

The North American Colored Department

By G. E. PETERS, Secretary

THE quadrennial period of the General Conference closing with December 31, 1949, has produced a record of remarkable progress of the colored work in the United States. The North American Negro Department, now known as the North American Colored Department, under a departmental secretary, was formed to do a more effectual work. Its particular mission was to give study and special attention to that phase of the denomination's work as an integral part of this great world movement.

The department was created at the twenty-sixth meeting of the thirty-seventh session of the General Conference held in Takoma Park, Washington, D.C., May, 1909. During the years of departmental leadership our work developed from 1,000 members in 1909 to 17,000 in 1943, showing a net gain of 16,000 believers in 34 years, or an annual net gain of 470 for each of the 34 years, but much greater progress awaited us.

In the year 1886 we were a small group in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country, numbering only 50, and paying a total tithe of \$50 that year. In 1949 the statistical report showed a present membership of more than 25,000 believers, a gain of more than 10,500 since we reported at the 1941 General Conference session; and the tithe paid by our Negro constituents amounted to \$4,828,246.64 during the last four-year period ending December, 1949; also offerings given to missions in the sum of \$1,839,614.92 for the same period made a grand total of \$6,667,661.56 for the cause of God in four years. We can truly say, "What hath God wrought!"

Recognizing the development of our work among Negro Seventh-day Adventists, under the signal blessings of God, in the establishing of a large number of churches with greatly increased membership and finances aggregating millions of dollars, the delegates at the spring meeting in Chicago, April, 1944, authorized the organization of colored conferences administered by colored officers and committees.

Lake Region Conference

The first colored conference was organized in Chicago, January 1, 1945. It embraced the colored membership of the Lake Union Conference. The name Lake Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was adopted. At the conference session of 1949 T. M. Fountain succeeded J. G. Dasent as president, and F. M. Crowe was re-elected to the office of secretary-treasurer. The present membership is 2,977. During this five-year period 951 were baptized into the message, and two new church buildings have

been erected. The present value of church and school property is \$354,000. Four churches were organized during this period. The tithe for the five-year period amounted to \$867,570.45 and the mission offerings, \$286,371.00. There are 29 churches, 3 companies, and 8 church schools with an enrollment of 336.

Northeastern Conference

January 1, 1950, marked the fifth anniversary of the organization of the Northeastern Conference, with headquarters in New York City. The officers elected five years ago, L. H. Bland, president, and L. O. Irons, secretary-treasurer, still retain their responsibilities. Since the organization the members have paid in tithe \$933,347.11 and given



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in mission offerings \$297,750.56. The approximate value of church property is \$475,000.00. They have acquired one church property each year. All property is free of debt including the buildings for conference headquarters and day academy. They report 1,020 baptisms since the organization. The working staff has been increased from 8 to 27. Their membership, December 31, 1949, was 3,005.

Allegheny Conference

This conference headquarters is at Pine Forge, Pennsylvania, about four miles from Pottstown, Pennsylvania, and forty miles from Philadelphia. The conference began its functions January 1, 1945. The Allegheny Conference, with

J. H. Wagner as president and M. S. Banfield, secretary-treasurer, comprises the territory and churches of the Columbia Union in seven States and the District of Columbia. The membership at the close of 1949 was 4,788. Tithe for the four-year period amounted to \$1,019,415.74, and mission offerings amounted to \$388,217.91 for the same period. The year 1949 shows a gain of \$10,947 in mission offerings. There were 1,286 baptisms for the four-year period. There are 46 organized churches and 4 companies in this conference. A 12-grade boarding academy with an enrollment of 100 is operated. The conference headquarters and academy buildings are on 540 acres of land. The total conservative value of all properties is estimated as \$550,000. There is no indebtedness.

South Atlantic Conference

The South Atlantic Conference, with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, is our largest colored conference, and consists of our membership in the following four States in the territory of the Southern Union: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and all of Florida except the northwestern portion. This conference began its operation January 1, 1946, with H. D. Singleton as president and L. S. Follette, secretary-treasurer. The membership at the close of 1949 was 5,132. Since its organization to the close of 1949 its membership paid in tithe \$621,762.78 and in mission offerings, \$349,782.86. There are 65 organized churches and 9 companies. There are 66 church buildings and 19 schools operated and serviced by 30 qualified teachers. Since its organization 2,448 souls have been added by baptism and profession of faith. The conference evangelist, E. E. Cleveland, has held several successful efforts, baptizing more than 700 persons during the four-year period. Other successful evangelistic efforts have been conducted. The faithful colporteurs delivered \$407,955 worth of literature during the quadrennial period. The total property value in this conference aggregates the sum of \$480,000 on which there is no liability.

