

The Negro Department

By F. L. PETERSON, Secretary



F. L. Peterson

It was at the General Conference in 1909 that this department was organized, and since that time the work among the colored people of North America has steadily advanced.

Although the six years which have elapsed since the last General Conference session have not

been without struggles and difficulties, they have been years of rich blessings for the work among our people, and today we bring you a message of courage and good cheer.

Since the time that Philip led the black premier from the realm of Queen Candace into the light, and baptized him in the name of Jesus, the story of Christ has been making music in the hearts of the sons and daughters of Africa; and today we are living in the days of which the poet of the Psalms sang: "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." Ps. 68:31.

The magnitude of the task has kept us close to God and to our work, and we have had no time for trivial and foolish disputations. With seriousness and diligence, our workers have, for the most part, addressed themselves to the work of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and of building up the cause of God.

Notwithstanding the unsettling influence of the time, the call of Jesus Christ has not lost its compelling power, and men and women are still being drawn to Him. This is evidenced by the membership statistics for the last six years. In 1930 the membership of this department was 8,114. Since that time there have been added 3,909, making a total of 12,023 at the close of 1935.

Our colored believers are loyal to the advent message, and this has been shown in part by their faithfulness in paying tithes and by their liberal gifts to missions. From the year 1930 to December 31, 1935, the total tithe receipts were \$903,899.81. The total amount given to missions for the same period was \$602,837.60, making a total in tithes and offerings of \$1,506,737.41. In addition to this, many thousands of dollars have been raised by our colored believers for their local church work.

In our department we have fifty ordained ministers, twenty licentiates, six Bible workers, and seven assistant field missionary secretaries. Among these workers there is a growing spirit of united action, irrespective of the geographical limits of their field of labor. Our one aim is that God may use us in the finishing of His work, and thus we may share in the glorious task of establishing His kingdom.

Since the last General Conference session, ministerial institutes have been held for all our workers, and they have proved a great blessing to them and to our work.

Four of our workers have been laid to rest since we last met in General session,

—H. D. Greene, Sydney Scott, A. K. Watkins, and Miss Sarah H. Crowe. In addition to these we would record the name of a faithful lay worker, Dr. J. H. Howard, of Washington, D.C., who, in a self-supporting way, pioneered the work of Seventh-day Adventists in Ethiopia.

Christian Education

More attention is now being given to Christian education by our church leaders than ever before in the history of our department, and yet we realize that far too many of our young people are still in the schools of the world. Surely, in a time like this, we as colored leaders must really believe and teach both by precept and example that "our children should be removed from the evil influences of the public school, and placed where thoroughly converted teachers may educate them in the Holy Scriptures." —*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 204.

At the present time we are operating fifty-three church schools, three junior academies, with an enrollment of 1,502 pupils, and are employing seventy-eight teachers.

Oakwood Junior College is our training center for the colored youth of North America. During the last six years it has had a large enrollment, and the general character of the work done is excellent. The school year just closed had an enrollment of 177 students, thirty-six of whom were graduated. Plans are now being perfected to make this institution a stronger and more efficient training center for our colored believers than in former years.

Out of a ministerial force of sixty workers, forty-three are the product of our own schools.

B. W. Abney, who was the secretary of our department for the Central Union Conference six years ago, with his family, answered the call of the Foreign Mission Board to labor for the colored people of South Africa. As a department we were happy to make this contribution to the work of soulsaving in that needy field. During the time of this very meeting here in San Francisco, our brother is visiting the native camp meetings in the mission fields of Africa. His experience will mean much to our work here in North America, both by means of the reports that he will send, and the inspiration he will bring to our churches, should his life be spared to return to the homeland.

In our department we have a loyal army of Missionary Volunteers. In the summer of 1934 we held a nation-wide Youth's Congress on the campus of Oakwood Junior College. There were present during the three days that the congress convened, over 1,000 of our young people from all sections of North America. This was the largest and most inspiring meeting that has ever been held for our group, and many of our youth made decisions at this meeting that will take them into the kingdom of God.

The Literature Ministry

We feel that the Lord has greatly blessed our faithful colored colporteurs in selling truth-filled literature during the past six years. Many of our believers have been trained and set to work to take

the printed page into the homes of the people. In a number of local conferences, colored assistant field secretaries have been leading out in this important phase of the Lord's work, and they and their force of workers have helped to make possible the good report of the Publishing Department.

