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CRUSADE OF BROTHERHOOD*

THE PART OF STORER COLLEGE

IN THE EDUCATION OF THE

NEGRO, 1865 - 1955

*Title borrowed from a history of the 19th Century activities of the American Missionary Association, by Augustus F. Beard, Boston, 1909.

CRUSADE OF BROTHERHOOD

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I

EARLY NEGRO EDUCATION

Some negro education in a formal sense, although certainly of a rudimentary nature, existed in America from Colonial times. Its nature varied with the social and economic conditions of the environment so that regional patterns developed.

Originally the education of the Negro beyond the simple instructions for his method of labor, such as planting, cultivating, harvesting and the rest, arose from the concern of religious people for his soul. This concern was certainly strengthened among many slave owners by their realization that the teaching of the rudiments, and of moral values. Usually no more advanced than a few of the Commandments and an emphasis on the 3 R's, could be to their common advantage.

Bearing in mind the frontier conditions in most of the Colonies in the 17th century, it is quite noteworthy the amount of attention directed to the education of the Negro. Perhaps his conversion is more to the point-- the early training was overwhelmingly religious in character and directed to the salvation of the soul and the gaining of converts to Christianity from heathenism. The Catholic missionaries who were so intent in winning the Indian to a religious life could not logically disregard the Negro perhaps just from tribal status in Africa the Dark Continent. He was a "savage", he was ignorant of Christianity and he must be won to the Church. Spanish and French are both mentioned in the earliest records. The Code Noir of Louis XIV was a truly liber

document as regards the treatment and privileges accorded to slaves and while it may not have been followed in many particulars and areas it did provide a basis of support for amelioration of conditions and instruction at least of a religious nature, leading to baptism and presumably salvation.

The Protestants are credited[1] with being in effect shamed into similar missionary work among slaves and it is noted that in London in 1701 the Church of England organized the Society for the Propagati of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, to work among Negroes and Indians ove seas. Yet before the Church did undertake these missions they were given absolution, so to speak from the slaveholders point of view, by the Anglican Bishop of London who officially stated that conversion did not also constitute simultaneously an act of emancipation. That is to say the soul might be the Lord's, but the body was the property of the terrestial master.

Work among the "heathen" was the proper course not only among people of good will, but was equally a tenet of belief, a required course of action among the dedicated church people, lay and ecclesiastical of the day.

This evangelical dedication really stemmed from the basic conviction of the Established and Roman Churches that a soul was lost for eternity unless converted and bartised before death. Then there was

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1 Woodson, C. G., Education of Negro prior to 1861, p.84

the further belief that a soul won to God was a glory to the Church on earth and as such to be sought after and prized, as in the secula field was coveted the gaining of new lands and territories in the na of the King and the Divine Master.

The liberal Calvinist John Eliot pursued the cause of religion among Negroes in 1695 and Indians too, because of course the latter were also among the enslaved, although these children of the wilderness had a disconcerting habit of slipping away forever without a tr of further knowledge, a handy method of escape whose brotherhood the Negro was later to recognize. Roger Williams[2] spoke against the enslavement of Pequot Indians in 1637 and Cotton Mather[3] published in 1693 his "Rules for the Society of Negroes" justifying their right to religious education.

The Interior Department's Bulletin #38 on Negro Education published in 1917, describes the activities of the Mood brothers, the eldest of whom began to teach Negro children in 1638, and who was fol lowed by his three brothers and a brother-in-law, one after another, till they had together given instruction to some 1200 pupils.

But the Quakers, of the simplest of religions, were apparently the first as a body to assume educational responsibilities among Negr with other than an evangelical, salvationist motive. Imbued with the belief, for which they sacrificed much, in freedom to worship outside the conventional religions, they easily carried their convictions of

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[2] Woodson, C. G., The Negro in American History, p.6

[3] Ibid

freedom of worship into a championship of freedom of the person.

In 1688[4] the Quakers made the first protest against slavery in Protestant America. Shortly before this in 1672 George Fox urged his co-religionists "to instruct and teach their Indians and Negroes how Christ tasted death for every man." In 1693 George Keith spoke for religious training in preparation for emancipation. William Penn favored emancipation as a way toward improvement. In 1696 the Quakers protested the slave trade and "neglect of their moral and spiritual welfare."

The truly great impetus toward eventual freedom as well as current education came however in the early 18th century. As the philosophical contentions of the French writers and thinkers gradually infiltrated the American colonies, their application to American conditions became obvious. They fitted into the Colonial impulse toward the determination of their own affairs, although they shocked many of the more conservative and convential leaders.

Rousseau, Montesquieu, the Rights of Man, the Social Compact, were all exciting and heady wine. Aside from the obvious inconsistency of slavery and individual liberty as a natural right, the ferment lead to a broadening of discussion and consequently of education per se among the Colonists, rather than as an adjunct or attribute of religious instruction.

A half century before the Declaration of Independence learned men at first and then their fellows, became imbued with a fervor for

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[4] Woodson, C. G., Education of Negro Prior to 1861, Washington, D.C. 1919

knowledge and self improvement that was to last well over a century, and to find outlet in a myriad of beliefs, convictions and frequently emotional movements which were to help alter the entire intellectual composition of what was to become Continental America.

Secular education by the Quakers and eventually by some civic agencies was the great 18th century boon to the Negro. While emancipation was debated and sometimes accomplished by manumission by individual slave owners, this was still a dream a good century away.

It is at the opening of the 18th century that a distinction must begin to be drawn between conditions in the North and South. "The Islands", the British, French and Spanish Caribbean plantations for the production of tobacco, cotton and finally sugar had given the first strong economic incentive to the Atlantic slave trade. The aboriginal Indians in these islands were found ill-adapted to supervised agricultural labor and the need for imported workers in these virgin lands caused a joint growth of the slave trade and the development of the New World of the Caribbean.

[5] By mid 17th century, sugar culture had been introduced, leading to a great expansion in slave imports, just a century and a half later the invention of the cotton gin was to have a similar effect in the southern United States. At the beginning of the 18th century, sugar cane was becoming uneconomic in the Islands and was to follow tobacco and cotton to much larger regions in America. The Islands had something left however. They had "seasoned" the slave and "seasoning"

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5 Franklin, Slavery to Freedom

would continue as their functions for many tragic years, until economics and emancipation would finally spell the doom of this traffic.

Actually slave imports into Virginia had commenced to increase rapidly from 1675 to 1700 and the increasingly heavy movement continued throughout the 18th century. Slave labor was an inseparable condition of plantation production. The use and direction of large bodies of men was becoming a new type of economic activity not familiar in those times in peacetime pursuits. The factory was of course unknown but the utilization of large scale manpower in the fertile fields of the South was an "outdoor factory" system and offered economic success and advantage to the planter.

In the North however, the Negro slave was not the resident of a ghetto, nor was he purchased or sold in quantity by his owner. He was employed in household service, with horses and cattle, and as clearly his best opportunity as a helper to the artisans and mechanics of the day, where there appeared an opportunity to learn a trade.

Just as "town" life became a part of existance in the North, the South engaged principally, as far as the Negro was concerned, in large scale agricultural production and with it, residence on relatively widely separated homesteads or plantations.

The effect on forms of education in North and South is obvious. The town school, or rural school near a church or hamlet was the practical solution to the Northerner. The Southerner must employ tutors for his family, or possibly a few families together, and since

much of the cotton, rice and sugar trade was directly across the Atlantic between the southern ports and their customers in Great Britain and the Continent, many of the teachers and tutors in the South were imported from abroad, undoubtedly more sophisticated and probably better rounded than the Northern pedagogues beginning to appear from the early "domestic" colleges.

In any event common schools were no novelty in the North, and while it would not be until the time of Horace Mann in mid 19th century Massachusetts that a recognized and well organized system of public schools would be developed and established, yet the distinction based on mode of life and occupation was clear and these characteristics were to govern schools for both the white and Negro races until after the Civil War. A noteworthy exception were the schools of North Carolina where as early as 1731 the Quakers had local schools and taught slaves to read and write, something they had been unable to do earlier in either Virginia or North Carolina. The original state[6] constitution of the latter state, in 1775 provided for general public education and while no appropriation was made for the schools, the statute did lead ultimately to the establishment of the state university.

The activity of the Quakers continued at a high level from 1780 until the post Revolutionary reaction, coupled with the servile uprisings of the second and third decades of the 19th century, put

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6 DuBois, Black Reconstruction, p.639

an end to most of the educational opportunities available to Negroes throughout the South. The Presbyterians continued their educational interest in western North Carolina even after their church became deeply split on abolition as the years of crisis approached.

In the North a school for Negroes was opened in 1728. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and again the Quakers, supplied schools and teachers for both white and Negro. At Newport, R.I. which was a major center of the slave trade in the North, a school for Negroes was commenced in 1762. John Hope Franklin[7] states that "the New England Negro was the best trained and most articulate of all Negroes in the New World."

But what appeared to be good progress in the North, and only latent or limited opposition toward at least religious schooling in the South, almost suddenly around 1810, by pressure from two direction ended the development of educational programs for the long period unti Emancipation. Again these pressures were different in the two regions In the North the impulse was negative, in the South it was positive. In the North it was intellectual, in the South it was economic.

The ferment and intellectual stimulation which had surrounded and preceded the Revolutionary War, had to a considerable degree been expiated by the contest itself, as well as by the crystalizing and accepting of the then liberal civil philosophy embraced in the Declarati of Independence and the Constitution with the further inclusion of a

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[7] Franklin, John Hope, From Slavery to Freedom, p.107

bill of rights in the latter. The debates in the Continental Congress and the new national Congress, the "Federalist" debates and even the settlement of a permanent national capital at Washington and the erection of a President's House and legislative chambers a mile away, all had the effect of bringing a sense of conclusion to the struggle, the crusade for the freedoms embodied in the Constitution, and their original sources among the French philosophers. The bloody excesses of the French Revolution joined with the weariness accruing to the American people after seven years of war and turmoil combined to forcibly draw the new American citizen to a preoccupation now long overdo with his own affairs, and with his compatriots to the building of a homogeneous nation. How well he did that is now clearly seen, yet not without another horrifying and as yet unforseen long interruption of the Civil War and its tempestuous aftermath of reconstruction.

But for the present the call in the first decade of the 19th century was back to the plow, the axe, the ship, the shop and the counting house. So for the Negro there vanished for a period, the public consciousness of that perennially illogical fact of his existance in bonds in a new republic dedicated to the rights of man, in the sight of, in the home and on the plantation of his owner. Dedicated people and groups were already at work for his ultimate release, and they labored on with considerable effort, but the great social and humanitaria urge as related to the condition of the Negro, was stilled for the pres

The North even contributed the mechanical device which was to bind him ferociously to the golden cotton chariot which he was hauling. Eli Whitney, a bright young man of Westboro, Massachusetts, preferred to manufacture violins, nails and hairpins with marked success until he surrendered to formal education and entered Yale College in 1789 at the age of 23. Within six months after his graduation in the autumn of 17[illegible] Eli had solved the major problem of the southern cotton grower by developing a gin with which one negro could produce fifty pounds of cleaned cotton in a day. Cotton production was almost instantly revolutionized and the race to supply the British and French textile mills was on. This was the stimulus and inception perhaps, along with Watt's steam engine of the British industrial revolution. Rice, indigo and tobacco took lower rank. Spinning and weaving inventions greatly expanded cotton consumption throughout the civilized world and the demand for labor in the cotton fields multiplied.

By 1815 the tide of demand was at flood, and Maryland and Virginia became producers of slaves. John Hope Franklin[8] says that at the high point of 1836, to be reduced the next year by the severe national economic depression of 1837, Virginia owners sold 120,000 slaves into the lower South.

Now there was little public or commercial sympathy for the slave. After all the slave holders were not a numerous group, and how could

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8 Franklin, John Hope, Slavery to Freedom, p.170-5

the new domestic textile fortunes of New England, the manufacturers, the traders and brokers and ship owners, who carried the slaves or the goods and supplies and who financed the whole commercial process, be sensitive to the problems of an inarticulare people dwelling distantly out of sight and mind? All were getting their first taste of the fruit of a new and dynamic country, intent on reproducing for themselves, with native ingenuity, protective tariffs and all the other devices of a new nation, an industrial and commercial force which would make old John Bull take another look at his erstwhile "plantation".

The door began to close on educational opportunities for Negroes in the South in 1800. About ten years later it was barred and locked. We have already noted that the Southern concept of education was based upon a different social and economic environment than in the North. Education for the white citizen of the South was individual, it was private and it was largely a privilege, with the possible excertion of religious education in the white churches. Not only the Negroes, a race with no legal status, but the thousands of ordinary white farmers and town workers were without opportunity for schooling.

But in the early 19th century the attitude toward the teaching even of the fundamentals to the Negro, became not only negative, it in truth became increasingly and actively hostile.

As we have observed, the stimulus of the Revolution, its philosophy and its climax in the documents and governmental structure which emerged had exhausted for the time at least, the emotional fervor for freedom of the individual. Now from another direction came the counter

pressure - freedom nor any of its apurtenances - education, franchise, independent movement and thought, should not be entrusted to those who might by their possession endanger the status quo. "Endanger" as a wo could be emphasized more strongly. Security, safety of life and limb and of property did certainly seem to be threatened in the mind of the plantation owner, generally isolated with relatively few white overseer surrounded in a sea of often inscrutable black people, maintained in su jection and docility by strict supervision and long hours of labor.

Did education, religious or secular, increase the value of the ser vant or field hand, or did it open his mind to dissatisfaction, dreams of freedom, and plots of violent revolt? Like all similar controversi "there was much to be said for both sides", given the circumstances an events of the early 19th century.

[9]Slave insurrections of barbarity and cruelty on the parts of both the insurgents and the owners or their overseers were well known in the Caribbean Islands for a good hundred years before the French Revolutio The violent ordeals of Haiti, or St.Dominque as it was earlier known, startled and alarmed the Southern planter. From mid-17th century to th latter portion of the 18th, Jamaica had had severe trials. Antigua was another source of deep trouble in 1736.

But the Haitian uprising of the final decade of the 18th century, its bloody suppression after a dozen drastic years, really supplied the flame for the tinder waiting in America's South. Here the revolts were neither large nor greatly costly in life or property. Yet they

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[9]Furnas, Road to Harpers Ferry

were enough to terrify the planters of the South, and even as [10] Furnas and other suggest, lend at least some reasonableness at a later date, to John Brown's stratagems and hopes, and to give confidence to some o his northern suppliers and supporters, before the assault on Harpers Ferry in 1859.

The jungle grapevine, the thudding drum were just as effective in the New World as in Africa or the Caribbean. The embargo on importatic could not still the news conveyed by secret word, or trumpeted by the shaken white refugees who undoubtedly could not find words sensational enough to picture the terrors and horrors of the uprisings they had le behindnin "the Islands".

In America the first revolt was the most ominous in terms of the numbers involved. In 1800 near Richmond one Gabriel gathered a thousa variously armed slaves who while betrayed by faithful servants, would yet have been a serious threat had not a severe summer storm impeded movement. Thirty odd rebels were hung with Gabriel, considered mild re tribution by Caribbean standards, but the damage was done. South Carol whose Beaufort and the Sea Islands were to see the earliest organized commencement of the extensive negro education programs which followed S cession and anticipated Emancipation, had only a half dozen uprisings i the approximate hundred years preceding probably the most publicized o these relatively small rebellions, that of Nat Turner in 1831 in south- eastern Virginia, again less than fifty miles from the first missionary

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Furnas, Road to Harpers Ferry

activities in behalf of the refugee slaves at Fortress Monroe. Sixty white persons were murdered in the Turner revolt, a large enough number to really arouse a countryside.

While retribution was quick and punishment by hanging for the leaders after trial, as well as vigilante justice for followers as the were apprehended, the conviction of constant menace and danger was now firm. The black man was dangerous, he was a threat to security and he must be curbed.

Unhappily for any attempts of rational or moderate treatment of the problem, at this very time abolitionism of a crusading and evangelical temper was just getting under way in America. Inspired by the British Parliament's far-reaching emancipation laws of 1833 completed as to detail in 1837 and the accumulated years of political and social preaching and pamphleteering, there now arose in the United States, a storm of self righteous, plain righteous and mixed righteous components that would rage and howl as a gathering tempest that would only subside into the turbulent but less violent days of post bellum Reconstruction.

Enough has been said to describe the provocation. The South took measures which it considered necessary for its self-protection. Tragically for the future, these measures principally embraced, after the obvious first course of restrictions on weapons and a heightened surveillance, into limitations on movement, congregations religious or social, and most damaging of all, upon learning - and particularly unhappily, upon the fundamentals of reading and writing.

Southern religious circles disturbed by the moral or ecclesiastical implications of the deprivation of the Bible, introduced an extra-ordi

palliative in the form of memory training in the Scriptures, possibly an explanation of some of the highly articulate and colorful language and forms of expression of the early Negro orators, although to be sure they had no monopoly on the gilded and ornamented phraseology of ante-bellum platforms and pulpits of America. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, early and militant abolitionist and among the inner circle of John Brown's responsible supporters[11] says that Frederick Douglass learned to read by studying the street signs of Baltimore, another exotic approach to the damned up stream of learning.

That Nat Turner was a preacher of some apparent force did not help the cause of religious training. Meetings were now taboo and life was simplified to its essentials. Work was the order of the day and the ever mounting demand for cotton called the tune for the field hand. Doubtless the end of his efficiency was not far away, new metho and new machinery were only a few decades hence, but for the moment, t negro slave was cheap labor, and America in the Northeast at least cou hear, less than a generation after its farmer's rebellion against King George, the hum of commerce and the rumble of its own industrial awake

The teaching of Negroes was becoming illegal by state legislative actions. Missouri in 1817, Virginia in 1819, Louisiana in 1814 and 18 and Georgia in 1831 took restrictive action, sometimes in addition to earlier laws of a similar nature, which had been largely disregarded. The Nat Turner uprising of 1831 was the most fruitful of such laws and in that year and in the next two or three most of the really restricti

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[11] Letter in Storer College Collection.

changes were placed upon schooling. Without reiteration, the atmosphere is dramatically, if extremely portrayed by Member Berry in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1832; "We have as far as possible closed every avenue by which light may enter their [the slaves'] minds. If we could extinguish the capacity to see the light, our work would be completed; they would then be on a level with the beasts of the field and we should be safe. I am not certain we would not do it, if we could find out the process, and that on the plea of necessity."[12] Such extremism was not typical but it did reflect to some degree the highly emotional atmosphere of that exact time.

Drastic and harsh as these laws and their objectives might be, they reflected only the fear and concern of the planter. Cruelty was hardly the intention for its own sake and later we will see that the New Englander's early and contemporary insensitivity to the condition of the Northern factory worker principally engaged in cotton fabrication must have deeply galled the Southern witness to the rising avalanche of Northern abolitionism.

The North also was not blameless on another count. The exodus of slaves from the South to the "free" states began to create problems. Not only did the well-to-do Northerner reject the position of host to a largely ignorant and untrained mass of indigent folk, but the white worker and laborer, as he has throughout most of the history of America's race relations, North or South, also resented this

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[12]Quoted by Woodson - Education of Negro Prior to 1861, p.171

additional form of economic competition, about to merge with the flow of Irish and Germans seeking freedom from old world economic and social bonds.

The pendulum had swung against the Negroes, but his friends, practical, or impractical, emotional or reasoning, were beginning to rally to his assistance. The very nadir of his fortunes would further stir the ardor of the emancipationist, but the course would be long and bloody before it reached a turning point. By 1840 the morally and socially unwholesome lot of the Negro coincided with an earlier period commencing perhaps in the 1820's of tremendous desire by the American of the Northeast to improve things, his nation, his environment and himself. Stung by the visiting foreign authors and journalists who frequently publicized the atmosphere of the frontier, the urge was to create a culture, an environment of art and literature that was native in subject, although the form and style adopted might be of the Continent or Great Britain.

Americans and particularly those of the Northeastern United States, began to take their country, its mission, and themselves with a very considerable seriousness and a non-objective sensitivity. Between 1820 and 1860, the way was charted for self expressionism in the fields of human rights and human conduct and cultural improvement. Yet the education of the Negro, as distinct from his emancipation, in fact and as an issue was almost wholly dormant in this per

II

" A MORE PERFECT UNION"

THE CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL AWAKENING OF THE NEW NATION

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II

"A MORE PERFECT UNION"

THE CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL AWAKENING OF THE NEW NATION

New England as socially and temperamentally constituted in the mid-19th century, did not lightly carry the cargo of its heritage. Born in Calvinism, serious nearly beyond redemption, it bore almost ostentationally its burden of good works, of its famous conscience, and of its all but self-flagellating drive to improve itself and possibly more strongly, almost anyone else.

By no means a phenomenon of New England alone, the Nation as a whole in the second and third decades of this first century of its history seemed suddenly aroused to a most active spirit of self expression in the arts, and in social and cultural matters of every kind. The impulse was to seek, to learn, to create, and to improve.

The sources and stimulus to this awakening are credited to a number of factors. Perhaps most simply, what amounted to a frontier nation, inhabited to an unusual degree by persons of considerable intellectural and religious heritage and convictions, finally matured sufficiently to cast off the vainglorious, but understandable self laudation for the establishment and defense of a new nation on, to all intents and purposes a new continent. In place of this patriotic and justified, but somewhat bombasticly expressed, reverence for the heroes of Bunker Hill, Valley Forge and Independence Hall there was substituted a more outward looking curiosity in the rest of the world's culture, and these followed a desire to emulate or exceed. Basically, this was not new. In the late 18th century, the Colonies had borrowed

heavily and had eagerly imported the liberal philosophies of government and organized society, from across the seas. But a quarter century of the war for Independence, the formation of a Congress and a government of laws, and men to see that they were carried out, the conversion of loosely related and diverse colonies to statehood, with their own executive powers, all had concentrated the energies of mind and body, the level and regions of thinking, and the focus of interest within the boundaries of the nation itself.

Now by the 1820's, America could look about her, and dropping some of its pride of birth, also peer within herself, at least with some degree of objectivity. Stung to this self examination perhaps by the often merciless criticism of the many visitors from Britain and the Continent, there arose a counter movement of cultural curiosity and stimulus.

The foreign criticism had indeed been sharp. The score or two of especially literate travelers from foreign parts were often cruel and uncomprehending in their exposure of this bustling self-contrivin and sometimes boisterous "civilization". The people were young and their ideas younger. The numerous popular elections in State and Nation, the fast clipper ships and the era of interior improvement with its canals and highways all pointed toward political and commercial activity and expansion.

In New York the intellectual atmosphere at the beginning of the country's first century had been nurtured by commerce and trade, and perhaps particularly by the proximity of the national government at New York City and at Philadelphia. Now New York was for a time to

abandon itself to business and finance, while New England would take up the responsibilities and excitement of culture and self-improveme

A typicalrallying call to the banner of culture might be select from many sources at this time, but perhaps the period and its emoti may be adequately epitomized by two quotations from a biography of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow written in 1902 by the fervent abolitioni and later man of letters of some notability, Thomas Wentworth Higgin late Colonel of Negro troops in the Civil War. The latter associati has little bearing on the cultural outburst with which we are concer Rather the portrayal of this early seeking of the mind, does seem to come well from a student of deep New England background and particul ly as directed toward the opinions of an immensely popular "native" intellectual.

Higginson uses the first quotation early in his biography as he describes the literary scene during Longfellow's undergraduate days Bowdoin College from 1821 to 1825, when he seemed despite parental di approval, to have determined upon a career in literature.*

Longfellow was familiar with and indeed had contributed as an undergraduate to the new semi-monthly "United States Literary Gazett published in Boston and New York simultaneously, commencing in April 1, 1824. **This periodical was edited by James G. Carter of Boston who was also well known during the 19th century in connection with the history of public schools.

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*HWL by TWH.,1902, p.37

**Ibid, p.23

The Gazette in its first issue in 1824 described its introduction to the poems of William Cullen Bryant, whose first book of poetry was published in 1821. Bryant was pronounced by the Gazette to be the firs "original poet found on this side of the Atlantic." It continues, "our pleasure was equalled by our surprise when we took up Bryant's poems,— and found that they were American poems. Though the English critics sa of him that their poets must look to their laurels now that such a competitor has entered the ring*, yet let him remember that a few jousts never established the reputation of a knight."

In one quotation of this nature it is hardly possible to carture the new spirit in literature, yet the Gazette was new, Bryant was new and the century was new. The quotation describes the stirring of the b ginnings of things, and the "surprise" of discovering American literary capacity of a high degree of merit.

The second quotation declares what one embryonic literary figure, Longfellow himself sensed his country needed, and what he would try to contribute. **Longfellow's Commencement oration in June, 1825 was titled "Our Native Writers":

> "To an American there is something endearing in the very sound,— Our Native Writers: - they foretell that whatever is noble and attractive in our national character will one day be associated

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*[there is something American we like to think, in an early literary journal employing a metaphor of a pugilist's ring in referring to a rising poetic figure]

**HWL by TWH.,1902, p.30

with the sweet magic of Poetry. Is, then, our land to be indeed the land of song? — Yes! - and palms are to be won by our native writers! - by those that have been nursed and brought up with us in the civil and religious freedom of our country. Already has a voice been lifted up in this land, - already a spirit and a love of literature are springing up in the shadow of our free political institutions."

There it all is, it must be native and nurtured by the revered and new political institutions. Again, "as yet we can boast of nothi farther than a first beginning of a national literature: - associated and linked in with the grand and beautiful scenery of our country,— with our institutions, our manners, our customs, — in a word all th has formed us, and — the land in which we live."

Longfellow is worth following farther, "Ours is an age of great minds, though perhaps not of great endeavors. — We are a plain peop that have had nothing to do with the mere pleasures and luxuries of life. — There must be "a noble self-devotion to the cause of litera In the vanity of scholarship, England has reproached us that we have finished scholars. — Our very poverty in this respect will have a tendency to give a national character to our own literature." And he closes his oration, "well may each of us feel a glorious and high-min pride in saying, 'This is my own, my native land.'"

If this is the "stirring, the beginning", it is mild compared to what is to follow. Gentle poetry and literature may lead the way, bu now comes not only the desire to perform, but also a sinister impulse

to reform, to render more perfect. The gamut will be run throughout religion, politics, the social sciences and medicine. Vegetarianism, phrenology, social and philosophical communities and "farms",improved education and woman suffrage, temperance and total abstinence, all intrigued and cluttered up the public's consciousness as one leading citizen after another espoused this cause or that, sometimes many,sometimes only one or a few, but always stridently and with the energy which only the New World seemed able to generate quite so vigorously. "No Tobacco-- No Rum, Nail the Flag to the Mast, and God will Help," it might have been said of any of the other projects and objectives.

deToqueville is well quoted on the subject by Williams, Current and Freidel in their excellent history of the period: "In no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used, or more unsparingly applied to a multitude of different objects, than in America. Societies are formed to resist enemies which are exclusively of a moral nature, and to diminish the vice of intemperance; in the United States associations are established to promote public order, commerce, industry, morality and religion; for there is no end which the human will, seconded by the collective exertions of individuals, despair of attaining."[1]

The historians continue, "This reform spirit derived from a variety of sources, religious and rational, domestic and foreign. The Christian doctrine of human worth, the Revolutionary philosophy of the equality of man - these were part of the general background. No doubt,

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1 History of the United States to 1876, New York, 1959, by T. Harry Williams, Richard N. Current, and Frank Freidel, p.399

with some people, a determination to improve human welfare was stimulated by the contrast between what actually was and what apparently might be."[2]

And further, "still more important as a call to reform were the preachings of the revivalist:[3] -- "the church must take right ground on the subject of Temperance, and Moral Reform, and all the subjects of morality which come up for decision from time to time." These leaders implied by their activities that they believed in a sort of earthly millennium as well as a heavenly one.---Reform was essentiall a middle-class movement, receiving its greatest support from the reas ably well-to-do farmers, shopkeepers and professional people of the North and West."

*"The great majority of reform leaders were New England born, and a large number of them lived at least temporarily in New York Sta Most were descended from substantial New England families, neither ri er poor, whose head had once been highly respected as preachers,docto teachers, and farmers. With the rise of commerce and industry these families lost status in comparison with the upcoming merchants and manufacturers. .....These family backgrounds indicate that the typical reformer was unconsciously a product of social changes underway in the North."

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[2] Ibid.,p.400

[3] Charles G. Finney
*Ibid.,p.401

Horace Mann could well be chosen to represent the best of the period, with just enough of the frenetic urge to improve all within view, without any of the unbalancing fervor of the fanatic. Espousing phrenology, he sought many reforms, state hospitals for the insane and restrictions on slavery, lotteries and the liquor traffic. He made issues of intemperance, profanity as well as smoking and even ballet dancing. He got into difficulties in the 1830's as Secretary of the Massachusetts State Board of Education, when as a Unitarian, he maintained that the Bible should be read in public schools but without comment, and he was charged with creating a "godless system of schools."

But Horace Mann of course is most to be admired for his services to public education. As a member of both houses of the Massachusetts legislature he supported most forward looking school programs, whose example and influence eventually carried throughout the nation.

Credit for the public school system of America is his beyond doul and his twelve annual reports, 1837-1848, as secretary of the Massachu setts State Board of Education, were widely read landmarks until well after the Reconstruction period. Mann's message and methods were suf- ficiently matured in the North by 1865 to be introduced in the South l the eager teachers to the freedmen, as well as eventually into all ar of the Nation for all school systems.

In a way what these good people believed was less important than how they believed it. Zealous, dedicated and evangelistic to the nth degree, whatever they espoused they wedded, body and soul. While we have seen that this quality may be generally characteristic of the mi

19th century in America, in its broadest sense it represented rather a catholicity of causes, from memory training through prisonreform, temperance, transcendentalism, and that most radical cause of women's enfranchisement, and finally most emotionally exciting of all--abolitionism.