South Central Conference

The functions of this conference, also in the Southern Union, include churches and membership in the States of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and northwest Florida. The officers are H. R. Murphy, president, and V. G. Lindsay, secretary-treasurer. There are 42 organized churches and 6 companies with a membership of 2,767. Since the conference organization 8 churches have been added. At the close of 1949 there had been 1,001 baptisms. The conference operates 13 church schools and employs 23 teachers. There are 28 ordained and licensed ministers, 6 Bible instructors, and 24 colporteurs. Tithe for the four-year period amounted to \$398,635.00, and mission offerings to \$238,350.32. The approximate value of church and school property is \$394,950. These buildings are free from indebtedness. The conference headquarters is in Nashville, Tennessee.

Southwest Region Conference

The organization of our work in the Southwestern Union Conference into a mission organization with a mission superintendent and secretary-treasurer was formed during the month of December, 1946, and gave way to a full-fledged conference organization January 15, 1950. This conference is known as the Southwest Region Conference, with headquarters in Dallas, Texas. The territory includes all the States covering the territory of the Southwestern Union. There are 41 churches and companies. The officers of the conference are W. W. Fordham, president, and V. L. Roberts, secretary-treasurer. At the time of the organization of the conference in January, 1950, there was a membership of 2,081, a net increase of 497 in three years. During that period the baptisms totaled 673, and 4 new churches were organized. The total amount of tithe paid by the believers from 1947 to 1949 amounted to \$239,714.05, and the offering to missions for the same period was \$105,719.96. The total estimate on all properties of this conference is \$505,000. It is encouraging to note that all property is clear of debt.

Central States Mission

In 1947 the Central States Mission was organized, with a membership of 789. T. M. Rowe was appointed superintendent of the mission. The present officers are F. L. Bland, president, and J. H. Jones, secretary-treasurer. This mission covers the territory of the Central Union Conference embracing the colored constituency of the States of Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Wyoming. The membership at the beginning of the year was 1,142, a net gain of 333 for the three-year period. The combined tithe and mission offerings for the same period ending December 31, 1949, was \$243,336, a net gain of \$115,105. F. L. Bland has brought strong leadership to this mission, and prospects are good for the organization of a conference in the near future. There are 19 churches and companies, 18 ministers, and one Bible instructor. There is no debt, and the estimated value of property is \$225,000. The members have organized to strongly promote evangelism during this year, 1950.

Pacific Union Colored Department

Our work in the Pacific Union retains its departmental organization. For nearly four years Owen A. Troy has served as secretary of the colored department. In the department there are 16 ministers, ordained and licensed, 6 Bible instructors, 20 colporteurs, and 9 schoolteachers. For the years 1948 and 1949, 599 baptisms are reported. The amount of tithe paid by our constituents of the Pacific Union for the two-year period ending December 31, 1949, was \$404,343.15 and mission offerings, \$135,038.22, making a grand total of \$539,381.37 in tithe and offerings for that department.

R. Hope Robertson, former pastor of our Los Angeles church and a successful

evangelist, now devotes his entire time to evangelism in the Southern California Conference. J. E. Cox, our pastor in the city of San Francisco during the last five years, has built up a strong membership and purchased a representative church edifice, on which there is no liability. Completely modern and on a 15-acre space is the new \$275,000 Los Angeles Academy, where J. F. Dent, principal, is carrying on a strong educational program. The estimated total value of church and school buildings owned by the colored department of the Pacific Union is \$560,700. These properties are also free from debt.

North Pacific Union

In the North Pacific Union we have two colored congregations. We organized a church in Portland, Oregon, October 5, 1946, with a membership of 19. At the close of 1949 the membership in this new church organization had increased to 97. W. J. Cleveland was called to our work in Seattle, Washington, April 6, 1946, and a church was organized with 15 members, which has since grown to 46. Both in Seattle and in Portland representative church buildings have been purchased and dedicated free of debt. We are greatly encouraged over the progress of our new work in these two cities. P. W. McDaniels is pastor of our Portland church.

Long Upon the Mountains

By ANNIE R. SMITH

This poem was written by the sister of Uriah Smith. It appeared in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, December 9, 1851. It is now used as one of our Advent hymns, number 664 in our *Church Hymnal*.

"So will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." Eze. 34:12.

Long upon the mountains, weary,
Have the scattered flock been torn;
Dark the desert paths, and dreary,
Grievous trials have they borne.
Now the gathering call is sounding,
Solemn in its warning voice;
Union, faith, and love, abounding,
Bid the little flock rejoice.

Now the light of truth they're seeking,
In its onward track pursue;
All the ten commandments keeping,
They are holy, just, and true.
On the words of life they're feeding,
Precious to their taste, so sweet;
All their Master's precepts heeding,
Bowling humbly at His feet.