The book, "Hope of the Race," written by one of our group, has been added to the list of truth-filled books, and it is finding its way into the homes of the people as a minister of righteousness.

As a means of more effectively and quickly bringing the truth to the attention of the colored people, we are issuing quarterly the *Message Magazine*. Many thousands of copies of this magazine are sold each quarter, and eternity alone will reveal the fruit of this seed sowing.

In this connection it is interesting to note that in the beginning of the work of Seventh-day Adventists among the colored people of North America, James Edson White, a pioneer of this work, prepared simple Christian literature for the lowly and unlearned, that they might be taught the rudiments of reading and at the same time learn the gospel story. For the accomplishing of this task the little book "Gospel Primer" was brought out. It was well adapted to the needs of many of the people among whom he and his company worked.

Since that time the popularization of education among Negroes has reduced illiteracy, and we now have among us many college and university trained minds. The presence of Negro newspapers and magazines in their homes is a fair index to the race consciousness and race pride that exist. So today the opportunity is afforded us to prepare literature covering every phase of the advent message, and to place it in the homes of our people so they may be without excuse when our blessed Lord shall come.

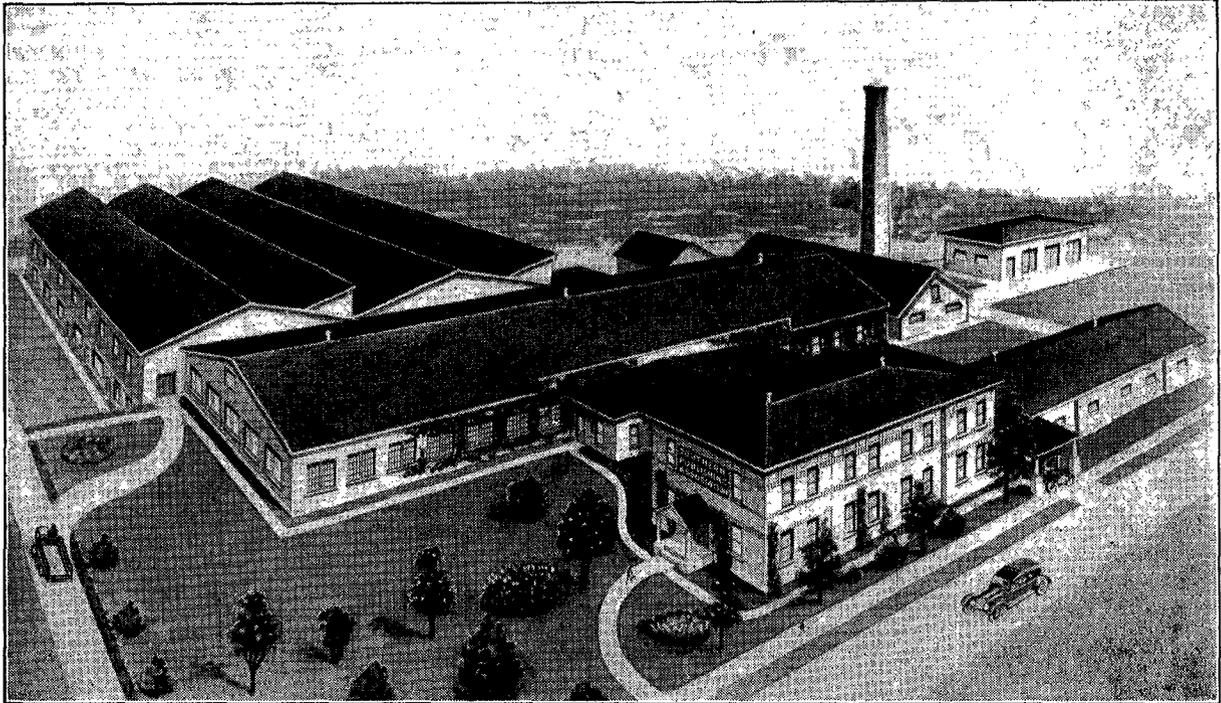
Medical Missionary Work

From a testimony to the General Conference in 1901 we quote: "I have seen that all heaven is interested in the work of relieving suffering humanity. Satan is exerting all his powers to obtain control over the souls and bodies of men. . . . My heart is made sad as I look at our churches, which ought to be connected in heart and soul and practice with the medical missionary work. Medical missionary work is the pioneer work. It is to be connected with the gospel ministry. It is the gospel in practice, the gospel practically carried out. . . . I wish to tell you that soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work."—*General Conference Bulletin, 1901, p. 204*.