The Old World had its causes too of course, but they seemed to have broader bases, the social movements arising largely from the more developed economic status, the culminations in the national revolutions as in 1830 and 1848, the great agricultural and industrial metamorphase

Yet the trans-Atlantic examples were those followed in America. Time was on the side of the more experienced nations in this sense, an the foreign journals, travelers and correspondence supplied much of the reasoning, the factual experience which supplied the basic guide lines.

In the areas of slavery and education this was particularly true The first of these had great emotional, moral and religious influences. The latter was of general and personal interest to many, though less sensational.

Just as the politics of a century earlier had borrowed their val ity from the French philosophers, so the anti-slavery forces turned to the British for example. Although the slavery problem in the two natio the Old World and the New, greatly differed in nature by area, proximit and quantitatively, none the less the elimination of slavery was a long and most difficult struggle on both continents.

In the half century between the War of 1812 and the commencement of the Civil War, the great variety of reform issues became lessened, o rather muted, to the gathering thunder of the Anti-Slavery and Abolitio

movement. Prohibition as a moral issue did hold a prominent position, perhaps especially in Maine where the strenuously won Act of 1851 stays on the statute books long after many other states had ended their early prohibition experiments. Slavery and Temperance seemed linked in the minds of many reformers. The elimination of slavery would constitute a political as well as moral victory at an Armageddon brought to contemporary reality.

And the Temperance and Abstinence crusaders saw in the defeat of the Demon Rum, the true and final conquest of almost all economic,socia and family

A Freewill Baptist of Indiana County, Pennsylvania, the Reverend William B. Bingham spoke on July 4th, 1853 to some 600 of [1]"the friends of Universal Liberty, and opposed to Slavery in all its forms" at Diamondville, Pennsylvania. A witness styled him "a thorough political Anti-Slavery, Temperance, Anti-War preacher." In this connection it is also noted that particularly strong [2]"antislavery elements were to be found among the Baptists. By 1845 the Baptists were effectually split by the slavery issue into northern and southern branches, and the northern branch itself was divided into two factions. One was virtually non committal on slavery, but the other, the American Baptist Free Missions

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1 Quoted in "Impact of the Slavery Issue on Indiana County"(Penn.) by C. Stephenson, 1964.

2 The Crusade Against Slavery, 1830-1860, by Louis Filler,N.Y.1960;pp 17

Society /of the Freewill Baptists/, was strongly abolitionist."

Conscience, and self-righteousness and evangelism, secular and religious, may exist anywhere, but in mid 19th century America, they truly resided in New England.

Massachusetts and its former appendix Maine, and New Hampshire, seemed to be the center. Vermont was remote, less agriculturally bless even than New Hampshire. In these the three most developed New England states of the less than century old Union, Boston was properly and reasonably described as the Hub, as long as "of the Universe" was not included in this self encomium.

In these states, constituting the "northern tier" of New England dwelt the Freewill Baptists with whom we will have much to do. And as simple believers in the power of man to improve himself, they as a denomination were evangelistically, whole heartedly and devotedly determined help each man to so profit himself.

III

THE REFORMERS, THE ABOLITIONISTS AND THE FREEWILL BAPTISTS AS A CLASSIC TYPE

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III

THE REFORMERS, THE ABOLITIONISTS AND THE FREEWILL BAPTISTS AS A CLASSIC TYPE

Interwoven in the complex and vivid fabric of this immense drive for fulfillment of the believed deficient cultural aura of American life was a thin but colorful thread represented by the religious groups whose intense and immense dedication to the improvement of themselves and their fellowman, was archetypical of the universal cultural self examination. The range of religious belief was wide, and devotio to the faith and frequently competitive instincts of proselytism and conversion were concomitant.

Into the warp and woof went the group with which this history is concerned, the Freewill Baptist Church that founded Storer College. Although not the larger element nor certainly the most sophisticated, this body of deeply religious people can surely be called typical of the merging of the religious spirit and active good works, and a deep identification with the anti-slavery movement.

Fifty years from the end of the American Revolution, America was ready for a "new look"! The days of the plantation aristocrats or of the intellectual New Englanders as political leaders were gone, for the time being, at least. Washington, the Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe had done their work, the foundation had been laid. But now must come the product of the boiling frontiers, the crowding spaces of the new lands, filling up with emigrants along the Erie Canal, the Great National Road, the Natchez Trace, and the Wilderness Road.

1832 signified much and the spirit and mood of the times were different. The elections of Andrew Jackson and of Van Buren, of simple origin, helped encourage the intellectual and material revolution, the reappraisal not always skillful or enlightened, of existing things and ideas. Development of the interior was the cry, and movement was the order of the day. And moral issues were rising too. In 1824 in Boston the temperance movement was inaugurated resulting in over a thousand dedicated societies only five years later. The membership of the Methodist and Baptist churches became large and in 1833 an amendment to the constitution of Massachusetts removed compulsory contributions to the Congregational, or "state" church.

Great religious enthusiasms commenced in the late 1820's and revival meetings became so basic to the life of many people and communities especially outside the cities, that a truly overwhelming religious and emotional fervor was a part of the social phenomena. The climax of extremism, Millerism under which many people were said at least to have given away all their worldly possessions and met at dawn clothed in sheets on hilltops to be nearer Heaven as the World came to its end upo the forecast day, left many shaken and bereft of any religious convicti

Early Mormonism, Free Masonry and the incredible great Moon Hoax o 1835 commingled with a seemingly endless variety of ideas, views, concepts and beliefs ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous and in breadth encompassing all possible fields. When an accepted daily newspaper, the New York Sun could run a series of articles purporting to quote the Edinburgh Journal of Science to the effect that the eminent

scientist Sir John Herschel had discovered, through his new observatory at the Cape of Good Hope, a race of human beings inhabiting the moon, equipped with wings and flying about in flocks, when not living in their triangular-shaped houses; when this type of thing could be accepted and believed by man, it is not hard to understand the turmoil occupying men's minds, and to appreciate the grasping for causes and missions to espouse as the ferment of "seeking" convulsed the new Nation. And the "pressures of living" as then encountered in those feverish days could not have been inconsiderable.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, the reaction would be instant A whole new area of conversion and good works would open up. Pent up energies, hitherto limited to anti-slavery propaganda and allied activities and as the Underground Railroad, could be released into more active measures. To some it would mean war service, either as combatants or civilian workers with the armies. To others it meant carrying the Gospel, the "Good Book" and the school book to new peoples, newly available to the "domestic" missionary. As will be seen later, the overseas or foreign missionary groups now would have to struggle for their positions, to hold their pious popularity.

Years before the experienced French and Spanish Catholic missionaries had wrestled for the soul of the American Indian. Looking for good works in the early 19th century, the American missionaries quite naturally, along with the Anglo American of the United States seeking cultural models and stimulation from across the Atlantic, adopted fro the British, limited religious and charitable programs in India, Afri

Asia and the West Indies.

The Freewill Baptists with whom we are concerned, matched in character and determination the granite hills of New Hampshire whence came their founding father. Never a large group, and despite aggressi proselyting methods, they seemed on the other hand, almost to discour age affiliation by their strict and stringent approach to the qualifi cations of those they sought to enlist. The principles of their fait were basic to them and many were the wrestlings of soul and mind whic occupied the elders as the new denomination sought to establish their beliefs and their church.

The American economy was overwhelmingly, really exclusively agri cultural two centuries ago. The long cold winters of the northern states, with little farm activity required, or possible, lent themselves readily to ecclesiastical debate, to undoubtedly endless consideration of every point of belief, of every tenet of a denomination Politics was the other great conversational and intellectual exercise and the end of the new 19th century was certainly conducive to the re view of the old beliefs, political or religious, and the erection of new moral and social concepts to fit the times. The Calvinism of the Puritans had served its purpose. The purification of the established Church was no longer a burning issue. The real problem now to many o those early "free thinkers", aside from such relative procedural deta as total immersion vs "sprinkling", or infant baptism versus a sensib acceptance of church membership by conscious choice, was the question

of the close relationship between the predominating Congregational Church and the state's, or earlier, the Colonial governments. While "sprinkling" and "conscious acceptance" were widely debated and vividly discussed in the pulpit and in the home, it would appear that over all was the desire of the individual to separate his church and his personal faith from the civil authority of the community in which he dwelled.

Roger Williams lead the way in the world, when he established in his colony of Rhode Island at its foundation in 1638 the principle, set forth in a compact among the colonies' members, that its duly enacted laws need be obeyed "only in civil things."

While this civil and religious separation (the Pilgrims were also "Separatists" in their first reincarnation becoming Congregationalist or Baptists in time) was the basic division, it is likely that "conscious acceptance", total immersion and the like were the life line, the vehicle of conversation that engrossed the town and community old as they listened to and discussed afterwards, the views of the itinerant preachers who moved about the northeastern countryside.

Moved by all kinds of motives and purposes, not always generated by the Holy Spirit, these ministers, ordained or not, carried messages that fitted into the revolutionary and inquiring mentality of the time. Thus the wonder may be that with all the countless variations and possibilities of belief, that any few number of denominations were ever able to become sufficiently united and agreed as to tenets, to permit the establishment of any single Church body of a homogeneous nature o

numbering any effective brotherhood of communicants and members.

Today there still are remnants of such colorfully styled Baptist groups of the 18th, and early 19th century, as "Six Principle Baptists "Old School or Primitive (Hardshell) Baptists", as well as the "Two-Seed-In-The-Spirit", the "Seventh Day", and the "United" Baptists.

Yet one Benjamin Randall did found in 1780 a church with such a body of belief and a tenacity of faith, both religious and moral, that it survived as a force of great potency and dedication for a century and a quarter until 1910 when it joined its congregations and its churches with the main Baptist Convention of the United States.

The name of this new or possibly "splinter" sect in modern popular phraseology, was intriguing and suitable to the times and to the beliefs held by Randall's converts."Freewill" Baptists had a revolutionary and original tone which fitted the temper of the age. It didn't quite imply "free thinker", but it did indicate that the believer was at least free to think and to choose, a long way towards independence and self determination, and for that matter, self respect.

It was this message that Benjamin Randall carried first to his New Hampshire neighbors and then to the nearby towns of Maine. Just as "trade follows the flag", so did the banner of the Freewill Baptists move with migration into eastern New York and up the Erie Canal to Michigan and Ohio. Its preachers travelled Canada's maritime provinces and eventually they reached Boston. Possibly they were over their heads here. There were many claims for intellectual attention in this self proclaimed "Hub". The Freewill Baptists were hardly sophisticated, th

had limited opportunity for education in the early days. While they might argue interminably the basics, and the refinements as well of their creed, it must be said that fundamentally they were moved from the heart, rather than the head. They were "single tracked" in their thinking, no diviation from their tracts was possible, and the Bible was their witness. Boston might have thought them old fashioned in their habits and beliefs, but no one could question their dedication.

The early days of these Freewill Baptists while immensely busy and active ones for the believers and their leaders, could hardly be said to have left any great impression outside the denomination. The member were immensely religious, they debated many internal matters and some of a minor external nature. They gradually eliminated the ritual of mutual foot washing as a symbol of humility, they protested active participation in what they regarded after the Revolutionary War as an unnecessary and war spirited mustering of militia; they were temporarily disrupted and disgusted by the "Shakers", and they were represented from time to time in the New Hampshire state legislature where they decided the world would be a better place if more legislators were such Christian gentlemen as they. They met often in prayer and in temperance during the period of the legislative sessions, as well as at home, they conducted revivals constantly and ubiquitously, and they voted as a matter of policy to maintain and support an itinerant ministry.

The annual musterings of militia were termed "a public nuisance", and all agreed that military operations should be disapproved and that "no Christian can consistently take a commission". The labors of women

were welcomed and in the earlier days were of some importance as several labored impressively in the vineyard. It is particularly noteworthy that in the 1790's and for a while thereafter, "promiscuous" or mixed sex religious meetings were considered suitable, a position not common to all denominations.

In the War of 1812, the Baptists had varied experiences, including arrest and suspicion, not for their religious beliefs, but because they found themselves sometimes in hostile Canada, or misunderstood elsewhere. They participated in military activities with none of the reservations earlier raised by their faith.

At Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1814 when a British attack was expected, one Mayhew Clark, a licensed preacher was drafted for the defense of the community. However in the armed camp of the defenders "he forgot not that he was a soldier of the cross, and called by the great Captain of his salvation to preach the gospel of peace". One morning "at early dawn he left his bunk and walked through the barracks singing a spiritual song to call out the soldiers of Christ, if any there were in the camp". Summoned thereupon to the officers' quarters he was greatly relieved to find that its purpose was to invite him to sing and pray there each evening, and to limit his military duties in the future "to labor for Christ".

Gradually small actions were taken which pointed toward a greater involvement in the affairs of the secular world. In 1823 a Free Missio Society was organized in Maine, and in 1835 this became the Freewill Baptist Home Mission Society. The first issue of the Morning Star was

issued in 1826 at Limerick, Maine before long to become the organ of the entire denomination, and its editorial offices moved to Dover, New Hampshire where it remained until finally transferred in 1835 to Boston, not without considerable opposition among the elder brethren.

At the first General Conference held at Tunbridge, Vermont, in 1827, the delegates showed at this relatively early date what was to be a basic position in their secular as well as religious thinking. The "Conference at once trampled the pro-slavery prejudice against color beneath their feet and unanimously: Resolved, that the color of a candidate for the ministry should have no influence on his ordination, provided he be otherwise qualified." A fortnight later the denomination's first Negro minister was accredited, one Robert Tash of Exeter, New Hampshire.

An itinerant ministry was sought which should be sufficiently organized to avoid the encroachments and misinterpretations by "self-called and heretical men", travelling through the countryside as Free-will Baptists. In this fashion the home missionary work became an important field of endeavor and engaged the serious and extensive attention of the denomination's most active men and women.

In 1829 Silas Curtis of Maine, of whom we shall hear much later, at the age of 25 "preached a sermon of thrilling interest" to the third General Conference held in central New York State. About this time correspondence was entered into with Freewill Baptists in North Carolina, and preachers visited there, and also at a small branch in South Carolina.

The introduction of the Church to foreign missions came from "General Baptist" missionaries in India and in the West Indies, describing the condition of the heathen and appealing for cooperation. This laid the foundation for considerable interest in the Foreign Mission Society, also attracting leading members of the Church to its organization and development.

A particular letter to the Morning Star in April, 1832 from a Baptist missionary of the "General Baptist" Church in England described sometimes in vivid terms the degradation and immense needs of the natives of Orissa, India, in the general Calcutta area. His appeal had been proposed by his second wife, the widow of an American Baptist missionary in Burma.

The response of the "Freewillers"was prompt. "The leaders of the Freewill Baptist denomination were full of missionary zeal, though not yet drawn out toward the heathen". Their dramatic zeal we have witnessed, particularly toward the bondsmen, but equal attention could have been drawn to their boundless energy in establishing churches, their "precious revivals, and their crusading bands of itinerant preach

Within a few months of the letter in the Star, a meeting was held North Parsonfield, Maine, and in January of 1833, the Maine legislature incorporated the Freewill Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. The Star reported in 1834, "how criminal has been our ignorance and neglect of this holy enterprise and how wonderful that providence which has illumined that darkness."

The first missionaries, the Rev. Eli Noyes and Jeremiah Phillips and their wives, were prepared and sailed from Boston in September 183[illegible] arriving at Calcutta after a four and one-half month's voyage around the Cape of Good Hope whence had been "reported" the extraordinary activities on the moon in the same year. Had these pious souls read the New York Sun before their embarkation?

The problems, obstacles and the matching determination of these first missionaries are almost incredible. They were largely alone with no medical assistance even the most primitive, and they were dealing with feudal mentalities. That they survived at all is remarkable. Mrs Phillips died as did her child. Mr. and Mrs. Noyes lost their child and almost their own lives. Retreat was the only choice for the moment and so after difficult convalescences the little remaining band of three established themselves at the slightly more healthful location of Bulas Aside from their good works at their first post, the most picturesque memory they must have had was of one "Silas Curtis" an orphan Indian among the numerous they had cared for and converted, and who is described as having usefully served as a native preacher at least into the 1880's

There is little need to repeat these little histories, except to honor these people and those that followed them. They were not numerous principally because their church could not afford many, despite the few hundred dollars a year, less than five hundred generally allowed each family. But they surely abounded in good works, this was their outlet and it served as a major charitable and religious activity until there developed at home a newer and immensely greater need in terms of contemporary living.

Not that there was not also activity at home, yet it was of a different nature. The Home Mission Society was established in 1834, two years after the foreign group. It would appear however that this step was largely one of organization. Domestic "missionaries" to the towns of Maine, Massachusetts and Vermont had been common practice. The use and general support of itinerant and proselyting preachers was advised and encouraged. Probably the impulse which brought this new agency to life however, was the opening of western territories as they then existed. The internal expansion of Andrew Jackson gave the opportunity, the roads and canals, and very soon the railroads were to clear the way.

How incongruous must have seemed some of these good people as they preached their way through the frontier communities of Indiana and Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin. How threatening the living Fiend, how few the converts, how many the backsliders. Yet they persevered and they left behind them many small churches and some embryonic schools. The freedman was no problem yet, not only was he not free, but he was not yet in the North in any appreciable numbers.

The field of labor then was the new settlement, the farming community and the homesteader. The Mississippi was the farther limit, and that was often hostile and dangerous territory. Yet we are not speaking only of the frontier town, but rather of the new community, settled not by the foreign immigrant of the late 1840's, but rather the perhaps pious and determined farmer from their own New England and upper New Y The first missionary of the Home Society was the Reverend Jonathan Wood

surely the prototype of the evangelical brethren and especially of the Freewill Baptist and his mission of good deeds. From the beginning Silas Curtis, William Burr, and a little later all the other stalwarts took their places in this vital missionary work, Perkins, Sinclair, Stewart, Dyer, Anthony and all the rest.

Jonathan Woodman is worth a moment because of what he typified. He was born in Vermont in 1798 almost contemporaneously with the beginnings of his church. His life of ninety years spanned all but the last decade or so of his denomination when it united with the Regular Baptists in 1910. He was president of the Home Mission Society in 1840, of the Anti-Slavery Society in 1843, and of the Foreign Mission Society in 1848 -1850. Yet his introduction to the church was unusual not in its drama for that day, but as a comparative illustration by present day standards.

Crossing New Hampshire on foot in 1816 at the age of eighteen to attend a church meeting in Maine, he stepped forward when the presiding elder, excusing himself with "I have not got the word", asked for a volunteer. The youth stood on a hastily erected platform by a removed church window so he could address the congregation within and without, and "poured forth the message." "Strong men wept, sinners trembled and confessed, and there was no day like that in the history of that church."

Thus were the men, and women too who followed the westward trending tide as far as the Mississippi. They built the background for the gallant missionary and educational work of the embattled 1860's and t

Reconstruction. They learned to survive the hardest kind of living conditions, not always surrounded by friendly or pious people.

The next important groundwork for the later effort was the establishment of The Education Society in 1840, and again Silas Curtis is among the organizers, to provide "Biblical instruction for pious young men who promise usefulness to the church." This was not an unimportant or easy step, because many of the early Freewill Baptists, being principally from rural areas and accepting the Bible and their hearts as sufficient guidance for all their denominational needs, regarded if not with suspicion, certainly with misgiving the blandishments of broad secular and general education.

While the old New England colleges were turning out ministerial candidates in large proportion to their students, the "Freewillers" were hearing the word and speaking from their hearts in the small village churches of northern New England and New York.

Disturbed by the new and intellectual atmosphere, Elder Jeremiah Bullock "with quite a constituency, mostly in York County, Maine, permanently withdrew from the denomination." He opposed temperance (presumably for health reasons) and declared he would "crawl" on his knees to set fire to all books." But the antipathy to "book learning" passed, it was part of the older day's fear of "putting secular knowledge in the place of the knowledge of God." The Education Society itself also understood the "great danger of losing that spirituality and warmth of heart so conspicuous in our fathers."

A number of Baptist schools had already been started in various communities, some as part of the tasks of the Home Missionary Society. The Parsonfield Seminary commenced in 1832, was granted a $700 librar by the Society, and other schools were encouraged.

Three score schools, seminaries or colleges as they were various called performed as best they could during the half century from 1832 into the 1880's. Some have become substantial institutions, as Bates College at Lewiston, Maine and Hillsdale in Michigan. There were mergers, eliminations and substitutions as the times and the means allowed or required. The deepening interest in and recognition of the importance of education for all, is part of our story.

But basic to all was the vital fact of the missionary and educational experience garnered during the three decades prior to 1860, through the Foreign and Home Mission Societies and The Education Society; not only the experience, but the deliberate acceptance of educational and missionary work as a province and responsibility of the denomination. This would mean much when the deluge of freedmen and refugees turned toward the schools and the churches for the precious education, the magical "three R's", and the spiritual succor which they would deeply need in their first great challenge of emancipation, de facto by the fortunes of war and the movement of troops, legal by the Proclamation of September, 1862.

But before this missionary work could commence its most valuable undertaking, the education of the freedman, there would have to be a much broader understanding of the issues and the needs, a much louder

call to this particular mission. There would be required a crystallizing of knowledge and sentiment not only among the Freewill Baptist but among all religious groups and among the public as well.

Interest in good works in India and the Carribean came rather naturally by stimulation from England. We have seen that the cultural impulses of the United States flowed from across the Atlantic in paper magazines and correspondence, social, commercial or learned. Avidly welcomed, the tone and the ideas of the erstwhile mother country were grist to the mill of the rising intellectual and popular interest in the better things, the fuller life, as it was then understood. As the British churches had by occupation, contact, and observation, seen the need and opportunity for good works in their widely spread possessions so would the American reader and thinker find an outlet for his "desire to do good", to serve his religious teachings. So he looked to India also, and generally after correspondence with a missionary group in the field, his church would copy without particular discrimination or evaluation, a response to the needs of an unfamiliar people halfway around the world from him, and where his military or commercial people had not penetrated or shown very little interest in permanent settlement as had the British and some French and Portugese.

Yet all around him at home was his acre of diamonds. As Charles Dickens helped awaken in the British people some realization of the social conditions about them as their great industrial and commercial empire leaped forward in giant bounds, so a message of a harsher nature was to be brought home to the American community. And the words

"brought home" are appropriate. Well before there existed a native comprehension of the problems of the embryonic factory system, there again was imported from across the Atlantic an appreciation of the stunning fact and elaborately developed literature of the unspeakable trade in and enslaved utilization of the black man.

*It had taken three or four decades, really a half century to 1833 and 1837 to effect emancipation by the British Parliament. During most of this period the anti-slavery organizations of that nation had used every conceivable method of public and private pressure and publicity, by word and pen, to convert or arouse the public conscience And much of this material flowed to America and was found applicable and convincing to the eager missionary heart. Yet the road was yet t be a long one, conflict of interest is as old as time and as hampering as popular inertia to the effort required for change. Harriet Beecher Stowe's imaginative but stirring "Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life Among th Lowly", was yet to be written, but the times were waiting for it.

The Freewill Baptists shared these handicaps of uncertainty and divided counsel though to a lesser degree than most of the other denominations. By 1850 they had grown to almost 50,000 members largely domiciled in the Northeast, principally New England, with 862 ministe and 1158 churches. Although **the number of church members represente a substantial decline in the past ten years,(i.e. since 1840), this

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* Road to Harpers Ferry, Furnas

**Minutes of 13th Annual Conference, Freewill Baptists,1847, Sutton,W

was considered only a temporary, and hopefully a cleansing phenomena. Most of the departed were held to be "Millerites", the deluded followers of William Miller* who being promised the end of the world by him, and told that the Freewill Baptist Church was Babylon and they must leave it to be saved, as well as having been disappointed in the anticipated "coming of Christ in 1843, lost all confidence in religion and became worse than before." But at 50,000 the membership was to remain until the eve of the Civil War, when in the very year of John Brown's desperate act in 1859, there was recorded a gain of 10,000 or 20% in the three years just preceding. Except for the understandable variations of the war years, it was to increase regularly henceforth for most of the balance of the century.

- But soon now a determined position would have to be adopted on human slavery. Back in 1835 at the Eighth General Conference at Byron New York, the minutes describe the atmosphere: "many of our brethren had anticipated this session with great anxiety and some fears. The anti-slavery excitement was at its heighth; mobs were frequent; churches were divided, and the question was sure to come before Conference." But the 1835 Meeting was harmonious and all fears were allayed. **On Slavery five resolutions were accepted including a prediction that if continued it would result in the ruin of the nation; that the denomination should urge "abolition" of Slavery in all States; that all Christians must frequently and fervently pray that Slavery would be removed; and that the

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*Religious fanatic,1782-1849, who predicted for a decade that the world would end "about the year 1843". The movement ceased in 1845.

**Minutes of Freewill Baptists, 8th General Conference, Byron, N.Y.

Freewill Baptists had "abundant cause for gratitude to God" that it was so generally united on the "distracting subject".

It was at this Conference that there was elected Secretary at the age of thirty, one who a few years earlier was already noted for his eloquent and thrilling sermon at the Third Conference at Spafford, New York in 1829. For thirty years Silas Curtis was to continue in this organizationally influential office (later to be titled "Clerk") until succeeded in 1868 by his close friend and junior by a dozen years, the Reverend Isaac Dalton Stewart then of nearby Dover, New Hampshire.

Despite the harmonious atmosphere of this important 6th General Conference of 1835, the original concern of the delegates preceding it, was a truer measure of the character of thinking and pattern of action of the next quarter century, until the fateful year of 1861.

Now for twenty-five years the United States was to grow with all the ebullience of what we have come to call the "American Spirit." Presumptuous as a term perhaps in view of the history of other great world expansion drives, yet popularly in that day and age the phrase stood for the forward surge that the tragic internal struggle would interrupt only briefly.

And despite all the growth, all the empire building and personal opportunity to work or gamble for great personal and financial rewards, there remained stabbing in the side of the public and private conscienc with ever increasing intensity, the anachronistic institution of human slavery. Certainly anachronistic morally, and becoming so economically but this latter aspect was not easily or generally realized or accepte

by the slave owner. Many battles, spiritual and temporal, political and ultimately military were yet to be engaged in and won, before the decisive and silent day at Appomattox.

Into this fray plunged the Freewill Baptists, as did all the other denominations, but with varying degrees of ardor. A fever chart for this twenty-five year period to 1861 would have maintained a high constant level, though the point of view of the North with which we are principally concerned just now, would have shown a decided shifting of emphasis from the early period when William Lloyd Garrison could barely escape lynching by Boston's State Street commercial clerks, to the final days on the eve of war when a young Unitarian minister, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, could rush from his pulpit to lead a group of armed plotters against United States marshals legally extraditing from the State of Massachusetts, a fugitive piece of human property.

By 1846 there was in existance a Freewill Baptist Anti-Slavery Society. Its fifth annual report in 1851, of twenty-nine book-size pages is a dramatic and eloquent history of that church's ardent but sometimes agitated position on abolition, immediate or gradual. Elder Silas Curtis was President of the Society and Isaac Stewart was its Corresponding Secretary. William Burr was Treasurer and the shy Elbridge Knowles was a member of the Executive Committee, as was the Reverend David Frost and several other distinguished Elders of the church. In fact it would be difficult, because of the position of the leadership in the general church affairs of these men, to distinguish by the early 1850's, between the anti-slavery convictions of the Society, and those

of the denomination as a whole, on that subject.

Not that the path toward a position for complete and immediate abolition had been easy. The Report of 1851 is a stirring, articulate and reasoned description of the development of that position, as well as a ringing statement on the entire issue of slavery. Perhaps in the center of the controversy in the earlier years was the editorial position of the Morning Star, a weekly publication in newspaper form that in later days was to become the organ of the entire denomination.

Established at Limerick, Maine in 1826, it moved in 1833 to Dover New Hampshire as the vocal and crusading news and proselyting media of the Freewill Baptists. Its final publishing center became Boston in 1885 after some disagreement as to the advisability of this "radical" move from the old home regions of northern New England where the church still had its numerical and spiritual stronghold. It was truly a "family newspaper", a family of devoted and dedicated people among who their fellow believers were invariably addressed as Brother or Sister.

But the Fifth Report, in 1851, of the Freewill Baptist Anti-Slave Society well describes the brotherly controversy. When the American Anti-Slavery Society was organized at Philadelphia in December 1833, j a year after the birth of the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1832 and two years after the publication of the first number of "The Libera by William Lloyd Garrison on January 1, 1831, one of the Society's pio participants was a Freewill Baptist minister. In 1833 this man, probab William Burr, became an associate editor of the Star. A year before h

was appointed editor-in-chief, in 1834, the Star published an equivoca editorial on the burning issue, pointing out that while "slavery was an evil, immediate emancipation was a greater one." The grounds for this position were humanitarian, if somewhat colored by a New England pragmatism: "it was an unjust demand upon the master requiring such sacrifice of his property, and cruel to the slaves in turning them out into the world incompetent to provide for themselves." Silas Curtis' Society comments "then was the light of our 'Star', darkness."---and, "how great was that darkness!"

By what some of the brethren must have considered Divine intervention, death called a few weeks later one of the editors, leading to a staff reorganization, and in 1835 the Star's governing body, the "Publishing Committee" declared that "slaveholding is a sin", and that though "politics" should be eschewed--, "all the moral influence within our power" should be used "to reprove sin". But under the existing critical circumstances of the country, the subject should be treated wi caution and the sin of slaveholding be reproved with great kindness. Th same year the denomination as a whole unanimously at its General Confer ence condemned slavery in a decisive fashion.

A decade or two later this somewhat weak position, at least in ter of action other than prayer, was considered rather courageous in view o the public mood of the 1830's. "Popular feeling was boiling with excit against abolitionists and mobs, imprisonment and death had been the fat of some."

