for pastors. The Negroes need the spiritual uplift, fellowship, and educational advantages of such a center just as white Presbyterians need Montreat. The number and program of summer conferences for Negroes should be increased and the facilities of Stillman Institute enlarged so that it may be an adequate conference ground. It has been suggested:

"More and more Stillman Institute and its facilities should be made to mean to our Negro people what Montreat means to the white people of our Church in its deepest spiritual sense. As some one has said, it should be 'A Little Montreat for the Negroes'."¹

D. Summary

The Presbyterian Church in the United States is making a practical and far-reaching contribution to the life of the Negro woman of the South. The help given through Conferences, Clubs, Missions, and Classes is

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1. Article by Sikes, W. M.: "A Review of Our Negro Work for the Diamond Jubilee", Presbyterian Survey, September, 1936

influencing Negro home life, health conditions, education- especially adult education, church life, and racial attitudes. The lives of the women testify to the value of the work.

Yet much still remains to be done. The basic need is for a transformation of the racial attitudes of the entire membership of the Church. A more aggressive social program must be undertaken. Financial support must be greatly increased and a larger number of workers must be employed. A full four-year college course must be made available for Negro young people of the Presbyterian Church. Negro young men must be enlisted for the ministry. Conference facilities must be increased so that the Negro Church may have an adequate religious center.

SUMMARY
AND
CONCLUSION

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

It has been the purpose of this study to discover the contributions which the Presbyterian Church in the United States has made and is making to the life of the Negro woman of the South.

In order to evaluate the work of the Church for the Negro woman, it is necessary to know the problems and needs which the Church is seeking to meet. Therefore the first two chapters of this survey have been devoted to a study of the Negro woman herself. The first chapter traced the history of the Negro woman from the time of her introduction into America up to the present time. The four periods in that history - the period prior to the Civil War, the Civil War Period, the Reconstruction Period, and the period of the New South - were briefly sketched. It was discovered that the Negro woman during these years suffered greatly. Yet through her labor and her personality she made a vital contribution to the life of the South, and she developed many qualities which are outstanding in the Negro race today. Among these are a deep religious faith, a personal loyalty and faithfulness, a love for liberty, and a great desire for education. During these years also there were developing racial attitudes which greatly influence the life of the South even at the present time.

The white people developed an attitude of increasing superiority and condescension, the Negro people an attitude of resignation and of inferiority.

The second chapter of the study contained a survey of the various phases of the Negro woman's life in the South today - her home life, her health, her educational opportunity, her place in domestic service and industry, her religious life, and her social position. The attitudes of the white and Negro races toward one another were also considered. As a result of this survey certain conclusions were drawn as to the outstanding needs of the Negro woman. These needs were found to be: improved housing conditions, more adequate health programs and better hospital facilities, an improved public school system and provisions for adult education, equal opportunity with white workers in business and industry, higher moral standards, better organized churches with better trained ministers, equalization of service in all public conveyances and meeting places, justice under the law, and sympathetic and unprejudiced cooperation from members of the white race.

Having gained an understanding of the life of the Southern Negro woman, the next step was to discover the part which the Presbyterian Church in the United States has played in influencing and contributing to that life. The third and fourth chapters of this study dealt specifically with the work of the Presbyterian Church in the

United States for the Negro woman.

The third chapter contained an historical account of the work from its earliest beginnings down to the present day. The three distinct periods in this history were noted - the period of individual efforts before the Civil War, the period of wavering Church policy after the Civil War, and the period of active work since the organization of the Woman's Auxiliary (now known as the Committee on Woman's Work) in 1912.

The fourth chapter consisted of a survey of the present work of the Church for the Negro woman. This work falls into three major divisions. The first is the work of the Committee on Woman's Work including Negro Women's Conferences of two types - Synodical Conferences and One-Day Conferences, Conference Follow-up Work in local communities, Bible Classes and Community Welfare Clubs, and Negro Women's Auxiliaries. The second major division is the work of Stillman Institute, the only school maintained by the Presbyterian Church in the United States. This school makes a vital contribution through its Woman's Department and its Nurses' Training School. The third major division is the work of the Negro Missions under the General Assembly - the four institutional missions at Louisville, Richmond, Atlanta, and New Orleans, and the outpost Sunday Schools.

Thus far the study has presented two major lines of approach; first through the presentation of the Negro woman - her history and her present life, and second through the presentation of the work of the Church - its history and its present scope. The purpose of the fifth chapter was to bring together these two lines of approach, to evaluate the work of the Church in the light of the Negro woman herself. The evaluation followed the various phases of the Negro woman's life, indicating the way in which the activities of the Church have contributed to each phase. It was discovered that all of the activities now being carried on are of vital importance and should be continued. In addition to these activities, there are other things which need to be done. Therefore a program of additional activities was suggested for the future - including an educational program for the purpose of transforming the racial attitudes of the mass membership of the Church, an enlarged social program, increased financial support, an increased number of paid workers, a full four-year college, the enlistment of Negro candidates for the ministry, and the establishment of a conference center for Negro Presbyterians.

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