We are glad to report that a beginning has been made in this work, and a few of our churches are known as medical missionary centers. Our church at Oakland, California, was the first to establish a medical and hydrotherapy department. From its beginning in 1928, over 10,000 patients have received medical help.

The Shiloh Health and Educational Clinic in Chicago has been in operation since 1932, and 11,550 patients have been treated.

In both of these churches, regular classes in home hygiene and care of the sick are conducted by the clinic staff of instructors. Many of our other churches are annually holding similar classes in home nursing.



Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee

The General Conference, in establishing throughout the world a large number of sanitariums, hospitals, and dispensaries, has not been unmindful of the needs of the colored people of North America. Much study has been given to the establishing of such a medical unit for our group. Some few attempts have been made in the past. While these beginnings have not progressed, we are loath to say that they have all been complete failures, for a number of our people have received benefit from them.

The inspired pen of Sister White records that "schools and sanitariums for colored people should be established, and in these the colored youth should be taught and trained for service by the very best teachers that can be employed."—"Testimonies," Vol. IX, p. 207. It is stated very definitely that "medical missionary work is the right hand of the gospel. It is necessary to the advancement of the cause of God."—*Id.*, Vol. VII, p. 59. It is further stated: "It will take money, and earnest, persevering effort to do that which needs to be done among the colored people."—*Id.*, Vol. IX, p. 216.

With instruction like the foregoing, and in harmony with personal interviews with Sister White, Mrs. N. H. Druillard purchased twenty-two acres of land near the city of Nashville, Tennessee, and there devoted her time, talent, and money to the development of the Riverside Sanitarium for the colored people. She spent nearly \$30,000 in building up this institution. This property has now been turned over to the General Conference, and today I am happy to report that a larger sanitarium and hospital is in process of construction in the suburbs of Nashville, thus carrying out the instructions that for the colored people "a sanitarium should be established in a favorable location outside the city of Nashville."—MS-38-1903.

In accepting this property the General Conference has made available for our use \$30,000 with which to put up a modern sanitarium and hospital building, and has also purchased twenty-three acres of adjoining land.

Our colored constituency have been asked to raise an additional sum of \$20,000 toward this building fund, making a total of \$50,000. We have gladly shouldered this financial task, and throughout the field our people are responding liberally to the call.

Exceedingly Grateful

While we have shared with the whole country the difficulties created by the financial depression, as a department of a world-wide movement we are grateful to God and to the General Conference for the resourcefulness with which every situation has been met, and that our work has not suffered beyond that of any other department. We are exceedingly grateful for this fellowship.

We thank God for the wise and courageous leadership that we have in our several union and local conferences, for a deepening sense of the responsibility that rests upon us, and for the growing liberality of our colored believers toward the advancement of the great world-wide mission program of the church.

Today, as at the end of six years we look back over the way that we have come, we can but say that God has graciously and abundantly answered our prayers, and we face the future with undaunted courage, and go forward with greater zeal and earnestness in self-effacing service for God and for the finishing of His work in the earth.

"Workman of God, O lose not heart,
But learn what God is like;
And on the darkest battlefield
Thou shalt know where to strike.

"For right is right, since God is God,
And right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin."



FORCE may subdue, but love gains; and he that forgives first, wins the laurel. Love is the hardest lesson in Christianity; but for that reason it should be most our care to learn it.—William Penn.

WHY is it that some allow their church membership to lapse and their spiritual experience to dwindle through neglect? Often it is because they fail to keep in touch with the onward march of the third angel's message as reported weekly in the REVIEW. Only by reading the REVIEW can one keep abreast of the progress of the message in all the world.

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CHICAGO, ILL.,
January 25, 1936.

PRESENT TRUTH

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Thanking you, I remain,
Sincerely yours,
Miss E. H.

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