But for the denomination itself any form of position was particularly complicated at this time for a special reason. The publishers of the Star had been instructed to seek incorporation from the next session of the New Hampshire Legislature, one "never partial to abolitionism." "Our prayer was not granted." Yet the publishers, "the Printing Establishment" was due a debt of $15,000 for books and for the Star. $6,000 of this was a charge against the Trustees personally The times were hard and the position taken by the Star on slavery had numerous dissidents, some expressions were "vile and abusive" and the subscription lists declined markedly.

By the time of the General Conference of 1837, held at Greenville, Rhode Island, the issue was becoming critical. The reconciliation of disaffected members, to avert the public odium heaped upon abolitionists [remember the rather mild tone, a spiritual condemnation, that alone represented the position so far adopted], to prevent the financial collapse of the treasured Printing Establishment, and to receive an act of incorporation, a retraction of the position was "demanded". From outside the denomination, the "mandate came with imperious authority."

Then the Conference members compared themselves to their earlier "patriotic fathers undismayed in the darkest gloom of the nation's adversity", and proved themselves worthy of their Revolutionary heritage, by unanimously approving the conduct of the Star in its "mild but decided course". And the Conference's Committee on Slavery recommended resolutions without any disposition to retract, which were adopted without a dissenting vote. The Trustees must have rejoiced. Only a few

months earlier they had met, aware of division among them. They had met all one day and then through "the live-long night", until the radiant beams of morning light streamed in upon the wrestling Board". Then a vote on the Star's slavery policy was taken. Only one dissenting vote and the "glorious news went forth to the millions in bonds!"

Despite the determination of these anxious people, or rather evidently because of it, the New Hampshire Legislature regularly denied the appeal for incorporation until 1846. The Star was a vehicle of abolitionism, and for ten successive years its humble petitions were disregarded, with overwhelming majorities.

The Home Mission Society, despite similar allegations of opposition to slavery and missionary conduct along that line, fared somewhat better. After three annual appeals to the Legislature, it was granted incorporation. Similar chartering obstacles were encountered in Ohio, where little Geneva Seminary, a "manual laboring" school and farm was opened in 1842, but the state authorization in 1843 prohibited colored persons from attending, a restriction removed at a later date before the church would accept a charter.

The next great position in opposition to slavery was taken at the 14th General Conference which convened at Providence, R.I., October 2, 1850, only two weeks after the passage in Congress of the Fugitive Slave Law. The Freewill Baptist Anti-Slavery Society reported the national temper: "slavery claimed equal protection with liberty and threatened the flow of blood if thwarted. But a Spartan band [in the U. S. Congress]

to freedom pledged, stood unmoved while their colleagues quailed. Might prevailed against right and the North became blood hounds for the South in hunting the panting fugitive"!

At this Conference a fugitive Negro preacher, a Freewill Baptist, pled his case and his plight, describing the possibility at any hour of being "torn from his home, his family and his pastorate." The Conference was emotionally aroused and before disbanding unanimously adopted truly strong resolutions, which in effect pledged the denominat to disobedience to the law; which William H. Seward had already in Mar of the same year, implied in his famous appeal to "a higher law" "When unjust laws contravene the laws of God, the government has no right to compla if we obey God, and without resistance, suffer the penalty." It was held that "when the government transcends the object for which it was established, disobedience is then a virtue." "When an act is wrong in itself, no legislation can make it right."*

This was strong language, and more was added: since the Fugitive Slave Law was intrinsically wrong, it could not be made right by the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, "even if signed by Millard Fillmore." At a Kennebec, Maine Yearly Meeting, "we say to this government and to all the world, that the only obedience we will render to the Fugitive Slave Law, shall be to suffer its penalties."

The force of some of these words can be further appreciated when it is realized that by 1850 the crusading Star had a circulation of

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* Minutes of 11th General Conference, 1850

9,000 weekly, principally among devout and earnest readers in northern New England, and abolitionism had become one of the strong bonds of union of the denomination. By 1860 the Star's circulation had become 11,000. The members with few exceptions were talking, praying and voting abolitionists.

By the end of 1851, the Freewill Baptists had gone about as far as they could without physical action and bloodshed, and they seemed to know it. Isaac Stewart concluded his 1851 report for the Church' Anti-Slavery Society with prophetic, if harrowing words: "God is just and his justice cannot sleep for ever. The bonds of oppression must break. If truth and mercy break them not, judgement will. And if nothing else will suffice, let it come. Our bodies may rest with the dead before that eventful day, but our spirits being with God, we shall join in the rapturous song: "Jehovah has triumphed - his people are free." This is a full and long decade before the attack on Fort Sumter

The anti-slavery crusade of the Freewill Baptists should not be underestimated. Though relatively few in numbers, they were surely dedicated. New Hampshire in mid 19th century America was a state of considerable prosperity and national importance and the Free Baptists were active there in public as well as religious matters. *They have been credited, with first breaking the power of the pro-slavery forces in New Hampshire by the election of John P. Hale to the U. S. Senate in

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* William Lloyd Garrison and His Times, 1880, by Oliver Johnson

1847, clearly still aroused by their continued failure until then to have their cherished Printing Establishment chartered by the State Legislature.

One of the recognized *biographers of William Lloyd Garrison singled out these people for special commendation, and "to be excepted from the censures I have been compelled to bestow upon the rest, if all other Christian denominations had come up to their level, the chains of the slaves might have been broken by moral power." The prominent abolitionist Theodore Weld added, "The Anti-Slavery record of the Freewill Baptists is a trail of light." For another ten years the turmoil continued, and then came the conflict foreseen a decade earlier. Fifty-eight ministers and 210 of their sons volunteered in their country's defense. The brother of the Anti-Slavery Society's secretary, as war broke out, the Reverend John M. Durgin, served in a New Hampshire Regiment at the age of fifty until wounded at Chancellorsville. There he lay on the open ground for several days until discovered and revived to live another twenty-five years.

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* "William Lloyd Garrison and His Times," by Oliver Johnson, 1880

V

THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY

AND THE MISSIONARIES AND TEACHERS

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V

THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY
AND THE MISSIONARIES AND TEACHERS

Times of war are tragically and tediously repetitious. But after the tragedy often comes the superb human conduct which tempts back a renewal of faith in mankind. So it was after and even during the Civil War.

The Sanitary Commission, The Christian Commission, the work of the Army itself among the Freedmen were of the utmost importance in assuaging the immediate anguish and distress of wartime. But it was not until toward the end, with the dawn of Reconstruction visible that really organized and extensive attention could be directed to the potentially new citizen. The Freedmen's Bureau and the far-reaching and controversial legislation of Reconstruction would appear after Appomattox, but before this came a civilian and private "Peace Corps" of a century ago.

Nathan Brackett was a "Freedmen's relief" veteran a year after he graduated from Dartmouth College. Earlier rejected for military service while a student at Colby College, and depressed by a campus abandoned by the other youths who had gone to war, he transferred to Dartmouth from which he was graduated with the Class of 1864 in July.

Freed from his financial responsibility to his parents at twenty one, he had saved enough money in a year to enter the Maine State

Seminary at Lewiston, later to become Bates College under the guidance of his and Stowe College's earliest friend, Oren B. Cheney. From there he had entered Colby in 1862, prepared to graduate in 1864. Determined to enter the ministry, one of the most popular professions among serious minded youths in those days, he was constrained by his sense of responsibility and his strong anti-slavery convictions to participate as best he could in the great national struggle now reaching its climax. Debarred from the regular military services by a physical handicap of a mildly respiratory nature he turned as a dedicated Christian servant, to the United States Christian Commission, a body organized in the early days of the War by the Young Men's Christian Association and manned by a heterogeneous but devoted group of men and women who asked nothing more than to serve the personal and spiritual wants of the armies.

Perhaps a combination of the Salvation Army, Red Cross and Young Men's Christian Association at work in wartime describes the Christian Commission superficially, but conditions of battle 100 years ago were certainly different. Burial parties, families and friends roamed the battlefields, sometimes while gunfire still sounded, looking for lost ones, succoring the injured, claiming the fallen. Warfare had not yet become an organized business, it represented an opportunity for the most basic personal service and a Christian spirit of the utmost dedication. While patriotism and loyalty to a cause were deeply rooted by any standards, it cannot be said that sensitivity to his fellow

man's needs and suffering was an ingrained feature of the mid 19th century spirit. The Christian Commission, and the more official Sanitary Commission, later to become embodied in the military medical and supply services of the future, received volunteers of a high degree of public and social responsibility, whether or not they would have them used those words to describe their feelings and motives.

The United States Sanitary Commission, sometimes deprecatingly spoken of as the "fifth wheel" of the military machine was organized in 1861 with special reference to the then relatively unknown area of preventive medicine, healthful and sanitary surroundings and procedure as well as the development of regulations and standards for the operation of hospitals, and in fact all the encampments and "tent cities" where troops might be stationed or quartered. The work was of great value and saved many lives and as such, strengthened the armies as combat forces.

The Christian Commission was of a less official nature though recognized and accepted for the great contribution it made in the amelioration it extended to the soldier's life in the field and army from hi Let its fourth and final Report as of 1865 speak for itself:

*"The Commission was created for a special object-- to make a channel through which the affection and solicitude and piety of those at home might be fitly carried to the Army and Navy, where, by some of its members, nearly every loyal family was taking part in the great

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*U. S. Christian Commission, Fourth Annual Report Jan.1,1866, p.15

struggle for country, and, at the same time, afford a medium through which a fair representation of the toil and suffering and necessities of men under arms, might be brought directly to the people."

It is noteworthy that the Commission surrendered its mission promptly with the cessation of hostilities. It folded its tents and little libraries, and departed. It's final report for the year 1865 issued at Philadelphia, March 1866, opened *"By the blessing of God on the Federal arms, this the Fourth Annual Report, closes the work of the U. S. Christian Commission." The churches (be it noted) had given the Commission a specific work to do, it had been pursued strictly up to the end, and now an accounting of the stewardship and surrendering of the trust committed to it, was the proper and agreed course.

The stewardship and trust appear to have been well executed. The financial accounts depict the wide areas of activity. ** Costs were met for publications, stationery and postage; for tents, chapels and chapel furniture; for hospital, field and battlefield expenses, for wagons, horses and forage teams, and for expenses and salaries paid to "delegates, permanent army, and home agents", and interestingly for "lady managers of diet kitchens."

There were four hundred libraries set up, two thirds of them described as "large" but actually numbering only 125 volumes in cases three feet square by eight inches deep, while the "small" cases were

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*U. S. Christian Commission, Fourth Annual Report Jan.1,1866,

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Ibid, p.

two feet square and seven inches deep, carrying 75 volumes. Most of the "large" libraries were made up of "new" books, the balance were donated by families and friends from household libraries. After the War these libraries became "permanent institutions, blessing our national defenders on land and sea for years to come."

The description of these libraries and the illustrative sampling of their contents following, is to evidence the atmospheric of this agency: "History of the United States." "Irving's Sketches," "Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation", "Temperance Tales", "Miller on Alcohol Linens on Tobacco", "Gibbons's Rome", "Uncle Tom's Cabin", and a "Life of Wesley". Pretty stiff reading, most of it, for the common soldier but this was a dedicated age, and the religious wants of many of the men in camp and hospital were real and deep.

By no means were the libraries the major interest, until peace came they were principally found in the hospitals, but the titles tell the story of the missions and their personnel. They were high minded and devoted to the spiritual as well as the temporal needs of the sol

What soon became apparent to all was that sanitation, diet and auxiliary non-military support for the million men who ultimately ser in the Union forces were matters far beyond the limited foraging and campaigning procedures of the Mexican War, only a dozen years earlier In the physical health aspects the Sanitary Commission took the major interest, being largely made up of medical practitioners, but as note above the Christian Commission also participated when the need or opp tunity called for such activity on its part.

For an example, one Annie Wittenmyer of Iowa served as an "agent for the Sanitary Commission. Finding that some hospitalized soldiers were being fed "salt pork floating in grease," Mrs. Wittenmyer introduced a special soft diet for the sick and wounded. Soon placed in charge of all Union dietary kitchens she wrote the first book of menus ever produced for the United States Army. President Lincoln commended her and her fellow workers and said he would "never forget these noble women."

All these men and women in this trying and exhausting work were sustained by high principles of belief and conviction. They were largely abolitionists, and deeply religious ones at that and they were prepared to suffer many hardships.* Walt Whitman, himself hardly religious in the accepted sense, wanders in and out of the scene, with only a tenuous and brief association with the organized work of the Christian Commission. He preferred to visit about the hospitals with baskets of fruit on an ass or equipped with writing materials and conversation, or to do what he co at nightfall on battlefields or in encampments. He was typical in many ways of the volunteer men and women who roamed the military scene, helpf and courageous, and apparently with little supervision or hindrance from those responsible for carrying on a first class and vicious war.

But there was also order and organization. In the Shenandoah Valley there is a good example of what appears to have been effective wo granted the conditions and handicaps to be expected in the midst of a fluid zone of combat. The story may be carried on in the person of one

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*Dictionary of American Biography

*Our Women of the Sixties, U. S. Civil War Centennial Commission, 1963.

non-combatant participants in the work of the Christian Commission. Nathan Brackett was a typical volunteer. In 1864 at 26, just graduated from Dartmouth in July and turned down already several times for military service, he joined the Commission as a six weeks' volunteer, delaying only to be ordained in August at Phillips, Maine by his lifelong friend and co-worker, Alexander H. Norrell, as well as Charles E. Blake and others. The spirit of the times is evidenced by the fact that the Reverend Blake was a chaplain in the 13th Maine Regiment and two sons served in the Union forces, one being slain.

The young churchman was placed under the direction of the Rever J. P. Miller at Philadelphia, and promptly sent on to Baltimore. Here was assigned to head the work of the Christian Commission with Sheridan' Army in the Shenandoah Valley, and with the General and his army he serv until the end of the War.

An odd combination in so many ways, yet not unusual in those da Gallant Phil Sheridan, the competant, and dashing military leader, only years old himself, sometimes profane, pleasure loving but aggressive in war, he found as one of his junior aides this young and deeply religious college graduate whose record in the remaining months of the war was al to attest to his ability and devotion to duty in the battle ravaged vall of the Shenandoah.

The Valley was in truth ravaged. For three long years the 200 m from the junction of the River with the Potomac at Harpers Ferry, as far south as Lexington and on to Lynchburg had been a cockpit and granary in turn, an essential source of food in summer to the Confederates and a passageway west of the protecting Blue Ridge, for their greatest command

and their most powerful forces. Lee, Jackson, Johnston, Early and all the others had lead their plodding and increasingly weary infantry, and their imaginative cavalrymen up and down the forks and branches of the Shenandoah.

The young clergyman found himself therefore in no bed of roses in the early autumn of 1864. Whether he had traveled beyond Portland, Maine by this time is not known, but it is probable that this busy seaport was hitherto his framework of "city" life. In any event his work with the Christian Commission commenced in an atmosphere of disaster and destruction on September 21, 1864, two days after the battle of Opequon or Winchester as it is also called. Disaster not in a Union military sense, but from the humanitarian aspect, for 9,000 men were lost between the two forces, of whom a thousand were killed and almost six thousand wounded. The civilian population of Winchester approximated _____ thousand at this time.

Brackett had started for Sheridan's Headquarters at Winchester with an elderly Methodist minister, a "Brother Curtis of New England", and a team of two hired mules hauling a wagon loaded with supplies, hard lavish equipment for the needs he was to meet. By this time Sheridan and his forces were following up their advantage against Jubal Early with a spirited sunset attack at Fisher's Hill overlooking Strasburg about twenty miles up the valley. There was enough work to do at Winchester; Brackett teamed up with the Agent of the Sanitary Commission to do what he could to help and to encourage. This was his baptism and the pressure

and the problems of active warfare were to continue in the Valley until the final dispersal of Jubal Early's command at Staunton and Waynesboro at the end of February, 1865.

But before this time, only a month later, there was to be another dramatic event for the young clergyman, Sheridan's famous ride was yet to take place. Brackett was with the General at Winchester the day before the fifteen mile ride to Cedar Creek and the hard-fought battle which opened at early dawn on October 19th. Just under 50,000 men were to be involved and the losses were very similar to the fight at Winchester four weeks earlier, a thousand men dead, 5,000 wounded and over 2,500 missing. How could a double mule team of supplies cope with such disaster? Of course it couldn't, and of course there were other workers and additional help from the Sanitary Commission, the medical corps and the citizens of the Valley communities. But it must have been grisly and overwhelmingly shocking to a relatively new comer, even after Winchester a few weeks before.

But troops in war accommodate themselves to some degree and so must have young Brackett. During the Valley campaigns he eventually had with him an average of a dozen "delegates" of the Christian Commission and two teams of horses or mules. The delegates spent their time between battles either at the hospitals or among the encampments "caring for the spiritual and temporal wants of the soldiers, especially the sick and wounded in the hospitals." Brackett also wrote that "in winter quarters a small library was kept at each Brigade headquarters, and a Sabbath Service was held whenever possible." His next six months was to find him up and down the Valley, as General Sheridan advanced, and retreated with the fortunes of war.

THE WARTIME SCENE IN THE VALLEY

This Shenandoah campaign or series of campaigns had been something The hardships of life and war in the Valley is readily comprehended in terms of its great values on two counts, as a granary and cattle source and as a passageway North and South for the raiders and combatants of the South particularly. The Federal troops used it rather for defensiv or punitive purposes principally, since the North did largely control the eastern portion of the Southern seacoast, where operations similar to Jeb Stuart or Jubal Early in the Valley, could be conducted by Union campaigners around Richmond such as Sheridan, supplied and supported at the captured Southern seaports of the Carolinas, Virginia and Georgia. However, by 1864, the Shenandoah had become a sore point with the Union commanders, not to speak of the Federal Government itself. Foray after foray had lunged at Washington thru Maryland by way of the Valley. By the beginning of 1864 Grant had had his fill. Not only was it a threat to the Capital as well as the east-west transportation lines, notably the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, but at the end of 1863 the Confederates had firmly undertaken to hold the upp valley, to pose a constant threat to the Federal troops at Winchester a to seize every type and quantity of livestock in the lower Valley for t use of the South as well as an act of deprivation to the constantly for aging forces of the North.

The winter of 1863-64 is noteworthy for the desperate attempts of the faltering Confederacy to supply itself with the urgently require

foodstuffs for its soldiers and civilians. The campaign was a relentless one, it lead to many small clashes and contests, and it swept the Valley clean.

This was the countryside with which young Brackett was to become familiar by the time of the next harvest. But before then the decisive further destructive actions of the Union forces were to take place. Grant decided once and for all to close the Valley, render it in effect uninhabitable, and eliminate the threat to Washington and Maryland, as well as try to finish the "starving out" process which would hopefully help conclude the War, now entering its fourth devastating year.

In early August General Phil Sheridan, commander of all Union cavalry, was transferred to Winchester from his harrassing activities southwest of Richmond, and given command of Federal troops in the Valley. He received strong and specific instructions from Grant, identical to those already prepared for Hunter on August 5th: *"In pushing up the Shenandoah Valley, ... it is desirable that nothing should be left to invite the enemy to return. Take all provisions, forage, and stock wanted for the use of your command. Such as cannot be consumed, destroy. It is not desirable that the buildings should be destroyed— they should, rather, be protected; but the people should be informed that so long as an army can subsist among them recurrences of these raids must be expected, and we are determined to stop them at all hazards."

On August 16th these objectives were passed on to Sheridan's Chief of Cavalry, "you will make the necessary arrangements— for the destruction of the wheat and hay south of —— Winchester. You will seize all

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*Personal Memoirs of P. H. Sheridan, New York, 1888, Vol.I, p.465

mules, and cattle——. The object is to make this valley untenable."

By the first week of August, 1864, after the appointment of Sheridan, President Lincoln* himself showed his impatience and disgust with conditions at the head of the Valley and directed Grant to visit the area himself. By this time the Federal forces were concentrated about Halltown, only two or three miles from Harpers Ferry, to which latter point Sheridan proceeded from Washington by special train as he intended that spot as his headquarters while making preparations to advance. The neighborhood was then occupied to a considerable degree by the Confederate forces, at nearby Martinsburg, Williamsport and Shepherdstown. One year later missionaries of the Freewill Baptists would be travelling and establishing little churches and schools throughout this area.

The Headquarters of General Sheridan at Harpers Ferry has been located variously, perhaps there was a distinction between his military command office and his sleeping quarters. In his **Memoirs (Aug.6 P.M. he says, "I made my headquarters in the second story of a small and very dilapidated hotel." Yet in the September 3, 1864 issue of Leslie's Illustrated Weekly, there is an impressive sketch by artist J. E. Taylor of the Paymaster's residence on the easternmost point of Harpers Ferry's Camp Hill, labelled General Sheridan's Headquarters, and bearing on its flag pole the large flag, with the one star of a Brigadier General.

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* Ibid, p.

**Ibid, p.467

At this time Major General Sheridan rated two stars. Perhaps, since on August 10th Sheridan marched his army from Harpers Ferry and Halltown, only four days after his arrival from Washington and his visit to General Grant at Monocacy Junction on August 6th, his name was only briefly associated with the Paymaster's House, and by the time of the arrival of Artist Taylor, a lowly Brigadier had usurped the impressive if war-battered large brick building with the magnificent view of the gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains as the Potomac River is swollen by the contribution there of the more slow moving but wide and water laden Shenandoah. Or perhaps he did occupy the building when later in mid August he retreated to Halltown responsive to General Grant's messages of warning of heavy reinforcements through Chester Gap to Jubal Early around Strasburg, and instructing Sheridan to be cautious.

In any event, it was in this temporary headquarters that only a little more than a year later, Nathan Brackett was to open a school for the freedmen, and in this building three years later Storer College itself was to receive its first small group of students.

The rapid and hurried withdrawal to Halltown of the redoubtable and newly appointed General Sheridan, under the instructions of General Gr came at a bad time for public opinion in the North, which was just recovering from the tremors induced by Early's primitive raid on Chambersburg and the further threat to Washington. The North must have anticipated far better with Grant, if not on the scene, or least nearly at the request of the President, and with the highly regarded Phil Sheridan h a fortnight in command of an army dedicated to the devastation of the

Valley at least as far south as Staunton. And here Sheridan himself m
was retreating back to the Potomac with Early and the to-be ravished
Confederates on the heels of his army. There were daily calls for his
removal, equal anticipations of the possible capture of Washington, an
general mutterings of alarm and dissatisfaction. In the next four day
by August 22, the Confederates held Charles Town, four miles from Hall
town and Sheridan's main army. By August 27th, the threat appeared to
over. Early withdrew a few miles from Charles Town, and Sheridan re-
entered. But on the 29th, the Confederates again approached that city
causing considerable loss to the Union forces.

Now for two weeks, and until just before the arrival of our young
Christian Commission volunteer, the Confederates were to remain based
Winchester until the eve of September 19th and the battle of the Opequ
or "Winchester". * For a month Early and Sheridan were to advance up an
down the Valley "burning mills, storehouses, barns, grain and forage,
driving before them all livestock and devastating the whole width of th
Valley from Staunton northward." The scene for Brackett's arrival and
the final great task of the Christian Commission in the Valley was laid
by the late summer and autumn orders of Grant to Sheridan.

To all intents and purposes the final battle in the Shenandoah wa
at Cedar Creek on October 19, 1864, a battle which involved a serious
near defeat of the Federal troops and occasioned "Little Phil's" famous

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*Ibid, p.483, 486 and 487

ride on his beloved "Rienzi", a stallion of 17 hands and great strengt later renamed "Winchester" for obvious reasons. Incredibly enough, "Rienzi", or "Winchester" is stuffed and mounted at the army post on Governor's Island in New York Harbor.

Cedar Creek really concluded the Valley campaigns and prepared fo peace the ravaged, wasted and distraught, long and narrow battlefield. To be sure there was a clean up operation in late February,1865 after both camps had waited out the brief southern winter. Sheridan went up the Valley for the last time, with little opposition, and completed th destruction of the unhappy Staunton (where Woodrow Wilson had been bor eight years earlier).

But Cedar Creek was another thing. Summoned to Washington on Oct ber 17th, despite his concern over intercepted signal messages between Longstreet and Early threatening a "crushing" attack, General Sheridan planned to return by special train after a morning of conferences with Secretary of War Stanton and General Halleck. Sheridan made his points probably reinforced by the atmosphere of preelection (November,1864), Washington, which he had referred to in his *personal memoirs in mid September. Then he had written "in consequence of the injunctions of General Grant, I deemed it necessary to be very cautious; and the fact that the Presidential election was impending made me doubly so, the authorities at Washington having impressed upon me that the defeat of

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*Personal Memoirs, General Philip Sheridan, Vol.I, p.499-500

my army might be followed by the overthrow of the party in power, whic event, it was believed, would at least retard the progress of the war, if, indeed, it did not lead to the complete abandonment of all coercive measures."

His mission accomplished, he boarded at noon as scheduled his special train for Martinsburg 95 miles away; there he was met "about dark" by his ordered 300-man cavalry escort. "Rienzi" was still with him having made the trip to Washington the night before by railroad from the Manassas Gap terminal. The night was spent at Martinsburg, a early next morning (October 18) "Rienzi" accompanied his master down t Valley pike to Winchester, much slowed on the 28-mile ride by the comp of the two engineering colonels to advise on a practicable defense lin east and west across the valley.

Two other visitors followed after with an aide, the commissioners of the State of New York, undoubtedly appalled by their closeness to the notorious hostilities of the area, who had been sent down to receiv the votes of that State's troops in the presidential election, (Lincol lost the State in the disastrous balloting three weeks later, despite the efforts of "Big Rienzi" and "Little Phil").

Progress was slow, one Colonel of Engineers was of "enormous weigh and the other correspondingly light, and both were unaccustomed to riding." The party arrived at Winchester between three and four p.m., Sheridan took the fat colonel (apparently, amazingly enough, still all in one piece,)to the nearby heights to look over the country side for its defense works potentialities. At dark they returned to Colonel

Edwards, the planned quarters for the night. The reports from the front were satisfactory, all quiet before Cedar Creek, and a Union brigade was to make a reconnaissance the next morning. To bed at 10 p.m. greatly relieved, Sheridan slept until about six the next morning when he was awakened by an officer to report cannon fire from the direction of Cedar Creek, fifteen miles away. A second similar report aroused Sheridan to a hasty breakfast and by nine, astride "Rienzi" shortly to become "Winchester", he set forth down the pike. A half mil below Winchester mounting a rise, *"there burst upon our view the appalling spectacle of a panic-stricken army, utterly demoralized, all pressing to the rear in hopeless confusion", telling of disaster, complete, irremedial.

**.....the steed..... is snuffing the smoke of the
roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away."
"Then striking his spurs with a terrible oath,
He dash'd down the line, 'mid a storm of hussas,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there,because
The sight of the master compell'd it to pause."

Sheridan took to the fields clear of the wagon and troop-blocked pike and rode towards the front with his two aides and an escort of 20 cavalry-- as he passed cheers and hats went up and the word of his return was carried along the lines by galloping officers.***"If enthusiasm can be excited from a state of despondency its power is almost irresistible." Despite the dramatic poetry above, Sheridan says he

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*Personal Memoirs, General Philip Sheridan, Vol.II, p.75

**T. B. Read, "Sheridan's Ride."

***Personal Memoirs, General Philip Sheridan, Vol.II, p.81

only remarked as he rode forward again along the road: "If I had been with you this morning this disaster would not have happened. We must face the other way; we will go back." At the front at Newtown, must have come a sincere outburst from the commanding general: "My God, I'm glad you've come!" By mid afternoon the Union counter attack came, it appears to have been one of those cases where despondency did give way to great enthusiasm, and the day was saved. President Lincoln thanked the army in an "autograph letter", and Sheridan was appointed a Major General of the United States Army, (hitherto he had beenan Major Generra of Volunteers, since December 31, 1862.)

Our good Samaritan friend had his own views on the colorful event *In after years Nathan Brackett was quoted, and it rings true as the view of a month-old veteran fresh from his ministerial ordination in rigid, rural Maine:

> It was my rare privilege to witness one of the most remarkable battles of the war, - Cedar Creek. Our army was fifteen miles above Winchester, and the rebels were encamped opposite toward the South. Everything looked peaceful and the federal corps were not anticipating an attack. Sheridan, thinking all was well, started for Washington to consult the officials at headquarters as to plans for his campaign. Returning, he reached Winchester on the night of the 19th of October and it was from Winchester to the army that General Sheridan made his ride now famous in history.
>
> When a man is successful in an undertaking, people overlook mistakes or neglect which avoided would have made greater success. So with Sheridan. The popular notion prevails that nothing but greatest praise should be accorded to him for his brave ride and heroic dash in the battle of Cedar Creek, but with all credit for the General's skill and bravery there are facts connected with Sheridan's ride which would have provoked criticism had he failed in the battle of Cedar Creek.

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*Interview -Maine paper (see)

"Sheridan reached Winchester at nightfall. The army was fifteen miles away encamped. It was Sheridan's plain duty to hasten on to the army and there was no real reason why he did not. The fact is that Sheridan stayed in Winchester because he wanted to not because he had to. He was fond of gayety and society and he remained in the city that evening for the purpose of enjoying himself.

Fortunately the sound of battle was heard in Winchester. Like a shot General Sheridan was in his saddle and off to the front. The poem says that Sheridan had twenty miles to ride but that is poetic license. As a matter of fact the distance was fifteen miles and only fifteen. As history says Sheridan made the ride at breakneck speed and finding his troops in confusion turned them back and led them on to victory.

Even if Sheridan did delay in Winchester that night without cause and even if he rode only fifteen miles instead of twenty, he was none the less a bold and skillful general and a noble man. No man was ever kinder to me than he was. He recognized the good I was doing and even once took pains to come to my office and praise me. With privileges from the general no man in the army was so well blessed. I had a pass by night and day to go when I would. Not even the officer next to Sheridan could take the liberties I could.

In physical appearance General Sheridan was a most striking man. He had a face with strong features. His eyes were fiery and deep-set. He had a stern, determined look. His general appearance was athletic. He was not large but was close built. His shoulders were broad, his hips narrow. He was a rough man who meant every word he said and looked it too. Sometimes he was profane. The boys just idolized General Sheridan and would die for him if need be."