In that world of light and beauty,
In that golden city, fair,
Soon its pearly gates they'll enter,
And of all its glories share.
There, divine the soul's expansions;
Free from sin, and death, and pain;
Tears will never dim those mansions
Where the saints immortal reign.

Soon He comes! with clouds descending;
All His saints, entombed arise;
The redeemed, in anthems blending,
Shout their victory through the skies.
O, we long for Thine appearing;
Come, O Saviour, quickly come!
Blessed hope! our spirits cheering,
Take Thy ransomed children home.

Northern Union

Our only church in this union is in Minneapolis. Under the labors of A. L. Kirk, pastor, a church building is being erected on which \$22,000 has already been spent, and there have been several additions to the membership. This congregation paid in tithe and in mission offerings during the past three years the sum of \$10,778.83.

Canadian Union

In this union there are no separate congregations, but there are seventy colored believers who hold membership in our Montreal and Toronto English churches. These believers are loyal supporters of our work.

Riverside Sanitarium and Hospital

Riverside Sanitarium and Hospital, Nashville, Tennessee, is a medical and surgical institution equipped with modern facilities. Dr. J. Mark Cox was assigned to Riverside April 1, 1944. He was appointed medical director November, 1944, and was at Riverside during the planning and building of a new unit. During 1946-48 a modern fireproof sanitarium and hospital was erected by the General Conference. The furnishings and equipment were provided by the colored constituency. The new unit, consisting of 84 beds and 16 bassinets, was occupied April, 1948. Riverside is registered and approved. Dr. Cox is now on leave of absence, taking a residency in surgery with a view to specializing in that field. Dr. Carl A. Dent, who previously served as medical director of the institution for four years, was elected by the board to fill the vacancy, and is at the present time the medical director of Riverside Sanitarium and Hospital. Dr. Rayfield Lewis is staff physician. Mrs. Ruth Frazier Stafford is nursing director; E. F. Carter is chaplain; and Adell Warren, the former certified accountant, is now the business manager. These workers, along with the entire Riverside staff, merit our confidence.

Oakwood College

Because of the many giant oaks on the property the name chosen for this institution was Oakwood Industrial School. The opening date was November 16, 1896, at which time 16 students were enrolled. Fifty-five years have passed since Principal Solon M. Jacobs, in 1895, welcomed the first student body to the school. In 1943, with J. L. Moran as president, Oakwood was advanced to the status of a four-year senior college. The enrollment for the 1949-50 school year is 411. The college now owns approximately 1,000 acres of land, 720 acres of which are under cultivation. On the campus there are 12 college buildings and 16 cottages and apartment buildings for teachers. The total assets of the college are valued at \$697,832.36. The records show that 1,128 students have graduated from Oakwood. F. L. Peterson, president of the college, reports that within the last five years 145 have graduated with the Baccalaureate Degree. The chief aim

of Oakwood College is to serve more adequately its constituency and to provide capable and efficient workers for the Seventh-day Adventist organizations.

The Message Magazine

Now in its sixteenth year, and published by the Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee, the *Message Magazine* has taken its place among the important contributions of Seventh-day Adventist literature. It was begun in 1934 as a trial edition, and sent out with the hope that someday the constituency would sell as many as 10,000 copies a quarter. For six years L. B. Reynolds has rendered valuable service as editor of this periodical, which has climbed to the extent that one monthly issue sold 260,000 copies. The goal is for a circulation, mostly by subscriptions, of 10,000 magazines in Nashville alone, which has a total population of some 75,000 Negroes. We are thankful to be able to report that the *Message Magazine* is fulfilling its mission as a soul-saving agency.

The North American Informant

The General Conference Committee authorized the establishing of a small monthly periodical to carry news and promotion material for the colored work in North America. The first issue was published in August, 1946. The name adopted was the *North American Informant*. It varies in size from eight to twelve pages, and is edited and published by the secretary of the Colored Department at Takoma Park, D.C. This paper is printed and mailed by the Review and Herald Publishing Association and sent to the home of each colored constituent and to the officers of General, union, and local conferences, also to the libraries of our institutions. The present circulation numbers about 12,000.

Some Comparisons

At the General Conference session in the year 1941 we reported 14,537 members. At the close of the year 1949 our membership was 25,041, a gain of 10,504, or an average annual net gain of 1,167 members for each of the nine years in that period (December 31, 1940-December 31, 1949). In 1941 we reported 236 organized churches in the United States. At the close of the year 1949 we were able to report 279 organized churches, a gain of 43 new churches, or an addition of almost 5 churches for each of the nine years involved.