Brackett was learning his duties and his mode of life the hard way. A few days before Cedar Creek he described this action:

"I shall never forget the 12th of October. * That day I went to Martinsburg with money of the soldiers to be mailed and came back late under Sheridan's escort, tired out. Reaching Winchester, I learned that

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* Note on Brackett's experiences involving delivery of money for soldier

a six-hour artillery battle with the rebels had been fought that day, some miles out. The dead and wounded were in awful condition and the only Christian thing to do was to forget fatigue and danger and rush to the battlefield. This I did. Dressing and caring for the wounded we worked until eleven o'clock. It was bitter cold that night. The wounded suffered dreadfully. The surroundings were such as I should never care to witness again. Blood and death on every hand were mingled with the agonized groans of the wounded. At midnight we started for Winchester with the wounded. The journey was most dangerous. The rebels at any moment we feared might fall upon us. Fortunately we reached the town in safety but the suffering of the wounded was heart-rending."

Far different from the Maine farm and his woodchuck hunting dog "Zion"; far different from the Lewiston Seminary, the Bates to be, from Colby or Dartmouth Colleges. Yet he appeared to fit into the scene of turmoil and to carry on with marked success. The final report of the Christian Committee was very generous to him as the responsible head of its work in the Valleys; the Reverend Edward P. Smith, Field Secretary of the Commission had this to say: "The agent upon whom the largest share of the work, in detail, was devolved, was the Reverend N. C. Brackett, of Maine. Being a strong man, and possessed of tireless energy it was impossible to give him too much to do. He was associated with us in all the operations in the Shenandoah Valley, and won for himself the kindest wishes of many hundreds of soldiers, as well as of officers and delegates."

This is the background then of Nathan Brackett's field of lifetime endeavor. A fertile valley, destroyed and desolated in which thousands of soldiers had struggled backwards and forwards for almost four years. The atmosphere in which Brackett was plunged made him a perfect example, emotionally or rationally of the fervid abolitionist gone to war. He had savored, had suffered through, with the troops and the refugees, a "large" microcosm, the very essence, the epitome of all that the Civil War has come to mean, death, suffering, heroism, terror and ultimately peace and glory.

THE BEGINNING OF POST WAR EDUCATION

IN THE VALLEY

The headquarters of the Christian Commission in the Valley was at Harpers Ferry throughout the War, also a major hospital and supply depot because of the priceless availability of the railway to Washington and t the west and southwest, as well as the most valuable canal. A dozen satellite stations surrounded Harpers Ferry including Frederick, Summit Point, Martinsburg, Winchester, Cumberland and Clarksburg. Brackett spent much of his time in Winchester, and one *historian lists him also at Staunton, Virginia, but this was later, after his marriage in late 1865, because Mrs. Brackett was with him in Staunton.

As one reads the reports and the accounts of the Commission's works and of the companion Sanitary Commission, and all the other volunteer workers in the vineyards "where the grapes of wrath were stored", one ha a constant impression of unfettered action and unstinted dedication to any good effort to aid and comfort. Brackett, for example, conducted a school for negroes in Winchester, while the war was yet in progress.

There were other personalities at Winchester. Brackett must have known Miss Rebecca Wright, a fellow school teacher, a Quaker, who by espionage activity for Sheridan was given generous credit by the General f his successful capture of that city only a few days before Brackett appe there with old Brother Curtis (not our Silas, he was a Freewill Baptist) and his two mule team wagon of supplies. On the day Sheridan entered

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* Northern Teachers in the South.

Winchester he apparently ended up without design at the home of Miss Wright where he wrote out on a desk in her school-room the dispatch announcing that his troops had sent Early's army whirling back up the Valley.

There were other impromptu schools set up among the armies, not on for the Negro refugees, but for the soldiers themselves, witness again the final Christian Commission report:

> "All the soldiers who have been in the Army of the Valley, know Chaplain Little and his 'music-box'. The Chaplain and his boys, (1st Va.Vets.,) built a large stockade chapel at Cumberland, and roofed it with two of our 'flies'. In the evenings they had prayer-meetings or preaching, and during the daytime the chapel became a school-room. Forms and rude desks were arranged around the walls, and then from morning till night, from one to two hundred 'boys in blue' sat with their books, and slates, and pens, and spelt, and read, and wrote under the direction of their Professor and his ample corps of assistants. Thus again ghastly war was transformed by the institutions of a free civilization casting their refining and elevating influences into its very midst. Many sturdy West Virginians will always remember this old army school-house, as the place where they learned the first rudiments of their education."

Education in America was still the magic key to success, frequently material, yet enthroned upon the basic tradition of democracy, an enlightened electorate. No effort was too great to get some schooling, a it is undoubtedly true that the damage and harm of war as always had a partially balancing grace of introducing some semblance of order into th lives of thousands of inexperienced, unravelled and frequently ignorant men and boys. War is certainly not a good school for living, but it doe often introduce unanticipated and collateral openings to experience and broadening of understanding.

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"The passionate New England faith in the common school as the creator of all civic virtues transferred itself to the South with redoubled enthusiasm. 'The Brother in Black' needed, it was thought, but the touch of education to prepare him for his new duties. It was perhaps a naive faith, but simple only in the pathetic assumption by Negro and whites that this transformation could be achieved in the course of a few years. It was certainly the flowering of the American ideal in a time when idealism was most needed, and the tragedy is more in the fact that the ideal was not maintained then in the enthusiasm with which it was initiated."

Education was not a new concept either for the underprivileged Indi and Negro. In New York City in 1829, Thomas W. McKenney, early United States Commissioner for the Indians participated in the organization of

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*Education of the Negro, Horace Mann Bond

As the final 1866 report of the Christian Commission stated, the task for which it had been created was done. But now was to emerge the real problem. Peace brought its great reliefs, but the healing and the quest for a healthy spiritual and common life among the people of a reestablished Union was to be almost as tortured as the pangs of battle. Surely the rebuilding was to take far longer than the destruction. And like almost anything to be rebuilt, new materials and designs would be added, sometimes with unhappy results, to the basic plan of the Union.

The troops, the generals and some of the uprooted, moved homeward. So also did Nathan Brackett. To be sure he did make a survey in the Carolinas where he

In the meantime during the last year of the War the various missionary and philanthropic bodies, civic and religious had not forgotten the problems which peace might only intensify. The Negro as a freeman could be a dreadful burden to himself and his country unless he had some means of participating in the broader life from which he had been debarred for so many years. More altruistically, he certainly was entitled to a helping hand if he was to benefit from the new opportunities opening before him.

Our Freewill Baptists through its Home Mission Society saw special opportunities for labor among the freedmen of the Southern states during the War. As early as 1863, the Reverend Ebenezer Knowlton, a U. S. Congressman from 1854 to 1856, and later proffered the Republican nomination for Governor of Maine which he refused in order to work in religious fields, was made the agent of the Society for work among the freedmen. In December 1863 the Reverend Samuel S. Nickerson, aged 30, was placed in charge of this work upon his graduation from the theological department of the New Hampton (N.H.) Literary Institution in that year. The Reverend Nickerson was the Society's [1]"first missionary to bear the word of life to the long oppressed race." He arrived at Roanoke Island, South Carolina, in the above month, and labored in North Carolina and Virginia for four years until October, 1867. In March of 1863 a church had been organized at the heart of the missionary effort among all denominations, at Beaufort, South Carolina where a meeting house was soon erected and the [2]"church flourished until President Johnson's reconstruction policy brought back the former landowners."

One wonders at the scene, at the possibility that anything was accomplished at all by anyone during such a four-year period: soldiers slaves, freedmen, former plantation owners, Yankee schoolteachers, ma and female, fervid missionary workers presumably always ready for a

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[1] Freewill Baptist Cyclopedia, p.106

[2] Ibid., p.275

prayer meeting or a revival, and then the Treasury representatives, the Army officials, eventually the Freedmen's Bureau agents, plus the Northern investors looking for a good plantation or two, and among them all, the rascals, north and south, white or black who were ready to prey on the victims of war's disaster. Despite this confusion, more correctly chaos, the work was carried on in seven Southern state in 1864-65 for example, by forty-six Freewill Baptist missionaries an teachers. However, as noted, the Reconstruction period was not deeme favorable to missionary work in the South, and after a brief time it was thought wise to centralize it. The church and mission at Beaufor was closed. (Silas Curtis was pained at the waste, and tried to find jobs for the teachers in 1867 at the new and more promising fields at Harpers Ferry and the Lower Shenandoah Valley.)

MISSIONARY WORK IN THE WEST

The Cairo Mission

The Shenandoah Mission was not the only point of centralization for the post war, or late war drive and crusade on behalf of the envisioned four million Negro freedmen. Another and sister effort was the Cairo Mission in southernmost Illinois. In 1864 the Wisconsin Freewill Baptists Yearly Meeting upon the urging of the Reverend P. M. Cary accepted the importance of taking up work for the evangelization of the freedmen and a committee was appointed. The Reverend A. H. Ruling was sent south to select a suitable location. He was but twent five years old at the time, recently educated at the denomination's

Hillsdale College in south central Michigan, (a few miles from Jackso
where the Republican Party had been organized just a few years before

The entire atmosphere in which these good people worked was charg
with new ideas, deep religious and political convictions of a radical
nature in terms of the status quo, and one may add - turmoil. The
Sioux Indian War of 1862 in nearby Minnesota was no little thing. Th
country was rough and frequently dangerous. Yet there was apparently
nothing odd about this youth preceding southward through a half thou-
sand miles of wilderness to establish a mission and school for what
must be regarded as the least privileged of the slaves, the common
cottonfield hand, who had followed the Mississippi and the Kanawha
Rivers, the Tennessee and the Cumberland northward to the land of Jub
No better marked highways were known to them, the rivers and the stars
particularly the Big and Little Dippers which became movingly memorial-
ized in the Underground Railroad song, "Follow the Dipper Drinkin' Gourd ."

The Reverend Ruling reflected the lack of means and the anti-
slavery record of the denomination. He selected Cairo, Illinois as th
most suitable location. At that time it was not safe for a small band
of known anti-slavery missionaries to venture far into the South. But
this was a western gateway between the North and the South, and as the
almost naked and half-starving freedmen came North seeking a home and

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Cairo - ch Trollope's "North America" 1862, Vol.2, p.121
also Martin _____ & Am.Notes 1843.

refuge in the free states, he [1] "could receive, educate and Christianize them." The next year a foreign missionary just returned from labors in India was also sent to Cairo. There the Reverend Cooley found the work so great that at his suggestion a convention was called of the Freewill Baptist L.C. western churches and there the Western Freedmen's Mission was organized with the Reverend Ransom Dunn as president Dunn was the father of two sons both of whom served in the Union Army, one dying in the service.

The Home Mission Society cooperated as it did at the Shenandoah Mission, the two groups each having an agent in the field as well as a financial agent, who was appointed at once. A half dozen or more teachers including four women were soon employed in the new mission schools. In 1865 the Reverend J. S. Manning was employed as a Home Missionary. His diary[2] describes the scene: "this truly is a great work! Hundreds of poor, degraded starving ones are here, and more are coming. They are what slavery has made them, having a large development of the animal, and a dwarfed soul." The two churches at Cairo and New City were increased by others in 1867 and 1868 and more teachers and missionaries joined the effort.

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1 Freewill Baptist Encyclopedia, p.98

2 Ibid.,p.99

The missionaries were definitely not alone in the work, nor were they even the principal actors by a long way. No less a person than General Grant recognized the problem, as perhaps few could not under the circumstances, and as early as November of 1862 he selected an experienced educator and army chaplain from the 27th Ohio Volunteers fo the difficult task of caring for the Negroes who flooded into the army camps. This was only a few months after General Ben Butler. Edward L Pierce, the American Missionary Association and others had commenced their activities at Fortress Monroe, Beaufort and the Sea Islands.

John Eaton was 33 years old, another New Englander born in Vermon and educated in New Hampshire. He graduated from Dartmouth College ju ten years before Nathan Brackett, and two years later in 1856 had becom superintendent of schools at Toledo. He apparently had considerable a ministrative ability and took a special interest in the compilation of educational statistics. Despite this interest he turned to the church resigning as school superintendent in 1859 to enter Andover Theologica Seminary, being ordained in 1861 just in time to join the above men- tioned Ohio Volunteers as a Chaplain, a controversial rank, incidently being left hanging by the creating legislation somewhere below a major of cavalry the "chosen" service, and whose pay they received, yet abov the Surgeons.

Under General Grant's orders, Chaplain Eaton organized the freedm into camps where provision was made for their physical needs and their education and they were set to work picking cotton on abandoned plants tions and cutting wood for the river steamboats most of which of cours

had been pressed into military service. Eaton's jurisdiction was extended over the whole Department of the Tennessee, including Arkansas. In October 1863 he was given appropriate military rank as colonel of a Negro regiment. Just before the War's end in March, 1865, he was brevetted a brigadier-general.

Eaton's well administered and successful organization was an important precedent for the Freedmen's Bureau. The Bureau was set up for its most important post war work in the same month of March, 1865, and he was appointed an assistant commissioner in charge of the District of Columbia, Maryland and parts of Virginia. His military service continued until the end of the year when he was mustered out. Eaton then returned to his old headquarters at Memphis where he edited a newspaper for two years. After two or three years of this work President Grant remembered his old chaplain and loyal political supporter and in 1870 appointed him U. S. Commissioner of Education. For over fifteen years he successfully worked to nourish and expand this three-year old fledgling of 1867.

Eaton passed another dozen years as president of two relatively small colleges, when this remarkable old man was called in 1899 at the age of 70, to organize a public school system for Porto Rico during the military occupation after the Spanish-American War.

But back at Cairo in 1868, trouble arose in the little frontier community concerning the possession of the Cairo Church, one of the

recently ordained ministers claiming the property as his own. The Freewill Baptists sent their Elder Manning to investigate. After perfecting the property title he had the offending divine removed by the police. The unhappy minister was aroused; that night he set fire to his erstwhile church, reducing it to ashes along with the adjoining dwelling and the schoolhouse. "The five missionaries and teachers lodging there, narrowly escaped a martyr's death."

This was hardly a cheerful time for the Mission, and to add to the gloom, it was developed that this hostile act would not have happened at all, had it not been for the "general and bitter opposition to the Mission's work among the Negroes, on the part of the white neighbors."

The problems of the Mission did have a silver lining. After a few days, other quarters, including an old hospital were purchased and the work recommenced. But really good fortune stemmed from a visit to Hillsdale College that winter by General Oliver O. Howard for a lecture. Learning of the losses and needs of the Mission, the head of the Freedmen's Bureau allotted $3,000 of that agency's funds, and the badly needed new school became a reality. The school continued for a number of years but eventually its work was absorbed into and distributed among the various "Quarterly Meetings" of the Freewill Baptist Churches. The evangelical labors of the early days of the mission were reflected for many years in the various Negro churches remaining in the half dozen southern states adjoining and down the Mississippi River.

THE SHENANDOAH MISSION

The Shenandoah Mission of the Freewill Baptist appears to have been junior by a few months to the Cairo, Illinois Mission, and was the product of several circumstances. It was not at first a settled fact that it should be located at Harpers Ferry. Rather, within the general oversight of the "catch all" American Missionary Association, religious and educational work was undertaken by the Freewill Baptists, along with several other denominations along the Federally occupied maritime areas of the Confederacy particularly at Beaufort, South Carolina. The withdrawal to Harpers Ferry, or rather first to the general Shenandoah region resulted from disillusionment with President Johnson's reconstruction policies, considered outrageous by our Silas Curtis, who writes in December 1865: "the consequence of the policy of the government in pardoning the Rebs and restoring to them their property at Beaufort and on the Sea Islands, the Freedmen are leaving Beaufort in such numbers that soon there will be none of any consequen left in the place."

The Cairo Mission then was the western prong of the church's la responding to the devil's pitchfork, a fork pointing northward from th ramparts of ignorance and un-Christian ways. The Army, General Grant Chaplain John Eaton had recognized and met the need as best they could wartime. The Freewill Baptists had done their smaller part. At the en of the war would come the Reconstruction and the Freedmen's Bureau. I the meantime, we have the other advance post of the teachers and preac the eastern bastion in the Shenandoah Valley.

Eventually the mission, church and school were closed out in the southeast, and the Baptists then sought a more suitable site for their fervent evangelism, again on the "border of civilization" between the slave and free states, as at Cairo, and also on the well worn route down the Valley of the Shenandoah.

Appropriately enough a niece of Horace Mann was already teaching Negroes at Harpers Ferry in the winter of 1864-65. She was a school marm, not a church representative and little is known of her activities now.

This Miss Florence Mann must have worked in a hectic atmosphere. We have seen the history of the community in that year of Sheridan's and Early's see-saw movements on her southern doorsteps. Brackett knew her apparently. He presented her with a somehow available military cha from which she presided over her charges. When she departed, whether for home or to new fields is not known, she left her chair behind at he school room in Lockwood House. Here in late 1865 Brackett was to adopt it as his own "seat of learning", as with his bride he finally set up the little school which ultimately was to become Storer College, among the earliest of the war generated academies.

Released from the Christian Commission which as we have seen, promptly wound up its affairs at war's end, Nathan Brackett headed for Maine and home. In October of 1865 he was on his way to Lewiston and the delayed theological course which he had so long planned, and also to attend the triennial General Conference of the Freewill Baptists in that city. This, of course was the first post-war meeting. In October

1862 the meeting had been held at Hillsdale, Michigan and in both year the Moderator was Dr. Edmund B. Fairfield, president of Hillsdale College. The Clerk chosen for the ninth time since his first in 1841, an last term, was the redoubtable Silas Curtis, president of the Anti-Slavery Society and later firm champion of Storer College.

These meetings were no small things. Though the "Delegates" numbered at this meeting only 55, it lasted 9 days. The Conference also estimated that 1500 persons were visitors during its sessions, of whic 250 were ministers.

At Lewiston, Brackett was seized upon by the Home Mission Board. He must have been something of a hero to his brethren. A year at war, exposed to every danger that might face an armed soldier, yet unharmed himself, he now had been commended generously by the Christian Commissi and he had undertaken with a representative of the Sanitary Commission the first conversations or negotiations looking toward resumption of s kind of commerce and trade up and down the Shenandoah Valley, between erstwhile enemy combatants and hostile civilians.

Brackett had been proud of this activity and in later years took much satisfaction in it. "Of one thing connected with my life in the Army I am proud: "At the close of the war the valley of Virginia was i devastation, Sheridan had destroyed everything in the shape of crops an vegetation. It was desirable that there should be trading between the North and South at this point, but how could this be done? In the midd of such bitter feeling, who could be trusted as agent for both sides? large delegation of both northerners and southerners met and unanimousl elected me to act as their common agent and they told me I was the man

who could be perfectly trusted to be fair and honest with both.'"

"There is another thing that shows I was not disliked by the people here. I was the first Yankee to go up the Valley of Virginia unarmed after the war. It was a dangerous task. I was riding on a mission. I met many Southerners with arms but none offered to do me violence."

*The Lewiston Conference was naturally greatly moved by the success of the Union arms only a few months earlier. Prayers had been answered, great sacrifices had been made, and Right as they saw it, had prevailed. Fifteen years earlier the Anti-Slavery Society had ended its fifth Annual Report, "we shall join in the rapturous song, 'Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free'." And surely these good people must have sung the words "rapturously" in October, 1865.

More practicably the committee on Home Missions had reported, "Today, four millions of our fellow beings, just delivered from their prison house, are asking us for the Word of Life." The Conference resolved "that immediate and renewed efforts be made to send preachers and teachers among the freedmen", and on Education, "that the calls from the South and many destitute churches are now so imperative that we encourage all who are called of God--- to leave as far as possible their secular callings ..... and as soon as possible assume the duties of the active ministry." This was indeed a call for to the brethren for help of a sacrificial nature.

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*Minutes of the Nineteenth General Conference, p.146; p.150.

Nathan Brackett may have had some second thoughts, there were complications. He had travelled widely for a young man of his age from rural New England, although to be sure one hundred years ago the seaports of New Hampshire and Maine did bring the world and its ways nearer to home than might be the case in the country's interior, barely on the verge of opening up by the railroad and the telegraph lines. Also, more important, Nathan had a classmate to whom he had become engaged during their days at the old Maine State Seminary.

Louise Wood had been teaching at Lewiston since her graduation in 1860, while her financee had gone on to Colby, Dartmouth and the Christian Commission in the field. When Nathan arrived home in September he found the little Free Baptist Communion with which he was affiliated, at a "white heat with zeal" for missions among the newly emancipated Negroes. Young women were volunteering for service as teachers and the Home Mission Society was eager to send them but a leader must be found. Who so likely as this young ~~man~~ ministerial candidate just returned from the Shenandoah Valley where the teachers were to be sent? He already knew the country, had acquaintances in the Valley, and would know where to locate schools most advantageously, and how to secure places in which to hold them.

Louise Wood was glad to join the eager group of young missionaries who were offering their services to the freemen. Brackett postponed, thought briefly, his career in the ministry. He accepted the appointment with the understanding it was to be for one year only. Louise agreed

that they should be married at once, and she would join her husband in the South as soon as her mother was well enough to spare her. On October 16,1865 the two were married by their teacher and friend, the Reverend Oren B. Cheney, founder and Principal of their Maine State Seminary. Both the latter were to be converted shortly into first President, and Bates College, respectively.

Silas Curtis arose to the occasion with arrangements for free transportation by ship from Portland to New York, with a well known ship captain who extended this courtesy to migrant and militant bands of teache and missionaries. Nathan was to check in at the American Missionary Association in New York and then presumably on to Baltimore or Washingt and up the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to Harpers Ferry; despite or pa ly because of its severe wartime devastation, as well as its associatio with John Brown, a well known almost household word throughout Amerion. Here, of course he was at home. From Winchester to Staunton, at Berryville, Charles Town, Martinsburg and all the other towns and villages h had ridden and tramped behind and among the troops.

- Brackett was accustomed to suspicion and unsympathetic attitudes i these erstwhile proud Virginia communities. But he also had been trust and admired as he frequently, courageously and generously performed ¼/ without distinction, his duties in the hospitals and camps, as well as for many of the hostile civilians among whom and with whom he frequentl worked over the ill or wounded.

Having left the area soon after the fighting had ceased, it would seem unlikely that he could quite anticipate the vigorous and harsh antipathy of these communities when he appeared in his new role. As a

Christian Samaritan bringing succor to the soldiers and families of both sides, yes; but as a Christian teacher and minister to the former slaves, definitely NO!

His reception of course varied from cool to violent. Brackett considered that his life was saved one day in Charles Town where he had made many wartime visits, by the timely appearance of an armed former Confederate officer whose life he had managed to save on the battlefield the night after Cedar Creek, the battle which introduced young Brackett to active warfare in October, 1864.

There was much to do before the young teachers could follow him to their posts. He must find shelter and lodgings for these teachers as well as facilities for the schools and for religious services. By this time Brackett would be commissioned an agent, representative or delegate by several groups. His Christian Commission certificate had presumably expired, but he would have those of the Freewill Baptists and of the American Missionary Association. Before long, in July, 1867, he would also have that of the Freedmen's Bureau as an agent at a salary of $20 per month.

On October 17, 1865, the day after Nathan's wedding, Silas Curtis addressed him a letter from his home in Dover, New Hampshire, which must have reached him during his week-long honeymoon. It was the first of many ~~///~~ frequent (sometimes twice daily), detailed and lengthy epistles of instruction, encouragement and admonition to the teachers and preachers in the field. Presumably themselves deeply conscientious, they all had these additional reminders of their New England copybook heritage

"since thou are not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour", or "employ thy time well if thou meanest to gain leisure."

In this particular letter Silas Curtis added "there may be a littl delay about your journey south. The recent strange movements of Presid Johnston (sic) in pardoning so many rebels; in the course pursued by General Howard in restoring confiscated lands to Southerners, and the calling home the troops which protected the Freedmen by the President; have produced disheartening effects upon religious and benevolent so-cieties which were sending out teachers. Still we hope there will soon be brighter sides." Also, "I send you the articles of agreement betwee us and the American Missionary Association," undoubtedly assigning the Shenandoah Valley to the good offices and labor of the Freewill Baptist

On October 20th, the Reverend Curtis forwarded his commission to Brackett. Then he was to proceed to New York by boat and report to the Reverend George Whipple, corresponding secretary of the American Mis-sionary Association, at 61 John Street. By showing the Reverend Whippl the Freewill Baptist's commission, the American Missionary Association was also to issue their similar document ("and a ticket for Baltimore a reduced price"). Then, "on to Harpers Ferry and Winchester, and see what the prospect is for schools, school rooms, and how many female teachers may be employed, --- and what the prospect is that the colored people will pay part of the expense for board of teachers, and see if you can find a house for a teachers' home, and can get any aid from government about a house."

On November 7th, Curtis expressed satisfaction with the district assigned by the American Missionary Association, "near the Railroad, and near the border of civilization, or the Free States."

The towns in the "district" included Harpers Ferry, Shepherdstown, Charles Town and Berryville, soon to be increased by Martinsburg and _____, as missionaries as well as teachers came to organize churches as well as schools.

Curtis would "send four lady teachers immediately", their names Ann S. Dudley of Lewiston; S. J. Foster, Gray (?); S. L. Gibbs, Wells; all of Maine, and A. A. Wright, Montpelier, Vermont. The teachers were instructed to proceed in pairs," and have bedding so that each couple shall furnish one bed for the two." The new Mrs. Brackett might also accompany the others, if convenient for her. She would be sent a commission also.

Two or four teachers then at Fortress Monroe might also be sent, thus abandoning the mission there, as had also the American Missionary Association. Also at the Rhett plantation school near Beaufort and at Hilton Head, the future appeared unfavorable because of "fears the President's policy would break them up." It was desired "to concentrate our freedmen's mission work to some one locality, instead of having it scattered so far apart."

Also in early November a letter of encouragement and local news was received from another close friend, older than Brackett by a score of years, and who had served as a minister in churches at and around Phillips, Maine while Nathan was growing up there. Within two years

Alexander H. Morrell was to come to Harpers Ferry to help in the establishing of churches in the mission, and to serve as "soliciting agent" for the Storer College to be. There he would remain until 1881, then spending four years as a minister of a church at Chepachet Rhode Island. In 1885 he returned to his beloved Storer where he passed away on Christmas of that year.

Again in early November, Silas Curtis expresses pleasure at the success in obtaining "rooms" at Harpers Ferry, but also concern about the whereabouts of his selected "lady teachers." He had heard from only one. Where the others are, he cannot conceive, but he will do t best he can, and will tell them "to go well furnished with bed clothe blankets,etc., Anyway, Brother Whipple of the American Missionary As sociation says that any of the teachers at Fortress Monroe could be transferred to Harpers Ferry if desired. "May the Lord prosper us an direct in all our steps."

Brackett himself noted that he was able to pick up a few vacant locations in the Valley. In most towns, and at stiff rentals, he established little schools-- perhaps in an abandoned market house, a stable, a log cabin, or a church basement. He reported that the assembling teachers were uncomplaining in the variety of homes where th ultimately gained admission, but the beds were frequently hard and th community often equally inhospitable.

The teachers had not an easy time in the Valley. Sword and gun were set aside, but other weapons replaced them. The temperament of the teachers could not have made their reception more comfortable.

They came if not as avenging angels, at least cloaked in self-righteousness and a burning desire to reform all about them, and they had no doubts whatsoever that such reformation was required as a purgative to diseased minds and souls. It is a wonder that there was not more bloodshed and physical violence than there was. A proud people now humbled, were the unhappy hosts to a flood of rigid, stern and uncompromising reformers. And all this within a few months of the terrible events of the final period of this long war. It is not enough to say that memories were still fresh and vivid. The events were not only fresh and vivid, they were to all practical purposes, contemporaneous. Assuming less violent actions than Sherman's march to the Atlantic, or Sheridan's and Early's devastation of the Valley, it is only necessary to consider Charles Town, the county seat of Jefferson County and only eight miles from the school and mission at Harpers Ferry. Here in 1862, the old Court House had been burned by Union troops, leaving only its blackened portico columns standing. Here nightly, in1861 the troops, including in 1862, the 12th Massachusetts Infantry, which is credited with popularizing the John Brown song, had met * a quarter of a mile from town, at the site of the gallows where John Brown was hanged, to deeply irritate the townspeople with endless renditions of that song, doubtless with all the variations and inventions of which troops in the field are particularly accomplished.

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* Glory, Glory, Hallelujah, Boyd B. Stutler, p.22

On November 20th Mr. Curtis is still worried about his four journeying teachers: "I am a little surprised that not one of the four sisters I have sent to you, has written a line to me," nor had he a word from the American Missionary Association in New York as to their arrival or departure, "I know not what this strange neglect means."

The teachers were safe enough, having arrived eventually, but they were not with the Reverend Curtis' request for a prompt accounting of the $25. he had sent them, and particularly they each were to inform him at once "what, if any, they were willing to discount monthly from their salaries of $15. per month, for the Freedmen's Mission of the Freewill Baptists." He adds that "last year we paid all our teachers $10. per month, the same as the American Missionary Association did their's," plus travelling expenses and board.

Each teacher was desired "to preserve in a diary or memorandum book any incident or anecdote which might fall under their observation or come to their knowledge respecting their scholars or the freedmen, which might be interesting to the friends of the cause if it was made public." Then he adds practically, "such little, short, interesting facts— keeps up the interest among the givers." This legitimate and pious solicitation precedes by two or three generations the elaborate financial campaigns of our present schools and colleges.

But money was not the only requisite, in fact a "make do",, economical approach is typical of these early efforts to bring things together, to repair and rebuild, to establish and promote, and any tool that came to hand was cheerfully and gratefully accepted. Books and clothing were urgently required and so was furniture, not to speak of school rooms and living rooms in which to place it. And this was to be supplied in an area where soldiers had frequently burned even staircase balustrades and fireplace mantles as fuel in the winter months, or for cooking fires.

On December 1, 1865 Brackett reported that he had established Sister Ann Dudley, his first teacher, at Charles Town. Curtis writes a week later that he is "glad you have got into Charles Town. Push on and keep the ground you take if possible." How militant are these words and phrases, they are identical with the field orders of any of the troop commanders, and they vividly portray the mood and the atmosphere. "The Bible follows the bayonet;" and of all places at this very religiously inclined denomination's General Conference at Buffalo in 1868, noting the political campaign and election only one month away, the Brethern and Sisters are enjoined "the same question is to be decided by the ballot in 1868* which was submitted to the arbitrament of arms in 1861," and "the rebellion of 1861 should be branded by our government as a high crime against God, liberty, and humanity." Not too far from the contemporary and startling cry of the politicians, "Vote as you Shot!"

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*Twentieth General Conference, pp 215-6

On a less practical note, but more earthy, the Committee on the Sabbath reported that "the practice of railroad companies running trains on Sunday is a violation of that day's sanctity and should be discountenanced by all good men everywhere," and discontinued of course by the railroads.

CHRISTMAS AT HARPERS FERRY, 1865

Christmas is approaching and Brother Curtis on December 11 plans for the augmentation of the teaching staff: "all the teachers we send this winter to your district we shall send from Eastern Virginia - Hampton or the Wise farm. We now have nine teachers there, four in the Butler School, one in Hampton, two on the Vaughan farm and two on the Wise farm. They would like to go in pairs two together, - do you want them before Christmas?" Also Brother Stockman is available as a speaker and missionary this winter, as he writes from Beaufort that "in consequence of the policy of the government in persecuting the 'Rebs' and restoring to them their property at Beaufort and on the Sea Islands, the Freedmen are leaving in such numbers that soon there will be none-- in this place."

Then, on December 15th, Brother Curtis writes Brother Brackett good personal news. His bride of two months is on her way and should be in Harpers Ferry December 19th or 20th in full time for their first Christmas together and the first Christmas celebration of the little

band of perhaps a half dozen teachers. Apparently all were quarters in the Lockwood House where teaching had commenced the year before, and where it continued for another two years before the additional grant of three more buildings was arranged by the Freedmen's Bureau with the War Department.

The scene must have been moving, Lockwood House had been battered by shot and shell throughout the War, it had been vandalized from time to time after the custom of soldiering from time immemorial, and of course it had been exposed to the elements. General Sheridan briefly set up his quarters there, but one may be sure that bivouacking colonels or majors, one after the other, Blue or Gray, could not resist the imposing new brick structure (it was completed in 1858) with the impressive view of the mountains and the gap. Apparently, it was spared the indignity of the Episcopal Church nearby, employed as a stable, or the more merciful use as a hospital as in the case of most of the other public buildings in the community.

For a Christmas setting there was much to be desired. Most of Camp Hill had been denuded of trees, by shell or by the axe of the soldier seeking fuel. To the west, graves of Union soldiers filled most of the ground between the dwelling of the Paymaster's Clerk and the Superintendent's residence itself. In the town few buildings were without damage from fire or shot, and the ruins of the Armory and the Arsenal must have been depressing.

The Lockwood House itself was a mess, despite periodic efforts to repair it, by the military custodians left in charge of the government properties at the Ferry. Major Young and a small command were responsible for the buildings and were friendly to Brackett and his

undertakings. Major Young was to become for awhile, an early trustee of Storer College.

Lockwood was to serve as school house, church and home for the teachers. It's roof and nine rooms had been practically wrecked."[1] Fortunately the few rooms that were habitable at all were very large, for each had to serve several purposes. The southwest room served as office, teachers' sitting room and at night as bedroom for the young organizer and administrator. The southeast room was kitchen and dining room and at night sleeping room for two teachers. The northwest room was sleeping room for the cook, although wintry snows blew in through cannon ball holes in the north wall. The northeast room was school room, and there during the holidays sleeping places were made for the visiting teachers on the tops of tables that had been built to take the place of desks. All the windows were boarded up at the top but the lower sash were fairly well supplied with panes and shades. The upstairs' rooms, five in number, were uninhabitable, except one, the southwest, and this was occupied by a sick German war veteran of the Union army, with his wife and baby. Not until the soldier had died, the following summer, and the mother and babe had returned to her people, was this room available for school purposes.[1]

One wonders about this first Christmas. Were there simple decorations of pine boughs, a tree with popcorn decorations, a bit of tinsel paper? Possibly an orange or two and some packages of nuts.

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1 Nathan C. Brackett, Mary Brackett Robertson (his daughter).

But everything indicates that the walls were bare and any color must have been added by improvisation.

One may be sure this little group of Christian adventurers and the hymnals brought from home must have been as heart warming themselves, as the fires in the open fire places of the scarred building.

A year later, in December 1866, a friendly witness, Miss Mary C. Ames, viewed from her window the arrival of these school teachers for the Christmas holidays. Writing to the New York "Independent", she described the scene. [1] "From my window I caught a glimpse of 'animated nature', caught from the blending hues of ruins, rocks and rivers. It was a small procession of Yankee girls, just from the cars, coming into Harpers Ferry to journey through the Valley of Virginia. There they were— 'the teachers!' A troop of maidens who suggest Tennyson's 'sweet girl graduates with their golden hair.' I see jaunty hats and natty jackets, gay scarfs and graceful robes— elegance, youth and beauty, all come to brighten the lot of the lady to deliver from ignorance and vice, that victim race."

Making full allowance for the contrast between the new arrivals and the "blending hues of ruins, rocks and rivers," it does seem that doubtless homesick eye, did exaggerate the smartness of the school-marms just delivered by panting coal and steam locomotives after the

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[1] The Independent, New York, Vol.XIX, January 3,1867, "Yankee Teacher in the Valley of Virginia," by Mary Clemmer Ames.

normally long and arduous trip from the North. Yet Miss Ames brings alive these teachers at Lockwood House, now "the abode of the superintendent of the freed peoples' schools in the Valley, the Reverend Mr. Brackett of Maine."

"In a grand old room, defaced by war, yet brightened with pictures and books from home", was a scene not to be forgotten. "No church doors opened to the teachers that Sabbath. "With their books in their hands, they surrounded this wide room, holding a simple service of their own. A room full of youthful women, far from home and all its loves, sang the Lord's song in a strange land. These old walls which in the last five years had resounded so often to the oath and jest of dissolute men, now sent back the echoes of sweet womanly voices, through which loving hearts trembled as they sang "Nearer, My God, To Thee!"

Over sweet indeed, and emotionally portrayed, yet these young teachers must have had something strong beneath the sweet voices and trembling hearts, beneath the "gay scarfs and nutty jackets." And their predecessors-- were they "dissolute men alone, with their "jest and oaths", or were they the eternally heroic common citizen-soldiers thrown into uniform and handed gun and sabre to preserve the Union an free the slave, or to justify their heartfelt convictions that their states were sovereign and free and entitled to care for their own peoples in their own way.

Be that as it may, drama was there aplenty, and the peace was not yet a year old,when in the last week of 1865, Nathan Brackett cou

look with satisfaction upon the progress of his labors of barely two months. At least he had a home, and his wife had joined him along with the teachers. Even two years later in 1867 when 49 year old Alexander Morrell and his wife moved into the Lockwood House also, there was little but naked and battered walls, only partially supplied with windows, and the roof still riddled by shells and cannon balls. Two families, two lady teachers, the school, several pupils and the religious meetings, all found quarters in this house of nine rooms. "It was not much like home life", quoth Nathan Brackett later.

But if the comforts of even the austere New England home were absent, the record was impressive. There were schools underway at Harpers Ferry, Martinsburg, Charles Town and Shepherdstown. At Charles Town, the teachers also made a home for themselves in the same building as the school. Sometimes only a hotel or inn was open to them, or a family impoverished by war risked public opinion to take them in.

But grow the mission did. The imagination of the Freewill Baptists had been stirred by the historic associations of the area - the entire Valley of 120 miles length and thirty in breadth. Although often the records and reminiscences of the early workers, the teachers and the elders at home in the North, referred to Brother Brackett as an agent during this period of the Freedmen's Bureau, or as its Superintendent of Schools in the area, the only specific evidence of his official association with the Bureau appears in his commission dated

in 1867 - executed July 23, to have taken effect three weeks earlier on July 1st.

There is every reason to believe that Brackett did have responsibilities closely related to the Bureau, from the beginning of his work with the Christian Commission. When he opened the first school for freedmen at Winchester in the winter of '64-'65, he may have done it for the army or a little later the Bureau. The latter was not legislated until March 3, 1865, and then within the War Department. The battle for control of captured prosperity, between the Treasury Department and the War Department was probably less acerbic in the Valley - the Treasury was more interested in the immensely valuable and much larger plantations and properties of the southeast, and the sources and supplies of cotton, tobacco, sugar, rice, indigo and naval stores.

Whatever Brackett had to do with the Bureau, it is clear that his heart and indeed all his interest and energies were devoted to educating and uplifting, to evangelizing the freedmen. And his superiors at home were equally dedicated to saving as well as serving these unhappy people. Again the phrase— "the Bible follows the bayonet", rang out. The elders at Concord and Dover, New Hampshire, at Lewiston and _____, Maine, plotted in their altruistic but shrewd way to build a permanent evangelistic structure in the rich and historic Valley.

Already at the end of 1865, in the same letter advising Brackett of the immediate departure of his wife for Harpers Ferry, Brother Curtis spoke of the naming of the new schools, only weeks old. "In respect to the names of the schools in our Shenandoah mission, I appreciate your

regard for me, but have no particular ambition in that direction, but if I could have a choice, I would prefer that at Harpers Ferry, and next at Charles Town." He had "spent one Sabbath at Harpers Ferry in company with Brother Burr [illegible], Harpers Ferry and Charleston (sic) are more properly historic places to old Anti-Slavery Freewill Baptist members who first commenced the antislavery battles." Next day he writes again on the subject, and the matter is apparently closed since the Harpers Ferry mission school continues to be called just that, until the heady events and activities of 1867 result in the creation almost overnight of one of the earliest negro colleges or normal schools.

So the year closes as far as the available records show. A little island of teachers at dramatic Harpers Ferry in a war-damaged "surplus" government building, with branch missions in heterogeneous shelters for teachers and students at Charles Town, Shepherdstown and Martinsburg. Nathan Brackett can well be pleased with his progress a a few weeks, and particularly in the interest taken in his work by hi church's elders. 1866 will represent the year he has agreed to serve before returning to Maine for his training for the Ministry.

THE YEAR 1866

Perhaps the year 1866 can be best characterized as a year of foundation and consolidation of gains, some small, some large. Years later Mrs. Brackett said that the familiar opposition of citizens and

other difficulties were met and overcame anew by slightly varying tactics in each of several places: Winchester, Front Royal, Woodstock, Harrisonburg, Staunton and Lexington. At the latter place a building was purchased which answered the double purpose of school house and home for the teachers. In a few communities the Freedmen's Bureau furnished a building."[1] These teachers who had been employed elsewhere under the pay of the Freewill Baptist Home Mission Society were all sent here at the opening of this school year, numbering nineteen teachers including those already on the ground. Until their different schools were assigned, they were all members of the family at Lockwood House. Several nights all rooms at their command, including kitchen, church and school room had to be converted into dormitories, and tables and benches into bedsteads. The dying Union soldier and his family were still there, occupying "the best room in the house", and the basement was filled with colored families", leaving six rooms for teachers, school and church." Mrs. Brackett added "It didn't matter much. Sleep was not so unwilling a guest as at some later periods." The atmosphere is further described by Mrs. Brackett when she mentions the "beautiful scenery which was so much to the teachers at that time. These marvelous combinations of rivers and mountains, varying at every turn, went far in supplying the lack of home comforts within."

The inclusion of Jefferson County by the State legislature in the embryo free school system of 186 , gradually led to the discontinuance of the local mission schools and the concentration of funds

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[1] "A Chapter of History" Mrs. N. C. Brackett, read at Curtis Memorial Church shortly after erection.

and efforts at Harpers Ferry, largely the development of 1867 and the next four years. There prevailed the times and conditions of reconstruction - rather construction since the concept was of a new design, certainly as it was intended to affect the freedman. There were many oddities: Mr. Brackett on at least one occasion, went down to the lower town, and simultaneously married three generations of colored people on the Wager Bridge, since once on the bridge they wer in Maryland, and Virginia and West Virginia did not then recognize th sanctity of negro marriage.

Relations with the community were tenuous for many years, continuing so even into the twentieth century. Yet Mr. Brackett was to become respected largely because of his wartime experience, service and acquaintship in the Valley. Though it was considered advisable by the Brackett family to send their children to school in New Englan because of threatened mistreatment locally, yet ultimately Brackett became a member of the Harpers Ferry Town Council where he served ___ years. He had become County Superintendent of Schools as early as 18 but this was more likely an appointment by reconstruction organizatio such as the Freedmen's Bureau, rather than so sudden a change of hear by the residents, and still bitter, local population.

The new year opened with a letter from Brother Curtis, of January 4, 1866. He is still concerned about the welfare of the teachers. Th should be housed with the most efficiency yet with the least expense, they should board themselves, "or in clubs, yet not expose their heal enjoin it upon all to take care of their health." He has teachers available from the fading South Carolina area. "We must entirely aba

our field there— sell the meeting house at a great sacrifice— hope we shall learn some good practical lessons— concentrate our efforts in some one place like the Shenandoah Valley, or some other favorable location where we can have all our teachers and missionaries near together." He can not help closing with the postscript: "I would thank you if you would cross your T's and dot your I's and make your figures a little plainer— Excuse me for the suggestion. S.C."

On a larger stage, the year 1866 was the one in which there was established on a sufficiently broad scale to be truly helpful that institution already mentioned which would be a principal sponsor of the [1]new college about to be established. The Freedmen's Bureau, or Bureau _____, was authorized by Congress on March 3, 1865, and was among the very last Acts approved by President Lincoln. It was [2]"primarily designed as a protection to the freedmen of the South and to the class of white men known as 'refugees', driven from their homes by the rebels on account of their loyalty to the Union." "The total destruction of the long established labor system of the South— based as it had been on chattel-slavery— led inevitably to great confusion, indeed almost to social anarchy. The provisions of the first Act provided largely for relief of destitution— issues of

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[1]Twenty Years in Congress, James G. Blaine, Vol.2, p.163: 1884

[2]Ibid ?

provisions, clothing and fuel, and supply of shelter. Further, the three year lease of 40 acres of farmland offered some promise of self reconstruction, although this promise actually faded away into the vague dream of forty acres and a mule." The badly required strengthening amendments, in face a new bill, included important clauses allowing for aid to education as well as 'judicial' protecti where Federal or State courts were not available to the freedmen or a matter of fact to the former plantation owners.[1] Rep. Blaine belie that Rep. Ignatius Donnelly of Minnesota was particularly articulate and forceful upon the education feature: "Education means the intel- ligent exercise of liberty: and surely without this, liberty is a cu ity— Suffrage without education is an edged tool in the hands of a child."

Senator Fessenden of Maine, a radical Republican, opposed to President Johnson's moderate measures of reconstruction, and a great friend to be of Storer College, is quoted by Rep. Blaine in this vein during the debate on this particular point, "I take it that no one co tends that now, at this time, the whole of the population of the rece slave States is fit to be admitted to the exercise of the right of suf frage." Senator Fessenden adds that he believes that even Senator Su of Massachusetts, "who is the great champion of universal suffrage," would hardly contend otherwise.

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1 Twenty Years in Congress, p.167 - 171

By a close vote the veto of President Johnson was upheld. A few weeks later, "the disaster * of the veto, for such it was esteemed by the Republicans, was repaired by the passage of another bill", meeting some of the President's objections as to term of existence, and the extent of judicial authority. His second veto was promptly over-ridden in both houses on the same day, although with less enthusiasm and decreased popularity, although judged by Blaine ** "a measure of very great importance to the colored race."

The original legislation of March 1865 had lead to the appointment by President Johnson of Lincoln's expressed choice for Commissioner, General Oliver O. Howard, a native of Leeds, Maine, known as the new "Christian General", and "thoroughly anti-slavery in his intellectural and moral convictions."

It was General Howard and his brother Rev't Brig.General and Asst. Commissioner at Headquarters in the District of Columbia who were to assist so materially within a year, the embryo Normal School at Harpers Ferry, and by a combination of the concrete generosity of money and Federal buildings at a spot already widely recognized for its deep association with pre-war time notoriety, as well as during the Civil War itself, to bestow upon the new denominational school for Negroes, a specimen reserved for only a few other such establishments.

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*Twenty Years in Congress, p.167 - 171

**Ibid.

***Ibid.

The ground work was being laid for the flowering of the new schoo from the seeds so courageously planted at Lockwood House at war's end. The early months of 1866 saw continued efforts to build up and expand the influence of the Mission. Expansion into Loudoun Valley was considered. Brother Stockman, considered a good preacher and businessman is moved up from Beaufort, along with Sister Smith. Brother Curtis fo wards from the Quarterly Meeting at Haverill, Massachusetts about $400 worth of clothing and books, "you may sell much of the clothing at a moderate price to those who are able to purchase and give to those who cannot buy." "Many of the Bibles are gilt and valuable, you may sell some of them and other books."

Brother Curtis also expresses unusually generous sentiments, "thi is not for the purpose of flattery, but for a word of encouragement to a toiling missionary far away from his brethren, facing the storms of opposition from the storms of opposition from the cold, black-hearted haters of human freedom." Brother Curtis is in fact surprisingly warm perhaps he is trying to atone for his earlier involved correspondence with Brother Brackett regarding the latter's monthly salary of $33.33, (Mrs. Brackett received an additional $15.00). Brother Curtis at firs thought he had been overcharged a dozen dollars, but learned his error and admitted it like a true churchman.

On February 1st Curtis writes ten long-hand pages offering variou teachers who will be free during the year, because their schools on plantation properties "will be delivered up to the pardoned Rebs." He also says, "we have never yet supplied school books for any of the

teachers, but he will write at once to the American Missionary Association in New York, and request them to send a box of school books, just enough to commence your schools with." They have "Bibles, Testaments and miscellaneous books," "First readers and spelling books, enough for four teachers." They will be sent to Brackett at Harpers Ferry, at the "office of the Freedmen's Bureau." He may sell as many as he can, the American Missionary Association will "advise the price of them." "We also have sabbath school books and several barrels of clothing." "Maintain good records, move slowly but surely, and keep me posted on the state and prospects of the mission."

Only a week later, something has upset the dovecote, but just what we do not know, as we do not have Brother Brackett's reporting letter. But Brother Curtis writes more in sorrow than in anger, "how sad and sorry I feel at such an affair as that at Martinsburg— give everyone of your teachers a good, sound, thorough lecture on their department, and take an effectual warning to shun the very appearance of evil. We cannot raise money to pay expenses, board and salary of teachers to go among th Freedmen, to bring reproach and disgrace upon the cause, and upon our denomination. But I would not be too severe on Miss F_____, if she has not intentionally committed any crime ——— rebel eyes are constantly upon them, seeking some occasion to retard or prevent our work of mercy among the Freedmen. What can you do with Miss F_____, poor girl! I pity her, and shall pray for her. Can she be sent to any other place? She has always had a good reputation. Must the school at Martinsburg be broken up by this affair?" He has asked the American

Missionary Association to send "another good, experienced, pious teach

The expenses of the Mission for February, 1866 includes food, sup plies, board of teachers, rent, seats, benches and blackboards, as wel as fuel, light, postage and stationery and travel by the teachers at Harpers Ferry, Charles Town, Martinsburg and Shepherdstown. These ex- penses totaled $279.46, including also freight and express charges, pr sumably for some very limited purposes, teacher's trunks, books or wha ever. Hardly an overwhelming budget, yet since some of it was for cap supplies, plus winter fuel, it probably rarely exceeded two to three h dred dollars each month, possibly increased by fifty percent as the ot schools in the area were opened during the year.

Yet by the end of 1866 the Home Mission Society was able to repor that the various schools had enrolled about 2500 pupils of all ages, s and degree of basic learning.

Our records are not complete as to detail after the first quarter of 1866. Yet we have enough to know that progress was made, and that the brethren struggled to "keep up good courage", and "stay up Bro. Brackett's hand as money is concerned." Teachers were not as freely available as Silas Curtis had supposed. The American Missionary Asso- ciation did not, or could not supply all requested, and some of the Fre will Baptist teachers, assigned to the American Missionary Association could not immediately be pried loose. But the school term was drawing to a close, haying would require labor for the summer, and as Curtis s in March, "we must do the best we can this season and hold the ground, and next season we can have all our teachers together where we please. Your's truly, S.Curtis."

We shall not hear from, or quite so much of, Brother Curtis hence forth. His interest in the Shenandoah Mission continued unabated and there is correspondence from him. He is in his sixties and will serve the Lord for another score of years, but others in the church are rising and taking a more active part, this will become evident as the imports events of 1867 begin to unfold. Brother Curtis, after 33 years of service (since 1835), as Secretary or Clerk of the triennial General Conferences resigns that office in 1868 and it is reluctantly accepted. He is succeeded by the Reverend Isaac Dalton Stewart of Dover, N.H., a man of fifty years and whose family will be closely identified with the Normal School to be, and all things Baptist.

*In the meantime new opinions were being arrived at among those interested and occupied in making the obligations and opportunities of citizenship a reality to the so recently freed Negro. In the Freewill Baptist denomination, Nathan Brackett in the Shenandoah Valley, and Lincoln Given, another native of Maine, who had spent two years in the West, of which eighteen months were in Minnesota, and six months at the embattled Cairo Mission, together agreed that the best teacher and guide to the Negro was the Negro teacher himself.

So in 1866 these two experienced workers suggested to the Home Mission Society that a "normal school" was needed. This conclusion by such capable workers must have received earnest attention. Negro preachers or teachers did not constitute a new concept at all, but now apparently for the first time there developed the thought of a training school to make their work more effective among their own people.

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*Freewill Baptist Encyclopedia, p.625

In the meantime, the local representative of the Freedmen's Bureau at Harpers Ferry, Capt. G. H. Wells, requested the War Department, earl in 1866 to transfer to the Bureau Government, Building No.32, the forme Paymaster's Quarters which was serving as Brackett's school house, office, residence, and dormitory for his teachers, not only for the work of the Freewill Baptists, but also for its continued use for Freedmen' school purposes. As stated earlier, the exact relation between the Freewill Baptists, Brackett and the Bureau are not entirely clear. Ina cally, it appears that the benevolent hand of the Federal Government w extended in support of the church missionaries and teachers, somewhat a guardian and conveyor of aid and shelter in many ways, formal and in formal in this early period of uncertainty and rebuilding. Be that as may, the seeds of the normal school, as well as the more primitive and basic educational program were being planted. While the request for t fer of the Paymaster's building was denied, its continued use until oth government requirements for it might appear, was approved March 5, 186

Though neither the Freedmen's Bureau nor the Freewill Baptists kn it, a new chapter was about to be written in this history of cooperati between the Federal government and philanthropic groups in the interest of Negro education.

VI

STORER COLLEGE, THE FIRST GENERATION

1867 - 1897

Pam

1. Harpers Ferry Community at War's End
2. The Need for Organized Education
3. The Commencement of "Storer", John Storer's Offer
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5. The "Normal Department" opens, October 2, 1867
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VI

STORER COLLEGE, THE FIRST GENERATION 1867 - 1877

HARPERS FERRY AT WAR'S END

The moment when the history of a man or a thing, or an institution or a movement commences, antecedes sometimes by a long period of time the precise instant of official birth.

The education of the Negro and the establishment of schools and institutions to accomplish this, doubtless appear most dramatically from almost the very commencement of the "War of the Rebellion," as it official history termed it. But long before this education had appeared in many forms.

It had ultimately been banned in some areas, it had been justified on religious grounds and for economic gain. It was feared as encouraging hostile insurrection and as a threat to the entire system upon which was to be erected the social and economic structure of the south portion of the United States.

That this early "education" was haphazard and unorganized is clear enough. It was sporadic with little or no pattern and developed as the slaveholder in the South or the church or civil authorities in the North were moved by circumstance to extend the opportunity.

The legal establishment of Storer College at Harpers Ferry in 186 was at first a very small effort and largely an extension of rudimentary education which had been undertaken there apparently in 1864, fittingly enough by a niece of Horace Mann.

The social and emotional problems faced at Harpers Ferry at the end of active hostilities can be imagined. The eastern "panhandle" of

West Virginia had largely sympathized with the South. Jefferson Coun was comparatively flat terrain, its agriculture, mode of life, and habits were all attuned to the "Old Dominion."

Washington was only a day's coach drive away and Mt.Vernon and the Washington family were familiar subjects of conversation and acquaintance. Three of George Washington's brothers held property here two dwelt here, and descendents intermarried among the local gentry. The first President had been a frequent visitor as a boy surveyor, as a soldier with Braddock's army. As President he had secured at Harpe Ferry the establishment in 1794 of the new Nation's second Armory and Arsenal.

This natural sympathy and understanding for the southern manner of life and mode of thought could only lead to a bond that was deep a earnest. Were these local citizens not deeply loyal to the American w their fellow southerners had created. Had they not joined General Washington without reservation or hesitancy? The splendid and dramati march in 20 days of 40 riflemen from nearby Shepherdstown to join the General outside Boston in 1765 well portrayed their spirit and their loyalty.

Their state had contributed besides the General, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Patrick Henry and all the others. Both Harpers Ferry and Shepherdstown had been considered seriously as possible capitals o their new Nation. They did not need anyone to teach them loyalty to that Nation, or correct conduct in managing their local affairs, educational least of all.

The balance of the state was much different. With the exception of a few counties like Jefferson that bordered on Virginia, the sympathies were with the North. The first land battle of the War took place at almost its center, at Philippi and there the first hero of the conflict, General George McClellan made his early reputation. When the new state of West Virginia emerged in 1863, Jefferson County was omitted by _____and it was not until _____ that i "rejoined the Union."

The raid of John Brown was regarded locally as treasonable and the jurors who sat in judgment upon him represented the respectable and respected citizens of the community. The totalitary destruction of the Charles Town courthouse where the trial took place not only burned deep into the minds and hearts of the community, it was to be a memory hindering reconstruction and reconciliation for years to come. For _____ years after the war, the impressive and huge Doric columns which were almost all that remained of the building served as a constant and gaping reminder of that tragic incident and the hell that had be the local harvest of the ensuing four years.

Furthermore the Negroes who were to be educated there, were outsiders. They were refugees, they were demoralized and unreasoning. Their roots were gone and they sought new ones. Jefferson County, Charles Town, Harpers Ferry, had held few slaves. Harpers Ferry until the War was a community of mechanics employed in the government works and with a relatively high standard of living, largely Scotch Irish wi some Germans who had fled oppression in Europe. They had little

acquaintance with house servants. In Charles Town the Negro was rare a field hand, there were practically no large plantations with many Negro field workers, but rather large farms where the crops were wheat and cattle rather than cotton, indigo or rice.

Little wonder that the horde of ill-clad, ill trained and pauper refugees, fleeing from the backwash of Phil Sheridan's raids, up and down the Shenandoah Valley and of General Sherman's march to the sea represented to them simply another form of vengeance taken upon the cultivated or at least substantial residents of Jefferson County, by their enemies in the industrial and strident North.

THE NEED FOR ORGANIZED EDUCATION

It was into this atmosphere that the northern school teacher had ventured. Without the little local office of the Freedmen's Bureau i the old Paymaster's Quarters atop Camp Hill at Harpers Ferry, it woul have been difficult or impossible to maintain this outpost of aid and education on this highway from South to North.

Brackett had put down his roots in 1865 and 1866, as Miss Mann h attempted in 1864. Now a new experiment was to begin and Brackett wa to be a part of it.

The seeds planted by Brackett and Lincoln Given among the Home Mission Society were about to fructify but nourished from an unexpecte source. The Negro was to be educated not only for his own advantage, but so that he might bring the same opportunity to others of his race.

White teachers from both the North and South, increasingly women as conditions became less arduous and more stabilized, believed that their colored pupils effectively could carry the message of freedom a education if given the opportunity. The first provision must be for some kind of normal school teaching, hopefully emerging eventually int academic or even collegiate levels. This could be overdone, and it fr quently was. But the movement was natural.

The hard-pressed teacher would surely welcome assistance from his brighter pupils and sometimes there were welcome surprises. *An estimate has been made that ten percent of the adult Negroes at the time o the War did have the rudiments of education. This is believed to

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*History of Negro Education in the United States, George S. Melchman, Bulletin 1916, #38, Bureau of Education, Dept. of the Interior, p.247

"explain the demand that came so soon for secondary schools and those of a more advanced grade." This is the ready explanation of the self development of these schools and of the necessity for classes above the primary grade.

An additional stimulant to the higher schools, seminary or normal as they were called, came from the responsibilities assumed by the Freedmen's Bureau under its broader authority conferred by Congress, July 16, 1866. General supervision was at once instituted over all schools, church, philanthropic, the erstwhile military. Reports were to be made at regular intervals; unused government buildings were made available for school houses, and transportation and subsistance for a time were furnished to the teachers. Grading and systematizing of the schools was the next step, and the private aid and church societies re stimulated and perhaps more free to exert greater endeavor.

Thus, the task of the Freedmen's Bureau, joining with the other agencies already in the field, was to set up these elementary schools in all places where there were freedmen to attend them.

*"These schools were made public in the largest sense and free to all who cared to attend them."