The tithe reported at the 1946 General session for the five-year period beginning January 1, 1941, and ending December 31, 1945, was \$3,226,096.34. We report for the four-year period, January 1, 1946-December 31, 1949, a total tithe of \$4,828,246.64, a gain of \$1,601,150.30 over the amount reported in the preceding five-year period. In 1946 we reported a total missions offering of \$1,397,557.76 for the five-year period. At this session we are reporting \$1,839,614.92 for a four-year period, or a gain of \$442,057.16 in our missions giving. The total sum given to the cause of God by our people in tithe and mis-

sion offerings during the quadrennial period was \$6,667,661.56, besides some \$260,000.00 raised for local church expense.

At the General session of 1941 we reported 73 ministers, ordained and licensed. In 1950 our ministers in the North American Division number 165, a gain of 93 during the nine-year period. In 1941 we reported 5 Bible instructors; now there are 30 Bible instructors. At the session nine years ago we reported 5 assistant field secretaries (publishing department secretaries). At this session we are reporting 6 Negro publishing department secretaries and 16 assistant secretaries. At the General session nine years ago there were no Negro conferences in North America. Now there are 6 fully organized conferences and one organized mission fully staffed with colored officers and workers.

As we view these evidences of God's divine favor, manifested for the finishing of His work, we feel a deep sense of our unworthiness, and bow before Him in humility, reverently pledging our allegiance.

Gratitude

In closing this report we give thanks to our heavenly Father, the giver of every good and perfect gift. To Him we give all the honor and glory for what has been achieved during the quadrennial period. We heartily thank the General Conference for their fostering care, for the contributions and subsidies given to Riverside Sanitarium and Oakwood College, and for the liberal help provided our churches from the church extension fund. We also greatly appreciate the counsel and encouragement afforded us by the leaders of our union conferences, which have proved of vital help in the development of our work.

Our Need

As we look into the future our hearts are filled with an intense longing for

more of the Spirit and power of God to come upon us in order that in this closing hour of the world's history we might be ready ourselves, and be used of God in finishing the task of bringing the judgment hour message before the fifteen million Negroes in North America, and to assist in the program of making "ready a people prepared for the Lord" out of "every nation, and kindred, and tongue."

WE have no time to lose. Important work is before us, and if we are slothful servants we shall certainly lose the heavenly reward. But few have broad and extensive views of what can be done in reaching the people by personal, interested efforts in a wise distribution of our publications. Many who will not be induced to listen to the truth presented by the living preacher will take up a tract or a paper and peruse it; many things they read meet their ideas exactly, and they become interested to read all it contains. Impressions are thus made upon their minds which they cannot readily forget. The seed of truth has in some cases been buried for years beneath the rubbish of the world, and the pleasing fables that deceived ones have enjoyed. After a time some earthly sorrow or affliction softens their hearts, and the seed springs up and bears fruit to the glory of God.—Mrs. E. G. WHITE in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 19, 1878.

ALL who are faithful workers for God will yield their spirit and all their powers a willing sacrifice to him. The Spirit of God operating upon their spirit calls forth the sacred harmonies of the soul in answer to the divine touch. This is true sanctification, as revealed in the word of God. It is the work of a lifetime. And that which the Spirit of God has begun upon the earth for the perfection of man, glory shall crown in the mansions of God. Those who are indolent and self-caring know not true happiness and peace. They are losing, even in this life, and what glory they lose in the future, immortal life. I wish I could speak words to men and women which would nerve them to diligent action. The moments now granted us to work are few. We are standing upon the very borders of the eternal world. We have no time to lose. Every moment is golden, and altogether too precious to be devoted merely to self-serving.—Mrs. E. G. WHITE in *Review and Herald*, Jan. 2, 1879.

God gives regularly and freely to bless man. His gifts are not only rich and munificent but systematic. The light of day, the recurring seasons, the dew and rains causing vegetation to flourish, are blessings of God unceasingly flowing to the children of men. And God requires of those whom he blesses beneficent efforts in conformity to the divine Model. Our liberalities are never to cease; our charities must be regular and constant; and order must be observed in the work.—Mrs. E. G. WHITE in *Review and Herald*, Dec. 12, 1878.

The Midnight Warning

By W. W. DICKSON

Watchman, tell us of the morning,
Full enough we know of night;
We have heard the midnight warning,
And we rise to seek the light.
Well we know the light is shining,
Clearly in the hearts of some;
All their inmost soul inclining,
Much to pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Watchman, is the daybreak nearing?
Do the lesser lights grow dim?
Are the saints in robes appearing?
Ready for the opening hymn?
Have they caught the inspiration,
Glowing in the eastern sky?
Does prophetic exultation
Shout the coming victory nigh?

Watchman, let us sound the warning,
For the Bridegroom cometh near.
Midnight is the bridal morning,
When the Bridegroom shall appear.
With the oil of joy and gladness,
May our lamps be burning bright,
And the midnight of earth's sadness,
Be the dawn of heavenly light.