"With these developments under the leadership of the Bureau, the people who had maintained the previous operations began to turn their minds to schools of a higher grade; and at this point appear indicatio

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*Bulletin 1916, #38, p.252

of denominational purpose. During the war, considerations of patriotism and humanity were dominant, and churches of every name united in the efforts undertaken, but with the return of peace, missionary enterprise took into view the churches that were to grow up among the freedmen, and shaped itself more or less in their behalf. This was most natural in those churches whose affiliations in the South had been strongest before the war - the Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. For the sake of those churches that were to be, they took measures to build up schools of higher learning at carefully chosen centers, which they hoped might become favorite resorts for scholars, rallying points for religious education and institutions of Christian culture and enlightenment for all the region around.

The African Methodist Church already had Wilberforce in Ohio, founded in 1847, and in 1864 this church added Western in Kansas. At Oxford, Pennsylvania, the Presbyterians had an important school founded in 1854 as Ashmun Institute, later Lincoln University. The Society of Friends were active early with the Penn School on Saint Helena Island near Hilton Head in 1862, the Laing School at Mount Pleasant near Charleston in 1865, the Schofield Industrial School at Aiken in 1868, and a school for orphans in 1864 at Helena, Arkansas, which, with the need for educational facilities growing, became Southland College in 1869.

The Baptists established Shaw University at Raleigh in 1865, Roger Williams at Nashville and Morehouse at Atlanta in 1867, Leland at New Orleans in 1869, and Benedict at Columbia in 1871. The Methodist Episcopal Church instituted Walden at Nashville in 1865, Rust at Holly

Springs in 1866, Morgan at Baltimore in 1867, Haven Academy at Waynesboro in 1868, Chaflin at Orangeburg in 1869, and Clark at Atlanta in 1870. The Presbyterians also Biddle University in Pennsylvania in 18 The Episcopal Church founded St. Augustine's at Raleigh in 1867. And of course, there was the Federal Government's own Howard University s up by the Freedmen's Bureau in 1867.

"The larger number of those who had been most actively engaged i* the school work during the War continued to keep the educational interests of the colored people uppermost in their thoughts and were le inclined to plans for church extension, but they saw the necessity fo advanced training to prepare teachers for the immense field that was opening to view; and so they also turned a great deal of attention to building up institutions of higher learning for this object."

The American Missionary Association is an interesting example. Its funds were drawn from the members of several different denominati including cooperation with the Freewill Baptists, and their activitie were largely now sectarian and educational. As the supporting church gradually assumed an evangelistic trend, the American Missionary Association returned to its original home among the Congregational churche and so became primarily an agency of that church.** "Its work was nec sarily restricted to the educational field. Perhaps for this very re

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*Bulletin #1916, #38, p.253

**Ibid.

it was more prolific in schools especially designed for preparing teachers." Its list of "teachers' schools is long and impressive. In the immediate post-war half decade, it could number: 1865, Avery Institute at Charleston, South Carolina, Ballard Normal at Macon, and Washburn at Beaufort; 1866: Trinity at Athens, Alabama, Gregory at Wilmington, North Carolina, and Fisk University at Nashville; 1867, Talladega College in Alabama, Emerson at Mobile, Storrs at Atlanta, and Beach at Savannah; 1868, Hampton Institute in Virginia, Knox at Athens, Georgia, Burwell at Selma, Alabama (later moved to Florence), and Ely Normal at Louisville; 1869, Straight University at New Orleans, Tougaloo in Mississippi, LeMoyne at Memphis, and Lincoln at Marion, Alabama; finally, in 1870, Dorchester Academy at McIntosh, and the Albany Normal in Georgia.

What a remarkable accomplishment, a score of training schools for teachers in five years. Some, of course, have consolidated or vanished but the will, the thought and the hope were all there, to the everlasting credit of those who did try to do something of surely an unselfish nature.

The Freewill Baptists were to do their part too, and more. Nathan Brackett and his sponsors had always been jealous in guarding their denominational activities, even though their limited numbers as compared to the major churches of the nation, had wisely and happily committed them to a close working relationship with the American Missionary Association.

However, from the very beginning, the activities of Brackett were directly sponsored by the Freewill Baptist Home Mission Society, and his teachers were almost exclusively sent on from the Freewill Baptist

communities and congregations in northern New England or New York. In fact, we have seen that Brother Curtis was disappointed at a crucial time in early 1866 in getting American Missionary Association teachers for Harpers Ferry.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF "STORER".

Now, out of the blue was to come the Freewill Baptists' great moment of opportunity in this embryonic educational eruption. Upon the structure built by Brackett and his teachers and elders was to be built "a college in the South for Negroes." From the cocoon of the little mission at Lockwood House and its sister schools nearby was to emerge an object of joy, pride and service, and for just short of a century it was to rise and fall, struggle and pause and struggle again as a typical example of the earliest Negro Schools. In its history is reflected the good and the bad, the wisdom and the misguided efforts of all the other schools designed to help, to train, and to educate for citizenship the hitherto deprived and disadvantaged Negro

And in this strongly denominational group, the first major benefactor was to be of another religion, unless nativity to the State of Maine could be called a "religion."

John Storer of Sanford was a Congregationalist and a merchant, a successful one, Nathan and Louisa Brackett's elder friend, who had married them, Oren B. Cheney was an indefatigable and devoted worker for educational causes among the Freewill Baptists. A dozen years younger than Silas Curtis, he was increasingly sharing the burden of the older men as the active abolitionist groups gave way to those who, while participating in that struggle themselves, yet had been secondary to the older leaders. Oren Cheney had an especially valuable and somewhat unusual facet, even in those days, for a minister. He had a flair for politics.

Probably because of his antislavery and temperance views this thirty-five year old teacher and minister was sent to the Maine State Legislature at Augusta by the Whig and Free Soil parties. His link to Augusta and its political atmosphere was strengthened by a call to ser as pastor of a Freewill Baptist Church in that community. Here he be- came acquainted with William Pitt Fessenden and James G. Blaine who w to remain his friends for many years. Men whose help and support were almost essential for the success of the new Negro College at Harpers Ferry. Dr. Cheney was foremost a teacher as is attested by the list academies, seminaries and schools at which he served as teacher or pr cipal sometimes as founder. Earlier an even more specifically useful friend had been acquired while serving his pastorate at Sanford and W Lebanon from 1846 until his election to the legislature and almost si- multaneous call to his Augusta church. At Sanford he had made a frie of John Storer, merchant and at the neighboring town he had establish the West Lebanon Academy.

While Cheney was still at Augusta, the Freewill Baptists receive a charter from the State of Maine in 1855 to commence the Main State Seminary. The Maine Legislature appropriated $15,000. on condition t an equal amount be raised elsewhere and the city of Lewiston met that amount with the understanding that the Seminary would be located there

Cheney's first association appeared to be that the Freewill Bap- tist's Parsonfield Seminary where he had been first educated before graduating from Dartmouth in 1839, and had been largely destroyed by in 1854, and the new State Seminary was to receive his consecrated in terest. Upon issuance of the charter, Cheney was chosen principal an treasurer.

In 1857 he was released from his parish in Augusta and in Septem ber of that year the Seminary opened. Financial problems and embarra ssment are described, but the little school survived and 1863 its trus tees were emboldened to vote it a college and to seek a charter as su The State legislature granted this in 1864, along with a conditioned gift of 151,000 acres of State-owned land.

Further, Dr. Cheney (Wesleyan University had bestowed upon him a degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1863) had prevailed upon a Boston capi talist with substantial manufacturing interests in Lewiston to help o financially. The Hon. Benjamin E. Bates had become deeply interested the embryo college, so when the charter was issued in January 1864 the new name of Bates College appeared therein in recognition of a gift of $50,000 from this benefactor. Conditioned on complementary contribu- tions of an equal amount, this matching sum was eventually raised. Wi the college status, went the new title of President, and the leadership of an augmented faculty.

The first Board of Fellows included James G. Blaine and Nelson Dingley, two rising political figures and the start was auspicious con sidering the times and many in the denomination to make the step to a higher educational plane.

As for the times, they were certainly not calculated to hold youth on the campus. Enlistments commenced with Fort Sumter and continued throughout the War. "Lewiston Light Guards called. Made a speech to them; also offered prayer." "Brought out lemonade." Cheney went to "the front". In the summer vacation of 1861, he served with the Christian

Commission about Washington, "distributing tracts and supplies and comforting the soldiers." "Saw Lincoln today. Called with the Chaplain." But the Reverend Oren Bates did not waste his time, even in traveling. Returning to his post for the fall term, he called on the presumably apprehensive Mr. Bates as he passed through Boston, and received a pledge of five thousand dollars, "as soon as the times would warrant", to aid in building another hall.

Another significant trip to Washington in the April vacation of 1865. Learning there of General Lee's surrender, this indefatigable* man proceeded on "to Richmond the next day and there rejoined with the victorious---- and talked hopefully with the Confederate prisoner But he was especially interested in another group. "What is to be do with, and for, the Freedmen, hundreds of whom are flocking northward?

Part of the answer, perhaps not too strangely, came from three o his former students at the Maine State Seminary who had been working for his denomination among these new Freedmen at Harpers Ferry. Two of them he had married, Louise and Nathan Brackett, the third was Ann S. Dudley. This devoted young woman was the denomination's firs female teacher and missionary in the Shenandoah Valley, arriving there to join Brackett a year after graduating from the Maine State Seminary in 1864, in default of her appointment as a missionary to India which

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* Life and Work of Oren B. Cheney, p.151

had lapsed because of a lack of funds.

In 1874 Miss Dudley married the Reverend C. E. Bates. She had taken an active interest in the Woman's Christian Temperance movement as early as 1850, at the age of seventeen and was increasingly active in later years. She served as a trustee of Storer College from the very beginning, possibly the first woman to attain such a position. The evangelistic spirit of her life, and indeed of her fellow workers is epitomized in her personal mottoes: "The World for Christ", and "Anywhere with Jesus." Her husband also typified this crusading spirit as an abolitionist he voted for James G. Birney and the third party", and in temperance he was a staunch prohibitionist. There was little room for a middle ground among these single minded people.

Still struggling however to place his beloved Bates College (unrelated in name to his student Anna Bates), he turned in early February, 1867 to a friend and supporter of twenty years from one of his earliest fields of labor at West Lebanon Academy. John Storer of Stanford, Maine, was a prosperous merchant and had proven himself a friend of education. He had been an interested donor to Bates, and "Mr. Cheney now hoped to secure another thousand dollars from him, but he found him so deeply absorbed in a different plan, that he saw at once it was an inopportune time to press the interests of his own college.

Mr. Storer was on the point of making a gift of ten thousand dollars* to "some organized body that he could trust to add to it and so manage it that it would be a permanent blessing to the colored race.

The program was ready and Mr. Storer had the papers before preparatory to the execution of the plan.

Dr. Cheney arose to the occasion and proposed the Free Baptists a the agency to undertake the task. At the back of his mind must have been the little missionary school among the Freedmen at Harpers Ferry, "some of their representatives are already at work establishing school in the South."

John Storer was interested but doubted the financial strength of the Freewill Baptists to carry out and develop such an enterprise. He had a college in mind, not only a normal school to train teachers, but a place where eventually an advanced academic education might be offer to the upward moving Negro student.

Oren Cheney was convincing and he prevailed. The next day, on February seventh, *"Mr. Storer signs the papers, giving to Free Baptis $10,000 for a Freedmen's College." There were conditions and things t accomplish, matching the amount by the end of the year and the questio of a charter, the meeting of the men named by Mr. Storer to take the enterprise in hand.

In only a few days Bradlett was appraised of the potential windfal in a conversation with his old teacher and pastor, Oren Cheney. Then C Cheney wrote him towards the end of February (Feb.26,1867): "Dear Bro. I hope you will see General Howard at once. It may be that he will aid you in getting $10,000.—— Where will you have the college located? What say for Richmond? /So recently the Confederate Capitol/—— The de-nomination should do something for its own honor—— I hope you will re-member next Thursday, the day to pray for colleges. Yours, O. B. Chen

*O.B.Cheney's Diary, 1867

In mid March, Cheney writes the Reverend Dr. James Calder, in the early 1850's, a M.E.Missionary at Foo-Chow and Hong Kong, now a pastor of Free Baptists at Harrisburg. Within two years he will be president of Hillsdale College in Michigan, the pride of the western churches, and at the end of another two years in 1871, president of Pennsylvania State College. He will be a trustee of Storer College from its inception. Now Cheney writes to him, "at your convention, it just occurs to me that a resolution in favor of colleges would do good— also, - notice of the plan for a colored college - Much love, C.B.C."

Bro.Calder is cool to the plan for a "Colored College", if not downright suspicious. He writes Brackett at this time that he "fears this is a snare for us which the devil has moved a Congregationalist to tempt us with." The Free Baptists as a denomination profess to be opposed to caste, claiming that all its institutions should be open to all students. Why should they now build a college from which white students shall be excluded? "Away with all caste."

The indefatigable Bro.Cheney is in constant and an almost incredible degree of motion. A day after his March 14th letter to Calder, he again writes Brackett from Bates at Lewiston, that he is off for Boston that day to attend the Education meeting at Haverhill to settle the location of the Bible School, another project close to his heart. He has heard from the good Brother Stewart, now sixty. Cheney says, "I have written him that Brother Storer will not consent to any such change. He is a Congregationalist, and if we tamper with him, we shall lose all—he is

as fixed as the hills."

Cheney is planning to get down to the Valley to see the schools and missions, and plan for the college - but there is much to be done, besides raising funds to match Storer's gift.

Three weeks later he is at Harpers Ferry. He is off down the Val Charles Town, Winchester, Harrisonburg and Staunton, a night at each.

After two weeks of visitations and inspections he turns up in Washington, whence he reports on really important matters. April 17th 11 a.m.,he has just been in Secretary of War Stanton's office with Senator Fessenden of Maine, an old friend and abolitionist, whose experience and knowledge of the needs and plight of the contraband and freedman,h has learned at first hand with his assistant, the erstwhile Private Pierce, while Secretary of the Treasury in Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet. With Representative James Garfield, who came under Free Baptist influences as a youthful student at Geauga Seminary in Ohio, he would be largely responsible for the generous legislative accomplishments of th church in the establishment and building of Storer.

Secretary Stanton is out of Washington, but Cheney will wait him out, "it is my duty", even though he is due in Harrisburg to consult with Brother Calder. At least he will be present for the adjournment of the Senate next day, although he regrets that his objective - the a quisition of government property at Harpers Ferry is yet unaccomplishe And he has a "new idea" - to secure <u>all</u> of the government property at the Ferry, water rights, buildings, ruins, twenty-five acres and all, lease and to purchase eventually, presumably for a lesser price than

others, "for we want it for the public good." Its eventual sale to others "at a good profit" would produce an endowment for the college. He has been to Richmond, and after Harrisburg, he will return to his college presidency after only a month's absence, by way of Providence and Boston. In the latter two cities, the good merchants Lewis Anthon and Benjamin Bates respectively can certainly expect to hear of the financial needs of Bates and Storer Colleges.

While Cheney awaits Secretary Stanton's return, he sees General Howard of the Freedmen's Bureau again. The General hopes to secure fu for the new Howard University "located here" from "President" Sears of the Peabody /Educational/ Fund. He thinks it a good idea and will fol low suit in behalf of the Storer to be.

The next day Stanton is in his office and "favorably disposed." has a question about the title to the government property, but will ha a decision in about a month and will confer with Brackett. Upon his a rival, Cheney visits Senator Cameron with Bros.Ball and Calder and se- cured his pledge of aid in securing the "property at the Ferry." Then Calder will visit the Governor of West Virginia at Wheeling where he will seek out $50,000 from the State, for the new school. Brother Bal task is to see the well-known abolitionist and intimate supporter of J Brown, to seek financial aid.

The planning is done here among the three. "An organization of some kind" is needed; it will be set forth on paper and circulated for approval and signature. Ball and Calder instruct Cheney to have Gener Howard's conditioned subscription made to this "provisional"committee,

"for he may die or [Pres.] Johnson remove him before the new college can be incorporated.

On the way home he also stops at New York and calls on Dr. Sears, the latter will send Brackett a circular. George Peabody, the merchan philanthropist wishes *"to encourage and aid common schools in the South; schools established, supported and superintended by the Southern people themselves." Normal schools will receive particular attention. Funds are not for "literary or professional schools." Cheney thinks normal schools might receive $75.00 to $100.00 for each student, equal divided between the institution for tuition and the student towards hi board. "Dr. Sears sees no reason why Storrs should not stand on the s ground as General Howard's college.

Dr. Sears will see General Howard shortly and is to visit the Sou inspecting schools. The Free Baptists must establish a "first class Normal School at the Ferry in connection with our University - Stanton University. (don't laugh)." Brother Cheney has caught the bug in Washington. General Howard's University must have sent his thoughts soaring.

Cheney is back at Bates after just one month. He hopes he has do the cause some good and no harm. He sends love "to the noble young women 'not a few', who are laboring for Christ's poor in the Valley." He adds he is circulating the "provisional committee" papers for signa ture to Brothers Day, Knowlton, Curtis, Brewster and Goodwin, but will first consult Brother Storrs.

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*Peabody Education Fund Circular

Two days later he writes from Lewiston that Brackett should info him "how many students could be gathered up for a normal school next fall— how many young men - how many girls? Then what shall we do for a teacher who understands how to teach teaching?"

Then back to the problem of a location. He will write General Howard and Secretary Stanton. What about Charles Town if the property at the Ferry is not available?

Two days later he writes again. "I did not get your letter in Ne York— what did you write? did you get my Richmond letter? Did you g my case? Through all the confusion, Brother Cheney has a singleness of purpose. He wishes Brackett to close the bargain at once on the Small farm on Bolivar Heights. If government property can not be procured f "our University", "we will put it on our land," (the Smallwood tract). The school should be at Harpers Ferry — the ground is historic — we c raise money for that place more readily — "we will have a John Brown Scholarship fund." "Get a good deed, there can be no loss on it." Ch is prepared to sell his house or borrow money if necessary.

Then Bro. Curtis writes more conservatively. He decidedly favors normal school as soon as a place can be found without incurring a debt. "No colleges nor universities for the Freedmen will be needed for years to come, and we had better attend to their present needs." Brother Cur is worried just now about money. "The truth is our funds are becoming low." "If the Pennsylvania brethren are so anxious to establish church will they tell us where to find the men, the money, and the people to make the churches of?" At the same time, early May, the optimistic

Brother Chaney telegraphs Brackett to "purchase the whole" Smallwood farm. Shall payment be made in Bank Bills or in U. S. gold bearing bonds?" "It will make no difference to me!"

At the annual meeting of the Home Mission Board in Northwood, New York on June 6, 1867, a body "composed of 25 gentlemen", was organized as "The Commission for the Promotion of Education in the South (continue balance of paragraph from p 6, Kate Anthony). Then in July is received the good news "like cold water to a thirsty soul", of a contribution of $6,000 to the new school from the Freedmen's Bureau. "Things are moving apace." During August Dr. Sears of the Peabody Fund writes that he will visit the Valley schools in September and will be at Harpers Ferry after the normal school is in operation. He is personally disposed to act favorably, but the grants are less than earlier believed to be required.

(later-- quote 8/27/67 letter, middle pp.)

In the meantime the descriptive and moving circular of August 15, 1867 is issued at Dover, New Hampshire by "the Commission for the Promotion of Education in the South." The membership of "twenty-five gentlemen" is listed with the exception of one unknown abolitionist, and contains in addition to the familiar NYB names which have appeared so frequently in these pages, the erstwhile Hon. W. P. Fessenden, Secretary of the Treasury to Abraham Lincoln, now United States Senator from Maine, and Frederick Douglass, now of New York.

Douglass is too often characterized solely as the "great Negro orator." While this description is deserved, Douglass had many other

qualities of intellect and leadership. Apparently the only Negro amon the Convention, at his present age of 50, he had already distinguished himself in a number of directions, more dramatically as a participant with the New England group in the plans of John Brown, as an active co ductor in the Underground Railroad, and more peacefully as the editor the Negro and abolitionist newspaper, the North Star.

The use of this name had carried significance. It was a steadfas point, of course, but basically, it was the great and unmoving beacon which the escaping slave might follow to bring himself across the Mason Dixon Line and into a sympathetic territory.

Douglass' son Lewis was the original sergeant-major of the Negro 54th Massachusetts Regiment, commanded by Col. Robert Gould Shaw who le these troops against Fort Wagner, South Carolina, where Shaw fell dead across the fort's ramparts. First Lieutenant Francis Lee Higginson com manded Company I of the Regiment. Soon he was to have his own regiment command of the / ? first Federal unit of colored troops, the First South Carol Volunteers. Another son also served in Shaw's unit.

Douglass was a witty man which undoubtedly accounts for his succes on the platform. Upon his second marriage in 1884 to a white woman, the was criticism. He responded that he was impartial *"his first wife was the color of my mother, and the second, the color of my father." The editorship continued until the Civil War, afterwards his interest was i reconstruction, education including industrial. He was Marshal and R. of Deeds of the District of Columbia by presidential appointment and also minister and consul general to Haiti.

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*W. E. B. DuBois, in Dictionary of American Biography.

Senator Fessenden we are familiar with. The other "new" names are only few, although important: General C. H. Howard, was brother to General Oliver O. Howard, and an Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau. It was he apparently, who helped in the detailed work which lead to his brother's later approval of the transfer of the Armory property to the new school.

In the same relationship was Captain D. J. Young of the U. S. Arm who supervised, really as caretaker, the government properties at Harp Ferry. Among the earliest trustees, he helped in the acquisition of t buildings.

The Circular's statement of purpose is to clear and so praiseworth that a considerable portion of it should be quoted:

Later: (6 selected paragraphs to be quoted).

With this stirring series of objectives as their banner, the documents commenced their solicitation. As we shall see, the overwhelming first came from the Federal Government through the Freedmen's Bureau and fro the Army, but John Storer's gift was the largest in money, and many a Baptist family contributed what they could, sometimes after mortgaging a farm or home.

In late September, the 25th, 1867, Silas Curtis, E. A. Steelsmith, George T. Day, J. N. Brewster, Isaac D. Stewart, James Calder and Nathn Brackett, Hamilton E. Hoyt and Capt.Daniel J. Young of Harpers Ferry "agree to unite and become a Corporation to be known as the Storer Coll in Western Virginia for the education of pupils of both sexes, and with out respect to color."

Three weeks later, October 14, 1867, the State of West Virginia issued the certificate "for an institution of learning, embracing a normal school, an academy and a college for teaching all classes of persons, without distinction of color." The certificate is to expire in just over three months, or December 31, 1867, when hopefully a char ter for the college will have been received from the West Virginia Sta Legislature.

This charter did not materialize until passed by the West Virgini Legislature on March 3, 1868. Its passage was bitterly opposed and ul timately was adopted (in the Senate) by a margin of only one vote. Th credit for success against a hostile legislature is granted to the Hon _____Hale of New Creek, West Virginia, a member of that body and a early trustee of the college-to-be, but not a Freewill Baptist.

In the meantime the Reverend Silas Curtis and the Reverend J. D. Stewart had followed Cheney's spring visit with a trip of their own, visiting various towns of the Mission and coming to the conclusion that Harpers Ferry was the most suitable location for such a school.

About this time, May or early June, Dr. Cheney was able to convin others of the wisdom of venturing a considerable sum in the purchase o the farm on the southeast slope of Bolivar Heights overlooking Harpers Ferry and known as the Smallwood property. The reasoning behind the ac quisition was stated by Brackett to be as a sort of insurance against failure to secure the greatly desired government land and buildings on Camp Hill. The hope that, whether or not the farm would be needed as a site for the school, its proximity to Harpers Ferry and its

ignificent watercourse would make it valuable to the college to sell off for building lots", was realized only to a limited extent.

It should be appreciated that the Freewill Baptist leaders were convinced that "right would prevail", and "virtue triumph". All these preparations were made without either the availability of the matching funds to John Storer's gift, the possession of land or buildings, and certainly much of a source of continuous income, or anything like an adequate teaching staff.

It was late in June, with only six months to go to meet Storer's January first deadline, before any marked success --- raising money occurred. "Inspiration came" to the Reverend George H. Ball of New York, and at a Yearly Meeting at Fairport, New York, by one of the great efforts of his life." The good doctor moved his audience, largely composed of Free Baptist ministers of a few hundred dollars a year, to pledge nearly double the sum required above the $6,000. from the Bureau

While all the preparatory work was going on the "Normal Department of Storer College" opened in the Lockwood House on October 2nd, 1867, with nineteen pupils all above the second reader, one as high as the fifth; Mrs. (Mr.?) M.W.L.Smith, assistant principal in charge. The primary school taught by Mrs. M. C. Everlett Strout in the adjoining room,was much larger.

Brackett says that the backless benches and lack of desks were not reckoned a hardship in those days. The best room in the house had now become available for use, with the passing of the German soldier and th

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* Freewill Baptist pamphlet by N.C.Brackett, These cost 6¢ a dozen,40¢ a hundred and were used for various proselyting purposes.

departure of his family. The big holes left by the war in the wall, towards Maryland Heights had taken on the "appearance of wounds beginning to heal."

Soon after the opening of the school in October, the Reverend A. H. Norvell came to the Mission both the religious and educational work "which were one to him." He had with him his wife, a young son, and a younger daughter. Brackett's family now consisted of his wife and an infant son. Years later Mrs. Brackett dated the arrival of the Reverend Norvell to this time "because he came near stepping on myBabb once as he was lying kicking on a rug in our common sitting room, and I couldn't go to the service when he preached because the baby thought he was talking to him and responded."

One may wonder how the nine rooms in Lockwood, all that were then in the possession of the Mission could answer all the purposes of that first winter. The two south rooms on the first floor were appropriated to schools and church. Another, the northwest room, was kitchen and dining room for the entire household. The fourth room with its glorious views from the windows and a curtained bed in the corner, was both family sitting room and guest chamber.

Brackett reports a good number of visitors that first winter, and sometimes beds had to be improvised in schoolrooms and kitchen, especially at the homecoming of the teachers from the mission schools during the holidays. Both schoolrooms were in use all day Sunday for

church purposes, also on two evenings of the week, and during "the long powerful revival every evening, till late at night, Brother Norrell was said to be particularly effective in these revivals," putting into them such earnestness of spirit, such persistent labor by day and night, and physical exposure, especially the long night revival services, as few men could endure.

His meetings were described thus: "he never sought to arouse the noisy demonstrations so characteristic of worship in those days, but rather to substitute for them, reflection, high resolves and honest purposes, yet every now and then the storm would come with such tremendous violence, the air ringing with such wild hallelujahs, as nearly to take away the senses of one not accustomed to it. At such times, with wide open windows and doors, we had the prostrate forms of the shouters carried out of the doors, and sang a long metre hymn 'till order was restored and then went on with the meeting."

Through it all Brother Norrell's tear-stained face would shine like the face of an angel as his conception of the plan of salvation became so vivid and his longing to save men so intense." As Brother Brackett said this was surely a busy and exciting atmosphere as the little school got underway.

After the first Christmas the number of pupils in the Normal Department increased to thirty-six and became seventy-five before the close of the session. Mrs. Brackett later said that in these earliest

days no one thought of "beginning anything" until after Christmas. "After Christmas seems to have been when everything began before the war." The slaves "all went home at that time and back to their old or to their new places of service when the festivities were over after New Years."

Brackett reminds one that the earliest period of Storer College history was the "most intense and bitter of the Andrew Johnson reconstruction regime", including the impeachment trial of the President in March, 1868. It is little wonder that the winter of 1867 and 1868 was a time of both activity and anxiety. It would not be until December 1868 that the four impressive buildings and the surrounding land would be won. Now the important thing was to make the unlocated normal school an"operating reality" and to justify legally the gift of John Storer. Actually the gift became a bequest for that generous man died, aged seventy, on October 23, 1867, only three weeks after the "college" to be named in his honor,had opened its doors.

The encounter of the donor's wishes was concerned that the heirs of Mr. Storer would challenge the gift, and he had advised Brother Brackett that every "_____and _____" of the gift must be complied with, but with the ultimate raising of the matching funds, the money was turned over. Moreover, although Mr. Storer had expressed only an oral wish, the heirs added, without obligation other than moral, an additional $1,000.00 for the library, as Mrs. Storer had requested.

But there were still some anxious days until January 1st. The school was open, the handful of teachers and Brother Morrell were on hand, but

little was yet certain regarding the future.

The concluding and intensified efforts commenced around Thanksgiving Day. The six thousand dollars from the Freedmen's Bureau had recently been received and there was much rejoicing over that. Senate Fessenden had John Shearer's final instructions regarding his gift, which indicated that the ten thousand dollars must be on hand and invested on or before the first of January. The Treasurer of the Free-will Baptists must take oath to this effect. Isaac Stewart writes Bro Dover on December 6th, "if it is not shown to be raised, all is lost."

The brethren are busy and surely in this project so dear to their hearts and their convictions of duty. On December 17th, only two week from the time of decision, Brother George Day sends Brother Brackett some practical advice: "Whatever amount of time, painstaking, lobbying buttonholing, etc.,etc. of a reasonable and decent sort may be necessary or deem necessary to success should be unhesitatingly accepted. I don presume it is pleasant, but I trust you will be able "to bear the cross

By December 19th there is some nervousness. There is no word yet from Senator Fessenden. An idea has developed. Isaac Stewart writes Brother Brackett that they will wait until December 23rd, then "go to the Bank and have whatever may be necessary above the $6500.00 in the farm and the receipts from our agents, invest it in the Printing Establishment /which published the denomination's Morning Star/ and send you the legal papers-- hold yourself in readiness to take them to Senat Fessenden in Washington immediately."

On December 23rd, Brother Day writes "we hurry off the documents this morning." The day after Christmas, Brother Stewart sends letters of introduction to congressmen who may be helpful: Sen."Patterson is one of my personal friends, and a Christian man." Rep.He also from New Hampshire, "is member from this district, but a stranger to me. He is an anti-slavery man, dyed in the wool." Two days later Stewart answers Brackett's telegram: "Sent proof of $3500.00 invested on Monday. Go to Washington Wednesday."

On the 30th Brother James Calder of Harrisburg is calm enough to write Brackett to please forward his application for renewal of his special rate ticket on the B & O Railroad. On the same day Stewart agai writes, "We have done everything we could to secure the Storer gift."

In early January, the matter is finally consumated. January 1st, however, was hectic. On that morning a telegram was received at Dover stating that the money must be actually collected and invested, notes an pledges would not be accepted. Brothers Stewart and Brunter, the only two available this final day of grace. Together they persuaded a bank t loan them personally on their own notes sufficient to cover the pledges and promises of the brethren on hand or in the hands of their agents. Tho' a blizzard raged, telegraphic communication between Stewart at Dover and Brackett at the Willard Hotel in Washington _____and thus was secured the endowment of John Storer, and a name for the college-to-l There would still be some delays and concern among the Baptists, as Senat Fessenden delayed until satisfied as to all the proprieties. Now they could turn to him and to Representative James Garfield for aid in securi the government buildings and the surrounding seven acres of land.

And at Wheeling the Hon. J. C. Hoke is struggling with the West Virginia Legislature regarding the charter. In February, 1868 he writes Brackett that he must remove his name from the charter, since members of the legislature, and he is one, may not vote on a measure in which they are personally interested.

Judge Hoke describes the attitude of the legislatures "the denominational feature is not half as obnoxious as the mingling of the races. However, I think we can pass it, but it is something new."

The impeachment proceedings against President Johnson are helping some of the school's projects: "the thunder at Washington suggests a storm which may absorb the entire public attention and so postpone the action upon the Harpers Ferry property. Do you hear anything decisive from the application for the Charter?"

On March 3rd, as we have noted, all doubts were resolved and the Charter was granted, but by a margin of one vote only, the vote of Judge Hoke who had qualified himself by removing his name from the list of trustees.

In June General Garfield writes that a House Committee has authorized him to report favorably the bill which will make the Armory property available in December, 1868.

This is accomplished by the Act of December 3, 1868 and again there is much rejoicing and thanksgiving. Yet there are delays in the transfer and occupancy. The community is not entirely happy with the new school. It will be a full year, to December 1869, before the newly granted buildings, which will constitute the school for nearly a century, can be occupied. The contributions of the Freedmen's Bureau were truly generous

and valuable. The first donation of $500. came in September 1867 in time to repair much of the war damage to Lockwood House by the time the school was fully underway there that October. As we have seen another promised $6,000 was paid over soon after the school opened. Another $4, came to renovate the shattered government buildings and about $1500. for operating expenses. An important sum of an additional $4,000. was allo in 1868 for the first "new" building, Lincoln Hall, completed in 1870 an serving at first as a boy's dormitory. This four-story frame building lasted almost forty years, when it was destroyed by fire on April 12, 19 It was then immediately replaced by a good-looking stone building named in honor of Nathan Brackett. All in all the Freedmen's Bureau is credited wit total grants to the school of $18,000. during the Bureau's lifetime in e ational assistance.

In the meantime Brackett is engaged in many other things. The Free men's Bureau office for education in Virginia, located at _____ Virginia, writes in May, 1869 that it is not justified in paying more th $10. per month for the Fort Republic or any similar school. The Superin tendent writes Brackett, "there are many to be served, and that is as th as we shall be able to spread the plaster." Lesser superintendents of s schools in the Valley or in nearby Maryland write for modest amounts; $5 for the first quarter of 1870 from Brother Baker at Laytonville. S. J. Gould writes in June 1870 also from Smithfield, Maine that he has close his school in the South for the present, and came to Maine where "wages are very good until after haying."

Other homely happenings include a letter dated Christmas Day, 1870 from Brother Curtis describing gifts from him and also the Freewill Baptist Church at Concord, thirty- to thirty-five dollars each, twenty five dollars to finish a wing room, and something under ten dollars to furnish it.

More important things occupied the 1870's. At the beginning of the decade the Freedmen's Bureau was to wind up its educational assistance programs. In September, 1870, J. W. Alvord, General Superintend of the Bureau, wrote Brackett a letter in the form of five questions a ing to learn from experienced persons, and "reliable" ones what might be done in this field by "the several states or by the freedmen themse without the aid from general Government." Alvord assumed that the "northern societies" would continue to operate to some extent.

Alvord inquires whether there is an efficient public school syste in West Virginia "embracing all classes", if not local patronage by in fluential persons, white or black. Are freedmen capable of carrying o efficiently their own schools? And more basically is the real questio "What will be the general effect if schools for freedmen should now largely fall off in number and interest?

Unhappily we do not have Brackett's response. We do know however that the devoted church people would endeavor to fill the gap, and pro ceed on a completely benevolent basis.

By 1890 they had Lincoln Hall for the boys. Lockwood House and t Superintendent's Clerk's office adjoining were variously used as quart

for Brackett or Morrell and for dormitories for the girls. The Commanding Superintendent's Quarters at the westend of the new campus on Camp Hill, was converted into rooms for a chapel and school purposes, and so dedicated December 23, 1869.

In 1873 the effort commenced for a girl's boarding hall, to relieve the need for better accommodations. *"All possible space in the teachers' homes, every nook and cranny, was crowded with these freed young women." It was not until May 30, 1876 that Myrtle Hall was dedicated, "free from debt, under the auspices of the Women's Missionary Society, and it was completed for occupancy in 1877. Myrtle Hall served for many years, until after its demolition after the college closed its doors.

Its original name "Myrtle" was derived from the same name born by the denomination's Sunday School paper. It's final designation, Mosher Hall was in honor of Mrs. Frances Stewart Mosher, daughter of Isaac Stewart, wife of Dr. George F. Mosher, president of Hillsdale College from 1885 to _____. Mrs. Mosher as editor from 1874 to 1881 of the Myrtle, carried much of the responsibility of assembling the many large and small contributions which eventually completed the girls' much needed dormitory.

Mrs. Mosher was an accomplished woman and not only served many years as a trustee of Storer, but also taught French and History on her husband's academic staff at Hillsdale. Perhaps more interestingly, a

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*Historical Sketch, 1891, by Miss Kate J. Anthony.

daughter Frances, married her classmate Henry McDonald, destined in 1898 to become principal and president of Storer, and to so continue for the long term of forty-five years.

Two other important buildings were completed in the nineteenth century. More closely related to the earlier days of building was the radical conversion of the old Superintendent's Quarters already described as receiving visits fromPresident Lincoln and General Lee.

The Curtis Memorial Church, named after the Reverend Silas Curtis was completed in 1892.

The four government buildings received in 1868 were essentially similar in design, size and material. Practically rectangular, they were of two stories and a basement each, with either an ell or an adjoining stable or utility building. Of these the Superintendent's Quarters were somewhat more impressive as befitted the senior rank of its occupant.

In 1881 the generous sum of $5,000. was contributed by Lewis W. Anthony, a Freewill Baptist and merchant of Providence, Rhode Island. Mr. and Mrs. Anthony had lost five of their eight children and their gift memorialized these children.

This money with an additional matching fund of the same amount was used to complete an impressive main building containing class rooms, an auditorium or chapel and executive offices. This was accomplished by converting the Superintendent's quarters into the south wing of the building. One hundred and thirty feet long, with a new north wing essentially identical to the old Quarters, all connected by a new main body of the

building which was to supply the principal additional space in the three contiguous units. The expansion and alteration was completed in 1882.

This slightly over a decade of physical growth was to represent the major additions to the college's plant until the turn of the century, and the emergence of new leadership and new objectives responsive to the requirements of the twentieth century.

Obviously bricks and mortar are of historic interest and when one considers the matter, it is perhaps surprising that more conversion was not undertaken of the old government buildings in their new usefulness To be sure, in 1883 a mansard roof covering ten new rooms was placed atop Lockwood, but otherwise the old Armory buildings were little alte over a century.

The buildings and the other physical facilities set aside the more important intellectual atmosphere and progress must be dealt with. What can one say of the activities and offerings of the 1870's, as the school accomplished its first decade in the turmoil of reconstruction a a suddenly burgeoning nation.

The college catalogue best tells the story. It is also interestin to consider the early progress of that sister but urban institution, Howard University, founded at Washington in 1867, and strangely enough having as its first class, four daughters of trustees, none of whom was colored. We may look at Storer's Catalogues first.

The first catalogue was issued in 1869 as a "Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Storer College, Normal Department, located at

Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, 1869." Until the last catalogue was published in _____for the years 195_ & _____, these pamphlets are a primary source of information for courses offered, faculty members, students in attendance as well as regulations, standards and physical and educational facilities.

The 1869 issue was printed by (L)ibby and Co.,Dover, New Hampshir The next year however, that task was performed by the denomination itself, through the Freewill Baptist Printing Establishment, in the same city.

*First President of the Board of Trustees was the Reverend James Calder of Harrisburg, a point not too far distant for reasonably ready communication if necessary. The Reverend Brackett served as Secretary and Treasurer, member of the Executive Board of the Trustees, and as Principal of the school.

**"The initial purpose was to serve as a Normal School or Academy to best meet the wants of the colored people for whose benefit it is especially designed", stated the 1869 Catalogue and a number of subsequent issues, and further that "it is the design that this Institution shall ultimately become a college."

The regular charge for tuition to students in the regular course of study if $3. per term, or $9. per year, but "certificates of Scholarships, guaranteeing five years of instruction in the Institution",

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*"A College in Secessia,"1960 by Alfred Mongin

**Ibid.

could be obtained from the Treasurer by the payment of $20."in advance Room rent was also $3. per term and Board "does not exceed $2. per wee Students could be furnished with employment to some extent, so that th could partially defray expenses. * "Expenses are reduced as low as pos- sible so that none who are really anxious for an education shall be de barred from the privileges of study." Part or all of the tuition and room rent might be abated in the case of indigent students.

The early catalogues carried similar notices of terms of admissi and the character and aims of the training and discipline. ** A compl education includes moral and physical culture as well as intellectual, and it is the purpose of the managers of this Institution to have all these ends in view. While the discipline of the School is strict, it is mild and persuasive."

The teachers would spare no pains to inculcate good morals, habit of industry and self-dependence. "The young man here receives counsel and sympathy, learns what constitutes correct living, and becomes qual fied for the great work of life." Attendance upon the devotions of th school and divine worship were to be rigidly enforced, yet "the parti- cular place of public worship may be determined by the scholars them- selves, or by their parents."

The first and apparently basic condition for admission to the sch was "satisfactory evidence of a good moral character." The applicant, before entering upon the "Regular Course of Study", embracing three ye

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*Catalogue, 1870

**Ibid.

must have a "good knowledge of the elements of Reading, Spelling, Penmanship and Geography, and Mental Arithmetic." A "Preparatory Department" would receive students not able to pass a satisfactory examination for admission to the Regular Course.

The actual curriculum is equally simple and adjusted to the situation prevailing: in general a desire for the magic of some degree of learning but a very limited conception of how to go about it, coupled with great deficiencies in the background requirements. The Regular Course sets forth this curriculum: First year,etc. (p.10 of 1870)/follow with text books/ (p.10 and 11 of Catalogue for 1870 - see XXX).

*The formality of the proceedings was also most flexible. When in residence students were required to attend all classes and recitations, but could attend intermittently for short or long periods of time depending upon personal responsibilities and finances.

Even twenty years later in 1889, admission standards were certainly not stringent, bearing in mind that a Normal School then, and a College later, was the concept. The candidate in 1889 must be at least 13 years of age, able to write, read in the Fourth Reader and to pass an examination in the simple rules of arithmetic. Knowing the truly dedicated spirit of the missionaries and teachers now conducting the school - Bro. Nathan Brackett and his wife, Louise, the Reverend A. H. Morrell, as well as Nathan's sister _____, and a handful of assistants and visiting and lecturing trustees, it is likely that even

*Catalogue 1869

the entrance requirements above noted, were relaxed in favor of tu-
toring, when an apparently earnest candidate appeared.

The minimum age was unmatched at the upper level, apparently more
mature age was no bar, although various warnings were given. "A heart
welcome is extended to those who had no opportunity to get an educati
while they were young; but they are advised to carefully consider bef
they come, whether they can submit cheerfully to all the regulations
that are needed, in so large a company of young people, to make good
order and effective study possible."

In the early 1880's persons of any state of advancement were ad-
mitted on any day of the session and placed in the classes appropriate
after an examination. Similarly students might be promoted whenever
their proficiency merited it. Another warning was to the effect that
those attending school for only a few months each, while possibly bein
able to work to advantage, yet should not expect to be advanced as rap
idly as if they attended longer terms.

Finally, "Diplomas" were issued each year at the anniversary of t
school held at the close of the Summer Term, to those who had satis-
factorily completed the three years' Course of Study. Members of the
graduating class were to receive "distinction" in proportion to their
prospective rank, based on their records of merits and demerits.

The library facilities were somewhat limited but probably adequat
for the early needs. In 1870, half of John Storer's thousand dollar
gift for books had been expended. Donations of books from other frien

and an annual grant of sixty dollars' worth of the publications of the American Tract Society of Boston, resulted at this time in a library of about six hundred volumes.

In 1870 the school was well underway. By that time a total of _____ students are listed, many doubtless on a part time basis only. The upper, or First Class listed ____boys and ____girls, the Second Class, a total of eighteen, while the Third Class was more extensive, boasting forty-nine, of which just over one-half were girls or women. The preliminary "Preparatory Class" contained ninety-two. As a sad side note, the 1870 catalogue indicates that three members of the Bateman family were drowned in the flood of that (?) year. Gradually the total number of enrollees increased from the original list of 96 in September, 1869. This included only one sufficiently advanced to be rated as the "First Class", seventeen were "Second Classmen", fifty three were "Third Classmen", and twenty-five were in the Preparatory Section, learning the fundamentals of reading, spelling, penmanship, geography and "Mental Arithmetic."*

The exact numbers seem to have sometimes escaped the Principal and his staff from time to time, and this is not surprising, considering the flexibility of attendance standards. In 1870 we have been there 169; in 1872, 223.** During the years between 1867 and 1900, the largest student body numbered 273, in 1869. During the first forty years of the college the number in the student body averaged 176 men and women, or youths.

The Normal School division graduated eight, --etc.

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*Catalogue 1869; p.5-9

** A College in Sequoia, 1960. Newsin.

Few of the earliest students are listed as coming from any distance, although practically it is likely that many of the attendants at this time may have come up the Valley in the War years or immediately thereafter. While later years would see an occasional visitor from Africa or other distant places, in general, the school was to draw most of its pupils from nearby counties, with a considerable number also from adjoining states.

Yet despite a degree of parochialism which appears to gradually descend upon the school, after the initial days of confusion and primary undertakings, a truly generous contribution was made to the available staff of school teachers in the general area. Mrs. Brackett estimated at one time, that one hundred teachers were developed* the first two years. Subsequent classes turned out their trainees with at least some learning from the written word, and the strictly applied schooling.

**On September 30, 1872 there was added for the first time, the Seminary Course, the "first academic department", offering a four-year course in the classics, to include instruction in Latin, Greek, German, French, Algebra, Geometry, Botany, Shakespeare and Astronomy. When this course languished in 1896, in favor of more practical training, twenty-five students had completed this course, an average of only one each year.

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*Check source.

**Catalogue, 1872, p.13

*By 1875, when most emphasis was still upon those whose first need was fundamental literacy, the Primary Department pupils studied from McGuffey's Reader, Hooker's Book of Nature, Mary L. Hall's First Lessons in Geography and Thompson's Rudiments of Arithmetic. **It is interesting to note that a dozen years in 1887, after the "college" had accomplished a history of twenty years, that the texts by Hooker, Hall and Thompson still were listed; the others had been supplanted by Scribner's Geographical Reader and Harvey's Primary Speller.

* Catalogue, 1873-75, p.19

**Catalogue, 1875-87, p.25

A STRUGGLING CONTEMPORARY

There was no false pride of academic scholarships, indeed there was no reason for it, yet lest one think that this simplicity of study structure, and aim, was unique, it is instructive to consider a contemporary school which was destined eventually to ultimately outlive most of the early Negro schools, although at different and varying periods during the century of their histories, various other institutions advanced at greater _____.

Howard University was conceived principally as an aid of relief measure against the large northward movement of colored folk, stimulated by the word of freedom at War's end. In connection with the Freewill Baptists, the American Missionary Association and all the other church and lay aid agencies, it has been noted that these bewildered people flowed first to the more permanent military installations or bases, and then up the rivers and valleys, always northward. Hampton Roads, Beaufort, the Sea Islands, and for the Free Baptists, Harpers Ferry and Cairo, Illinois were the first major points of contact.

*At Washington a group of military leaders and prominent white citizens, a number of them stalwart members of the Congregational Church, met in November, 1866 to face the problem. General Oliver Otis Howard, a founder of the First Congregational Church in Washington

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*"Howard University" by Walter Dyson, 1941, p.50

already since May 13, 1865, by recommendation of President Lincoln and action of President Johnson, Commissioner of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, participated actively in the planning, and through the Bureau, materially assisted in the establishment of the school.

[1]Howard stated the problem starkly: "the freedmen moved from community to community with all 'their poverty and wretchedness, their raggedness and nakedness, their hunger and thirst, their weakness and sickness'." [2] From 1860 to 1870, the Negro population of the District of Columbia increased from 10,000 to 43,000 persons. [3]"About 27,000 Negroes out of a total population of 31,549 were unemployed in Washington and Georgetown during 1866-1867; 10,181 of them were patients in the government hospitals."

Professor Dyson points out that some other schools were available in Washington, as well as relief facilities, at the time the new school was proposed, [4]"It was to assist these agencies already at work educating the ignorant and alleviating personal suffering in the District of Columbia and in the country at large that Howard University was founded." These were basic and rudimentary needs, and General Howard

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1 Quoted by Dyson, p.30

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid, p.40

4 Dyson, p.41, quoting Howard's Autobiography, II, p.393, 394 (emphasis supplied.)

and his associates knew, indeed felt deeply within themselves that such wants must be satisfied if all they had fought and suffered for was to have any ultimate meaning.

Howard himself was the embodiment to the public of the "Christian Hero", as one of his [1] biographies is titled. The funeral oration in 1909 referred to "the record of this other great soldier of the Cross whose life and death we commemorate today."

In the midst of the misery and destitution, General Howard visits the former government barracks on private land, where so many of the freedmen had found temporary shelter. The need was obvious and one of the more permanent values of the relief measures was the University.

It must not be believed that an elaborate institution developed at once. Courses and studies offered appear little different than those made available at the same period to the scholars at the sister institution at Harpers Ferry.

There is an interesting small link between Storer College and General Howard personally, besides the generous assistance in the form of buildings, land and money, from the Freedmen's Bureau. General Howard suffered under two extensive investigations into his administration of the Bureau's affairs, from which he emerged unscathed, with the possible exception of a feeling best summarized by his friend and

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1 "Howard, the Christian Hero", by Laura C. Holloway, New York, 1885

superior, General W. T. Sherman.[1] In a letter to General James A. Garfield on December 30, 1880, General Sherman characterized Howard as "a brave man, and a conscientious one, but credulous, easily used and influenced, ... as a business man I have not the faith in him our President /Grant/ has."

[2]However, our point involves the Congressional investigation of 1870. Dyson summarized the charges against General Howard as follows: "First, that the money contributed by General Howard /thru the Freedmen's Bureau/ to certain private corporations was illegally given; second, that a group of men were using the Freedmen's Bureau for their financial and political interests and for the interest of their relatives and friends."

Taking the latter charge first, it is generally accepted that the size of the task, four million freedmen and many impoverished white Southern farmers, the emotions and politics of the times, and the temporary and complicated nature of the assistance and educational programs surrounded with the atmosphere of an administration whose head w being tried by the Congress in impeachment proceedings; could hardly b conducive to efficient, organized and standardized treatment of even a much simpler problem.

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[1]Quoted by Dyson, p.495-6

[2]Dyson, p.17

All in all, it may be a wonder that more sensational scandals and dramatic blunders did not take place, than actually appears to be the case. The fact that General Howard's own brother Charles H. Howard, a brevetted Brigadier, served as an important Assistant Commissioner of the Bureau, must have added some fuel to the public imagination.

The first charge was almost amusing. Turning to the list of suspect corporations, one might expect to find, from the charges, recipients on the order, let us say, of the Credit Mobilier(?). Instead, for a total of just over one million dollars by May, 1870, the Bureau had contributed $529,000 to Howard University, $243,750. to the American Missionary Association, and $230,750. to twenty schools, among which benefited Berea College, 1855; Wilberforce University, 1857; Lincoln Institute at Oxford, Pennsylvania, founded as _____Institute in 185_; the three earliest schools, as well as Atlanta University whose home city was captured and burned by General Sherman with General Howard commanding his right wing and also little Storer College which the records lists as having *received at that time $11,500.

Atlanta was the largest beneficiary with $37,750; Lincoln received $15,609.46; Berea, $19,000; Wilberforce, $3,000; Fisk, $10,254; and Oberlin, $5,000.

As has been noted, General Howard was exonerated of intentional wrong doing, and was able to continue his public philanthropy until the

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*Howard Investigation, "Minority Report, 1870," p.30; quoted by Dyer.

Bureau wound up its affairs in 1872, the latter period after 1869 being almost exclusively devoted to educational activities.

Returning to Howard University itself, which is used in a comparative fashion to measure the problems and accomplishments of Storer College in its more withdrawn atmosphere some miles from Washington, we find that its first class room instruction, commencing May 1, 1867, catered to four white girls, the daughters of members of the original Board of Trustees, * "It was the Normal Department only which opened on May 1st." Soon there was added a "Preparatory Department", then in order to supply the necessary training for pupils to enter these two departments, came a "Model School, including elementar grades, A, B, C, and D, established in the same building. Next it was necessary to set up an "ungraded class" to prepare pupils for the "Model School." "In this way, [1] Howard University went down to the people", as indeed it must if it was to develop a student body at all.

The comparison with Storer in the earlier days is quite clear. While Washington was surely a larger theater, the basic problem was the absence of almost any education at all, combined with a tremendous need for teachers and other workers. [2] Dyson says that married men appli

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* Dyson, p.44

1 " p.45

2 " p.47

to enter in the early years, and asked to bring their wives.[1] Many brought with them working tools such as picks, shovels and spades. Dyson also frankly states that the earliest standards were too high for the average Negro applicant. In 1877 the Minutes of the College Faculty implied that the College probably was no more than a "first class high school in Massachusetts. This also may have been too high praise. The candidates for training with notable exceptions could not possibly sustain a truly high level of instruction in the beginning.

The school was not blessed with the same continuity of direction as at Storer. The first president served less than six months; the second, almost a year and a half. General Howard, the third president is credited with about five years, from 1869 to 1874, but part of this time, particularly after 1872,[2] when the termination of the Freedmen's Bureau "stripped Howard completely of his former powerful influence", there existed a period of considerable confusion, only to be relieved by the development of the office of the dean. Many things had been involved, the possibility that the University trustees might be dominated exclusively by the Congregational Church, or the American Missionary Association, or that the Negro trustees, including Frederick Douglass might be pushed aside. The severe business crisis of 1873 did not alleviate the difficulties of the period for the still struggling school.

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[1] Dyson, p.52

[2] " p.56

The first two decades of Howard are really a story of shifting emphasis and the creation and dissolution of a large number of "schools", or "departments", in an effort to find a pattern of useful services. As at Storer, the first candidate material was limited in capacity. Early medical and law schools religious and commercial, agricultural or industrial divisions waxed and waned. The classics w taught and later abandoned or set aside for more practical courses.

Through it all one may wonder whether the trustees and the faculty or the students were acquiring the greater education. Perhaps the mos obvious objective comparison to Storer College was the multiplicity of interests at Howard, undoubtedly engendered by a gradually larger student body feeding from a much more extensive community, and stimulated or stirred by a more cosmopolitan body of trustees, ranging from Presi dent Grant, who served as an Honorary Board member of sixteen years until 1885, in later years an extensive list of secretaries of the Interior, and from the beginning, a considerable number of Senators an Congressmen.

Both schools commenced simply enough. One under the protective w of a particularly dedicated band of deeply religious churchmen, the Fr Baptists, conducting a rural school in at first hostile territory as t might have managed a similar academy in northern New England. The oth school, Howard, must also commence with the same handicaps of an inexperienced and untrained student body, and a similarly inexperienced but hopeful faculty and trustees, in the atmosphere of the capitol city. The final development of Howard perhaps came well into the twentieth century, when the problems of the 1930's combined with special

unemployment handicaps of Negroes, to renew attention to the preparation of that race for economic survival and potential contribution to society.

Historian Walter Dyson of Howard outlines the steps which lead to the recognition of the school hitherto largely unappreciated [1] capabili

From February 1, 1929 to December 13, 1931 a group of men called gether by the Secretary of the Interior, including representatives of Congress, the Executive Branch, the Office of Education, Howard Univer sity and private philanthropic groups, including the General Education Board, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Rosenwald Foundation, "met t consider the problem of educating the Negro in the United States, and the relation which the Federal government and private philanthropy sho sustain toward the control and support of Negro Education."

This series of round table meetings had been preceded by five ex-cellent reports by competent authorities over two decades between 1909 1928, emphasizing the need of state and national aid for Negro educati Two of these reports particularly stressed the potentialities of the Medical School. All the reports [2] "pointed out directly or indirectly that Howard University, because of its foundation and location was wor of unlimited development."

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1 Dyson, p.440

2 " p.441

The concluding report of the series by the Office of Education of the Department of the *Interior in 1928, coincided with an Act of Congress, approved December 13, 1928, which legalized the appropriations of the Federal Government to Howard University.

- The round table conference recommended a ten year development program which commenced in 1931. The Federal Government agreed to appropriate an annual average sum of $1,100,000. The trustees from private sources were to supply an annual amount equal to one-third of the Federal appropriation in the beginning, with the objective that ultimately the Government would contribute not more than one-third of the total budget. From 1931 to 1936 a student body of about 1200 was to be provided for and at the end of the program in 1941 a college population of 4,000 might be provided for. "Howard University** was to be the capstone of Negro education by 1950."

The comparison with the cousin at Harpers Ferry ceased by the beginning of the 20th century, and very definitely when Howard's rich uncle, the Government, formally adopted it. General Howard's early pl had, not been far distant from those of the *** Freewill Baptists at St "It was the aim of Oliver O. Howard in the beginning to establish colo schools of every grade 'from the infant class to the university', and

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*Myrson, p.441

** Ibid.,p.442

*** " p.442.

soon as these schools were in active operation 'as in Massachusetts and Ohio' to transfer them from the care of the Federal Government. In this system of education Howard University was designed "to afford an opportunity of liberal education to freedmen and their children fro all parts of the United States',"

*But, then says Dyson, "the slow and unsteady growth of the endow ment funds and other income, and the irregularity and uncertainty of Federal support, made any consistent growth of the University impossib

Storrer in its own way had these problems with Federal Aid after t end of the Freedmen's Bureau educational program in 1872. The state o West Virginia contributed something over the years in compensation for educating the citizens of the state, but it was certainly irregular an uncertain.

The little Free Baptist denomination itself began to be absorbed into the main Baptist denomination, and the old and valiant elders had to give way to time. Friends of the Negro were always present in great or less degree, but the old heroes such as Howard, Senator William Fit Fessenden, Garfield, even Grant himself, gave way to the new America. The Negro would remain on the farm and plantation on the whole until after World War I, the thoughts of the nation were no longer upon him, but rather the new industrial and political America of McKinley and Roosevelt, of the factory, the city and the immigrant. By his very ob- vious presence in the urban community, the immigrant drew the attention of the socially minded; the philanthropist, the educator and the courts

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*Dyson, p.442

The Negro, his welfare and his problems disappeared from view into the little back country farms, where few schools were found, until the general awakening and movement occasioned by World War I. Even then as we have seen at Howard, two decades and a half dozen competent reports were required to produce a program and financial assistance on anything like an adequate scale.

By the second decade's end, 1920, it was probably too late for Storer. It had struggled and so had its trustees, courageously, but gone were the Christian teachers who "marched as to war." Gone were the founders of colleges white or negro, free or private. Now the question of the colleges and universities was survival, and survival depended on faculties, facilities and finances.

In April, 1931, Brother Brackett opened his heart to Brother Mars in a mood of unusual discouragement: "I do not think I can sleep well again, till I unburden myself a little to you ..... In this matter of colleges in West Virginia - my conviction is that we are not going to have two colleges in West Virginia. The question is can we have one? That depends on whether we have and hold the active interest of our Northern Free Baptists till that one [Storer] is endowed." ----"another college is out of the question, but they may maintain an Academy. I do not believe that can be done. Why - because there are in the little state of West Virginia now six Academies or Normal Schools having on the average four times the property [than Storer?] with an annuity from the State of $8,000. to be divided between them. Then each one is surrounded by an interested sympathetic community. Brother P is good and

earnest but he does not know what it is to found a school. Those schools all give free tuition and furnish books free to their pupils, —— when this mission is seriously crippled only to prolong the agony of that /other/school," and so felt Brother Brackett toward further academic competition for his little school.

It was a hard struggle and the generous spirit was hard to maint Over a decade had passed since the flags were furled, the tents folded and the private lives of the soldiers and their families were regained for the time being.

The clarion call, the evangelistic spirit in the cause of the emerging colored citizen, was lost in a multitude of other mighty objec tives, selfish as some of them might be. A generation that could and almost did deify Lincoln, Grant, the Grand Army of the Republic, and t Republican Party, had to give way to the age of economics, and the lif of the immigrant and the city.

Before Storer faced these final facts of racial educational life, it did its best to do two things that were typical of the middle perio of its growth. In the 1860's and 1890's there were accomplished some physical growth in the form of facilities, dormitories and the like.

After the windfall from the Federal Government of the four hundred old brick residences with the really impressive views from atop Camp H there came almost immediately a further boom of the new "Lincoln Hall" also through the friendly offices of General Howard and the Freedmen's Bureau.

Lincoln Hall was a wood frame building erected in 1868 which serv usefully as a dormitory, just to the south of Anthony Hall and its cla

rooms, until destroyed by fire in April, 1909. Nothing daunted, the College was able to construct a new greystone building of a hundred rooms, which served for the remainder of the life of the school, first as a men's dormitory and later for women students. Upon its completio in 1910 the new and striking building, with its splendid view from the heights up the Shenandoah Rivers, was named in honor of Nathan C. Brackett, who died in July of that year.

- After the acquisition of the College property by the National Par Service, the condition of Brackett Hall was such as to making its rest for more economical than any attempt to restore it to use.

The sister building, first used as a dormitory for girls was dedi cated in 1876, and completed in 1878. First known is Myrtle Hall, it took its name from a "Freewill Baptist publication for young people. The subscribers to the "Myrtle" had labored to assemble the funds for this project and its dedication was a matter of great pride. Tiny con tributions of pennies and dimes had paid for the building brick by bri over a five-year period. The Woman's Missionary Society appropriated $1,000. and the "Centennial Jubilee Singers" contributed $600.00. The four-story brick building was renamed Mosher Hall in honor of Mrs. Frances Stewart Mosher, daughter of the early worker and supporter of the school, the Reverend Isaac D. Stewart. Mrs. Mosher was really the basic link which connected three generations of Baptists with almost a of the constructive life of Storer. Mrs. Mosher's husband, George F. Mosher was president of Hillsdale College commencing in 1885, and their daughter Elizabeth, married her Hillsdale classmate Henry T. McDonald,

who ultimately, in 1899, was to become principal and president of Star and to thus serve until his retirement in 1914. Mrs. Mosher served as the editor of the "Myrtle" and a junior religious paper. "The Little Star" from 1874 to 1881, at much of the time that Dr. Mosher was associated with the "Morning Star" from 1869 to 1881, the last six years as editor. It was, of course, during this time that the campaign for Myrtle Hall was underway, and the change o f name was not very radical an action, since Mrs. Mosher's name had become nearly synonymous with her publication.

Equally dramatic was the provision of Anthony Hall. A devoted lay man of the Freewill Church, Deacon Lewis W. Anthony was a prominent and successful businessman of Providence, Rhode Island, one of the fertile grounds for the church's work in southern New England, where the tradition of Roger Williams still lingered. In 188_, Deacon Anthony contributed $5000. to the erection of this building, in memory of the five children which Mrs. Anthony and he had lost. Other donors assisted and the old Armory Superintendent's residence was incorporated in the building as its south wing. The overall length of 130 feet embraces the new wing almost identical in exterior design to the old south wing, with a connecting main hall of considerable impressiveness. In this hall from its completion in 1881 were located the classrooms, chapel, and lecture hall, and the officers of the school's officials, as well as for a number of years, the quarters for the principal's family.

The Reverend Silas P. Curtis is memorialized in the red brick church which bears his name. Dedicated in 1892, its memorial windows although simple reflect the frugal nature and condition of the various New Engla

missions which contributed to its erection. The Reverend E. W. Parker of Massachusetts was zealous in the completion of the church. Dr. McDonald prevailed upon Rhode Island friends to supply the pipe organ. The church served not only the college, as an auxiliary to the chapel in Anthony, but also sheltered its own congregation of Freedill Baptists almost all of whom had attended Storer. The simple granite memorial to the Reverend A. H. Norrell, one of the earliest mission workers in 1867, stands just south of the entry to the church.

MODERN WARS

INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

In 1891 Mrs. Mary P. DeWolfe of Illinois donated $2000. in memory of her husband, to supply a building for industrial education, largely carpentry for the boys. By 1934 this stone structure was used entirely for classes and laboratory work in the biological sciences. After World War II in 1947, a surplus frame structure with some equipment was acquired from the Federal Government, and the laboratories for biology chemistry and physics were housed there.

In addition to the main Anthony Memorial Hall, another building of field stone constituted the library of the college. Given by the heirs of Deacon Anthony, it was named the Lewis W. Anthony Building. A substantial cinder block addition was added in 1951?, as the trustees of the college strove to meet the standards for official educational accreditation which was never quite attained.

The final construction of importance evidenced that in 1940 when it was built, the college had a vitality and usefulness that justified generous assistance. The donor, Permelia Eastman Cook was a New England friend of the college, who recognized the need for a modern girls' dormitory combined with a Home Economics "laboratory" and practice "house and kitchens."

This is the total of the physical acquisitions of an important nature. In addition there were various generous financial gifts, large and small. Perhaps the largest was the Anthony fund of almost $35,000, as well as a gift of $10,000 from the Reverend John L. Sinclair, an

early supporter of Negro education as well as a president of the Free will Anti-Slavery Society. There were many small donations also, son undoubtedly larger in proportion to resources, than those already mentioned. The purposes of the gifts were many and it was not always easy to keep the smaller funds within the particular intent of each donor. All in all, the total endowment of the College, while it was still active, did not exceed $125,000. and probably averaged consider less than that, even in the better years. A rough inventory of gifts, made in 195_, by then President _____, is in the files of t college.

The DeWolfe "Industrial Building" in 1891, the Cook Home Economic Building and the Smallwood Farm were the physical manifestations of th attempt of Storer College to keep abreast of the practical aspects of Negro education. The Smallwood Farm dated from the very beginning of the school and offered the most specific type of helpful training avai able to either a white or colored youth. Post-war opportunities parti cularly in the South and West were largely agricultural and this embra a wide range of skills including blacksmithing, butchering and simple carpentry.

Sewing, cooking, preserving and all the other essential arts of nineteenth century rural living were taught the girls. The 18_ cata- logue states that each girl in order to graduate, must make her own dress for that occasion.

In adapting these simple forms of industrial education, Storer wa simply doing what came naturally. The students of all ages needed

guidance in the simplest things, later Booker Washington was to use the memorable expression "put down your bucket where you are" to describe this first effort to adapt an untrained people the simplest aids to self sufficiency and support.

Storer did this as a matter of course from its very beginning; later with the addition of the modest facilities and buildings already described, it simply followed along in emulation of the much greater and broader land grant college programs provided by the original Morrill Land Act of 1862, and the subsequent additional legislation of 1890 and 1907. Justin S. Morrill incidentally was another New Englander, a Vermonter who served in the House or Senate from 1854 to his death in 1898 at the age of 88.

Perhaps more interestingly on the broader scene and as part of the portrayal and understanding of early Negro education, Storer did refle in its smaller way the introduction to what became known generally as "industrial education", and the related battle of the giants among the truly recognized and undoubtedly great Negro leaders.

The "industrial" concept was born at Hampton, Virginia, strangely enough by adoption from Hawaii. Among the soldiers of the Union Army who seemed more fortuitously than otherwise to become interested and active in aid to the Negro was Samuel Chapman Armstrong, born in the Kingdom of Hawaii in 1839 of American missionary parents.

Possibly influential in his early life is the fact that the perio precisely 1838-39, marked a tremendous religious revival in these isla strangely contemporaneous with the 1837 economic depression, in the la

cities of America, and only a few years after the revival fervor about the time of the British industrial revolution.

Hardly of the Calvinistic breed, however, Armstrong enjoyed a delightful and most socially agreeable youth and delighted in the pleasu and society of eighteen undergraduate months at Williams College in Massachusetts. Here he came under the cultured and humane philosophical guidance of the school's revered president Mark Hopkins. Enlistin with limited enthusiasm in the summer of 1862 when Union spirits were not high, he was commissioned a Major of troops which he enlisted at Troy, New York.

Armstrong's war years make *fascinating reading, as does the stud by his brother, Colonel of the 1st U.S. Carolina Volunteers, Thomas W. Higginson's relations of "Army Life in a Black Regiment." His admirat for colored troops grew only with his experience in his command. It w not emotional or "abolitionistic", in origin, but it ended with the mo wholehearted and unreserved commendation of the Negro soldier. We shal see how the chance association influenced his entire life thereafter.

Armstrong secured United States citizenship as the result of just over three years' service in the Federal forces, of which the latter t years was as a competent and respected commander of Negro troops.

Something still stirred within Armstrong at war's end, of mission spirit, although as he said, ** he "would rather minister than be a minister." Discharged in the late autumn of 1865 he considered various

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* Samuel Chapman Armstrong, A Biographical Study, by Edith Armstrong Tal (his daughter). Doubleday, Page & Co., New York, 1904.

** Ibid., p.131

careers, business rather than professional on both the east and west coasts, apparently having definitely abandoned Hawaii for his adopted but actually native land, thanks to fully American parentage.

The Freedmen's Bureau was in its first year. Remembering his fa plan of work for the Negro in the South, he applied to General O. O. Howard, Commissioner of the Bureau, for a position, armed with a lette from his late chief of staff, and supported by his brilliant record as an officer of colored troops. He was received favorably by General Howard who relied heavily upon officers of the regular army at the mos responsible points. At Hampton, Virginia, seven thousand Negro "con-trabands" camped in the most squalid fashion in huts or tents pitched over the ruins of the town, burned to the ground during the war.

Armstrong received a double appointment, as agent under the Freed men's Bureau having control over ten counties, the fifth sub-district of Virginia, and also as superintendent of schools, or Bureau Superin-tendent over a large, loosely defined area in that general vicinity.

In March, 1866 he arrived to take up his duties of reconstruction As he then wrote his mother, his "work was to scatter and renovate the squalid, crowded, poor and idle" who were congregated there. He had a dozen officers under him, though he was now a civilian.

Hampton had been an early little city of refuge and continued so throughout the war, where "came from all Virginia, daily caravans of Negroes to seek freedom, food and home. Were it not for the daily issu of 18,000 rations of food, death by starvation" would ensue. Six month after his arrival Armstrong was able to shut off rations to all except

those in hospitals.

But the problem of relocation and resettlement was not so easy. The original plantation and farm owners were returning to claim and cultivate their properties, where now were loosely established thousands of colored squatters, largely by permission and encouragement of the Federal government. Armstrong's official report later stated, "it was about two years' task to settle matters by making terms with the landowners, who employed many laborers on their restored homes. There was irritation, but both classes were ready to do the fair thing."

All this however, was subsidiary to his main responsibility and growing interest in the work to which General Howard had especially assigned him: the study of the existing and limited educational opportunities, and to report concerning the need for others. This was indeed congenial. In his earliest contact with Negro troops in his first and command, he had strongly encouraged in the winter of 1863-64, at his headquarters, Camp Stanton, Benedict, Maryland, a school for Negro soldiers, and the young Lieutenant Colonel was given the "presidency" of the "college"!

His journal description of this simple schools is excellent whether applied to soldiers on active duty or the early postwar teaching of whole families." /Final pp from p.109/

*Ibid., p.142

Armstrong had been at Hampton only a month, when with characteristic energy and imagination he developed a concept which promised some relief for the immediate needs of the freedmen. In April 1866 he addressed "to many ladies of Boston" a circular letter which contains his mention of plans for industrial education. After proposing the *emigration to the North of the destitute negroes, for employment in homes and as hostlers and as general untrained laborers, he says "the daytime of our labor for the freed people is short. The North has not as yet done its full duty." Yet there is "another and most important field for philanthropic effort. It is the building up of industrial schools. In order to do this, a teacher should be sent whose annual support comes to about $300. She should be supplied with suitable goods to be made up into clothing by the colored women and girls. In this way a useful art is taught."

Armstrong was frankly and sometimes painfully outspoken. He developed the position that more important to the freedmen's present future** than charitable relief, "or even than education as commonly understood, was training in common morality and habits of industry and foresight." He saw that between the university and no school there was a middle course in which lay the hope of the colored race.

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*
Samuel Chapman Armstrong, p ....."About 1000 Negroes actually joined Boston and Cambridge homes as a result of this letter."

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Ibid.,p.150

*Loyal to Freedmen's Bureau, and believing it to be the Negroes "last hope", he stayed with it to the end. They "stretch out their arms to the Government not for 'bread and homes' (as has been said), but for help and justice; without the Bureau they will receive neither. Every material hope held out by the Government has failed them; they are not where and what they expected to be; they did not fight for thi

The educational department of the Bureau, which had justified itself by careful and successful work, was continued until 1872. Armstr was now ready for his life work, and industrial education was to appea largely. And now the seeds planted within him in Hawaii would bear fr

The Hilo Manual Labor School for Native Hawaiians was a boarding school for boys which Armstrong had observed in his youth. There nati boys paid their expenses by working in carpentry, housework, gardening and other useful skills, while they received some slight instruction. **It was the "only school where the boys were expected to work with th hands as well as their heads, and was a marked success."

Armstrong proceeded to develop a program through which negro youn men and women could be trained to be teachers and leaders of their own people. This concept was hardly original at Hampton, it reflected the conclusions that were arrived at almost simultaneously at many of the early Negro schools, missionary, philanthropic or governmental, includ Storer at Harpers Ferry, and Howard at Washington.

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* Ibid., p.152

** Ibid., p.155

But because of the special concept picked up in Hawaii in the 1850's, this plan of combining mental and manual training seemed to fit precisely the needs of the situation at Hampton.

Lest it appear that this concept is belabored, it must be remembered that the idea of combining mental and manual training so familiar in the public school system of a generation later, was a novelty even though eminently suitable and practical in its special application to the Negro race. The classical and private schools of the North and particularly of the limited school system of the South might appear the key to leisure to the newly freed Negro, by his past observation and experience. But the realities were very different, and the "hope and true salvation" on earth, of these inexperience people must depend upon special "adaptation of aptitudes."

Armstrong had already brought to life the Hampton Normal and Industrial Institute in 1868 while serving as Regional Superintendent of Schools for the Freedmen's Bureau. In 1867 he had written the American Missionary Association recommending that the 159-acre estate upon which he was then living, be purchased as the foundation of an industrial school for negro teachers.

The Association gave extensive financial assistance but a $10,000 gift from the $250,000 portion of the Avery Estate, dedicated to Negro education, authorized by the executor, the Hon. Josiah King of Pittsburgh after a visit to Hampton, accomplished the property purchase. Armstrong is credited with raising the funds for the first school buildings by personal solicitation among friends in the Northern States.

The institution which developed over the years "has had a profound effect on the educational life of America. It sprang from a creative, though not a wholly original conception, and it has been the source and inspiration of many schools which represent the same idea - 'education of head, heart and hand alike'."*

The best known disciple of the Hampton Institute is of course Booker T. Washington, born in slavery in 1856 in Virginia and a student from 1872 to 1875. "Life at Hampton was a constant revelation, -- meals at regular hours, use of the bathtub," - and above all, his "greatest benefit", contact with General Armstrong. Trained there as a bricklayer, he returned to his home near Charleston, W. Va. upon graduation to teach in a colored school.**

From 1879 until 1881, Washington was again at Hampton, this time in charge of the 75 to 100 native Indian students, and also of the Institute's night school. Most important he served at the same time as secretary to General Armstrong. Here arrived his great opportunity. After two years, the General received a call from a white former slave holder George N. Campbell, and a former negro slave and mechanic Lewis Adams, for a candidate to undertake at Tuskegee, a new normal school, just chartered by the Alabama legislature.

So commenced the first real seedling of Hampton, the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, with Washington its teacher. The Hampton concept was adopted in toto, with perhaps greatest emphasis on agriculture,

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* Dictionary of American Biography, 1943, p.360

** Up From Slavery, B. T. Washington, 1900

the livlihood of 85% of the negroes in the Gulf states. *"We wanted to teach them to study actual things instead of mere books alone."

**At the turn of the century Booker Washington wrote especially for Samuel Chapman Armstrong's daughter who was preparing what has become the standard biography of the General, a thousand words which clearly describes the early principle of manual labor and mental work:

At its inception the whole subject was new not only to the Negro, but to northern and southern white people. /The experiment had been tried of divided labor, with dubious results among white students of both sexes, notably at Oberlin, Wellesley and the Mt.Holyoke Seminary./

The general impression which prevailed among a large number of colored people, especially those who lived in cities in the North and who had received some advantages of education, was that industrial education was meant to retain the Negro in a kind of slavery to limit his sphere of activity. Many of the colored people felt that it was to be applied to the colored people only. The fact that southern white people as a rule approved of industrial education added to the Negro's suspicions.

The first objective at Hampton and as adapted at Tuskegee, was to give the colored people an "idea of the dignity, the beauty and civilizing power of intelligent labor with the hand." Second, to teach the Negro to lift labor out of druggery and toil by putting thought and skill into it. Third, through industrial education both races in the South could be

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* Up From Slavery, Booker T. Washington, 1900, p.126

** Samuel C. Armstrong, 1904, p.206

brought into closer relations. And fourth, there was the opportunity for the impecunious student to "work out" a portion of his school expenses, thus "building character, and teaching that all forms of labor were honorable."

In this memorandum of Booker Washington, he also alludes to the results evident to him in later years in perhaps an unexpected direction, "the growth and spread of industrial education among the southern white people. Such schools were not very popular among the white people at first, but the idea has spread until every Southern state has one or more such institutions, and the industrial idea has become almost as popular among the white, as the colored people."

So gradually industrial education found its place in manual training offered to both races in the North as well as in the South. By circumstances of time, necessity and ingenuity, a system of education among a Pacific Island race was applied in truly wholesale fashion by a nineteenth century Peace Corps. It is hard to conceive now of any better approach to the emergency elevation to a level of something like the possibility of self sufficiency for four million people, or a third (?) of the population in the region where they dwelt.

Perhaps the Bureau of Education has the last word on the subject in its Bulletin, 1916, No.38:

The extraordinarily complicated concept of appropriate education for the Negro confused and obscured the basic intent.

Some Negroes felt that the race was being assigned a permanent status of labor, as possibly in the lower orders of Plato's Republic. This aspect might appeal to the thinking of the better educated (sic) Negro who feared a block to his advancement. The more inexperienced colored man on the other hand saw in the classics and "college" or higher education, the magic world of leisure, as he conceived it to be enjoyed by the white person. In addition, the early teachers from the North simply brought with them the classical courses and curricula with which they were familiar, without stopping to consider its applicability or usefulness to the newly freed, at large in a still partially frontier society.

Probably the judgement of the Southerner was the most practical, and if it was not allowed to deteriorate into a class system, which it did not, it did offer the Negro his best opportunity for security and advancement.

But it was a mighty issue, and when Booker Washington was at the height of his fame, had dined at the White House and been widely accepted and honored at public meetings in the North and the South, he became embroiled in controversy with the new generation of Negro intellectual and leader. As an outstanding representative of this group, the brilliant and articulate historian, W. E. B. DuBois was unmerciful in his criticism of Washington, and his assumed acceptance of a subservient position for his race. The background and appearance of the two men was made to order

for dramatic comparison. DuBois was educated at Harvard and was born of free parents. He was actually dapper in appearance and prolific and colorful with the written and spoken word. Booker Washington was born in slavery of an unknown white father, years before DuBois. He was a charity student at Hampton when only the first rudiments could be absorbed by the student body.

In retrospect it is difficult to deeply criticize either man, or their believers and followers, each in their time. To Booker Washington and thousands of others in the little schools throughout the South, where the great mass of Negroes dwelt as farm workers of the simplest sort, what offered salvation was the simple dignity and opportunity that might arise from a basic training and knowledge of how to produce a little more effectively learn some trade or agricultural skill that elevated him above the common laborer in the field. Once on the way, the rest could follow.

DuBois was by no means blind to the absolute essentiality of common and basic teaching of the first principles, but possibly he found the issue one which at least offered a means of arousing the potential enthusiasm for the higher things among a sometimes inarticulate, bewildered and deeply discouraged race.

Certainly DuBois was outstanding and challenging in developing a new military and elevated spirit in the new generation of colored men and women who perceived, participated in and made possible the commencement of the Negro renaissance of the 20th century.

One of the pitfalls which damaged Washington was first dug in his greatly admired and publicized speech at the Atlanta Exposition of 1896.

Warmly applauded by press and President Cleveland alike, it yet furnished his more critical reviewers with a weapon which was provocative. He, in effect, to their minds, rejected or at least postponed the goal of social equality. In the middle of his speech, Washington had directed to his white listeners a pledge of loyalty in the future as in the past "with a devotion that no foreigner can approach, ready to lay down our lives, if need be, in defense of yours, interlacing our industrial, commercial, civil and religious life with yours in a way that shall make the interests of both races one."

Then came the sentence that aroused the controversy. *"In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to human progress." To many of the rising generation of Negroes this meant a surrender of any future acceptance of complete equality. While debate and criticism was to continue for many years, it did not then, and has not since, seriously detracted from the great stature which has been acknowledged to Washington. An objective view in the later years certainly would agree that his purpose at the time, with all the problems of the first generation after a bitter civil war, and almost as bitter a reconstruction was to bring some measure of mutual consideration and respect between two races of totally different background. Washington said **"that his race asked of others not social intercourse but justice and protection."

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*Note on speech MSS in Storer College.

**From an undated longhand speech MSS now at HFMMP (Mr.Nash, ask me re this) It is most interesting that Washington substituted "intercourse" in the above quotation, for the crossed out word "equality".

The embroilment over the purposes and uses of industrial education was thus a matter of national, even world attention. Yet at Storer the simple virtues of work and study were accepted as a matter of course. It is probably an important fact that the intentions of the teachers of this small school were to do all possible to bring out by close personal attention all the qualities possible in each student.

It is a dramatic fact that to Storer came first for their American education the present premiers of two of the most advanced African states, Nigeria and Ghana.

/Comment on Azikiwe and background, etc./

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VII

STORER COLLEGE

THE LATER YEARS

By 1890 the pattern and style had been pretty clearly established for Storer. Principal Brackett, aided by his wife and sister_____ had presided for a quarter of a century over yearly student bodies averaging 200 boys and girls, and some progress had been made toward a higher level of training and education. Though never strictly denominational, the school was a beloved protege of the devoted women and men of the Fremdill Baptist Church. None identified with the school over these first twenty-five years could ever separate it from the total embracing atmosphere of the valiant days of the antislavery society, the educational and missionary labors of the War between the States, and the struggling period of Reconstruction.

Just as by the 1890's the Grand Army of the Republic, the "boys in blue", had become living symbols of earlier sacrifice and heroism, so did Storer reside in the hearts of the Free Baptists as a monument to the most glorious period in their denominational history.

All were older now, and time colored the earlier events. The "boys in blue" at the end of the century were approaching sixty years of age, all had made their places in life, great or small, and they lived the war and its aftermath in memory. Many came to Harpers Ferry as tourists as they brought their families to follow with them the roads to Manassas, Antietam and Gettysburg.

Most of the early founders of Storer were inactive, if alive. New Hampshire, Maine were dimming in their glory as Boston and New York boomed with industry and the rush of immigrants to its mills and plants.

Storer had most of its physical facilities and its faculty was adequate to its considered needs. The days of the smaller college throughout America were drawing to a close, or would be by the time of World War I. Then a new appreciation of higher education would follow. The larger colleges would benefit most, including particularly the state universities..

As the new generation of Free Baptists reviewed their objectives and considered their future purposes, so in the same way, a new interest by a new generation would attempt to establish a valid design for the education of the Negro.

It is not easy to recapture now the esteem in which Booker Washington had come to be held by non-Negroes as a responsible and outstanding leader of that race. He had made bricks, if not exactly without any straw in the form of financial aid, at least with straw acquired by his own effort. His lack of social militancy was being questioned by highly educated and far visioned members of his own race, and perhaps in their time they were to be proven right. But Washington and many another Negro teacher had spent their hours doing the best they could to form some kind of base for further advance. One might well believe, given the conditions prevailing in the two decades surrounding 1900, that the

economic somnambulance of the South, added to the unrestricted influx of European immigrants into the Northeast, made the higher education of youths, either colored or white in the South, only a wasteful departure from the essential training which might at least afford them a livlihood.

Such reasoning is of course specious. Education must be universal, by persons and by regions, otherwise the inevitable decadence of both.

The U. S. Bureau of Education has well described the interchange of views that arose at the end of the first post war generation. While some of the exchanges were commercial, many were social: "The winter experiences of northern sojourners in many southern resorts resulted in /similar/ interchanges of thought; and the attendance of southern people at national educational association meetings, at Chautauqua assemblies, at summer schools, and in the numerous summer resorts of New England, the Adirondacks, and the region of the Great Lakes, worked quietly on toward a mutual adjustment of differences that once seemed irreconcilable."[1]

The Peabody Fund of 1867 had lead the way, followed by the John F. Slater Fund in 1882, and the Daniel Hand Fund entrusted to the American Missionary Association in 1888. These funds had been administered by a remarkable series of devoted individuals who were perhaps especially noteworthy for their very practical interest, their continuous inspection tours of the schools of the South and their deep comprehension of the needs and failings of existing Negro education.

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[1] Brill, 1916, #38; p.266

Probably General Armstrong was their best measuring rod for progress and method. Perhaps his words are the best summation of the problem of Negro education in the 19th century. Hampton's history dated from the very beginning of the primitive working schools, it had worked out a national program to get the student started in life under immediate post war and emancipation conditions. Hampton's prime example of successful accomplishment was Booker T. Washington, erstwhile student and secretary to General Armstrong, and now the principal of the widely publicized Tuskegee School which he had founded with the aid of Southern philanthropy.

The Peabody's, the Slaters, the Stokes, Armstrong and Booker Washington were a part of the war and immediate post war generation, now must come the new generation with a new approach and a broader view of truly the problem of 20th century Negro education.

At one of the conferences at Lake Mohonk which had been instituted by Albert K. Smiley in behalf of the American Indians, Dr. Hollis B. Frissell and the Reverend Edward Abbot received the inspiration which lead to the series of conferences on the status and direction of Negro education, of which the first three were held at Capon Springs, W. Va., in 1898 and subsequent years. Capon Springs is a small southern resort in a secluded valley almost on the Virginia State border, reached with difficulty by railroad with part of the journey then requiring travel by stagecoach. "The meetings were small, only about seventy being present at the largest of the three; but they were significant, and the papers and addresses were given wide publicity through the press and

and the published proceedings."[1]

Dr. Frissell was ideally suited to develop the second generation adjustment of Negro educational thinking to 20th century needs. In 1898 at the age of forty seven he had already served for five years as principal of Hampton, to which position he had arrived upon the death of General Armstrong after thirteen years apprenticeship commencing in 1880. He could well bridge the period between the first abolitionist-educators and the second generation of more considered and less emotional and unfortunately less patriotically appealing, development of the Negroes's capacities.

The first conference set the tone and purpose, a series of meetings of "Southern and Northern men and women prominent in educational and religious affairs, having for their aim the discussion of the economic, social and educational problems of the South."[2] Upon this scene appeared Robert C. Ogden, a life long friend of General Armstrong and Dr. Frissel and trustee of the Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes. A successful associate of John Wanamaker in Philadelphia and New York, he had been impressed from the earliest days by the work of General Armstrong among the Negroes.

Ogden's practical business experience, his wide commercial acquaintance in both North and South, added to his deep interest in the problem, brought to these southern conferences just the personal associations and practical administrative capacity which was needed to launch this

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1 Brill, 1916, #38, p.266

2 Ibid.,1916, #38, p.19

"second generation" movement to renew and revitalize Negro education. So closely did he become involved in the program that in the early years of the 20th century it became known as the "Ogden Movement."

During the next dozen years after the first three annual meetings at Capon Springs, conferences were held at much more accessible spots throughout the South including Winston-Salem, Athens, Georgia, Richmond, Birmingham, and several other large cities, with abundant increased attendance and publicity. From these meetings came the Southern Education Board, or Conference for Education in the South, and clearly inspired or encouraged by these meetings as well as by the example and words of Booker Washington and others, came the various new agencies which were to carry the leadership of Negro educational aid for most of the first half of the 20th century.

The Jeanes Fund was created in 1907 principally to improve the smaller rural schools of the South. In 1909 came the Phelps Stokes Fund which recognized the important part played by southern white people in Negro education and attempted to increase this cooperation. Commencing in 1914, Julius Rosenwald of Chicago had arranged to make substantial contributions toward rural school structures. The Carnegie Foundation has made many generous gifts.

However, the principal and dominating foundation, resulting in a large coordinating system was that represented by the General Education Board. Like the Phelps-Stokes Fund, not restricted alone to the needs of Negro education, it was the largest and probably the most objectively administered of the general education funds. Commenced in 1905 by large

endowments from John D. Rockefeller, in 1905 the Board entered into a cooperative arrangement with the United States Government through the Department of Agriculture, and ultimately with state and county units particularly in the field of farm demonstration work leading to improved agricultural methods and increased soil productivity.

This then is the background, a bird's eye view of the position of Negro education as the first generation passed from the scene. At Capon Springs in 1898, and thereafter, a new atmosphere was to surround and to influence to a greater or lesser degree all the educational facilities and opportunities available to Negroes. That these facilities and opportunities would continue to be limited and inadequate to a tragic degree has become all too evident with the passage of the half century since the second generation took over.

Even in 1916, when the later private foundations were only commencing operations, the U. S. Bureau of Education was compelled to say: "The beneficient effects of these conferences, however, are more apparent in what they have done for the white people than in advantages accruing to the Negroes. Indeed there are those who question whether they have been of any advantage whatever to the colored people and to the schools maintained in their behalf, claiming, on the contrary, that the gains to the white people have reacted unfavorably for the Negroes. To which it may be replied that a movement of such manifest value to education in general can not fail to have reached all the people with beneficient consequences, even though they have not always fulfilled the cherished expectation."[1]

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[1] Bull. 1916, #38; p.267

These are weak words indeed, in defense of our second generations effort to catch up the torch from the earlier heroes. It is probably unfair, in the light of the public comprehension of the early 20th century to place the blame for the continuing deficiencies in Negro education on any group. The people, the individuals and the committees and conferences were very clearly and devotedly doing their best by their own lights. Many other social abuses continued to exist, of every kind and among every class, as they do today, and in great breadth of significance.

Perhaps the point is that the needs and problems of the Negro race became lost in the overwhelming expansion of the nation and its industrial ferment. Until the late 1920's the Negro was out of sight and presumably possessed of a minimum if substandard living on his small farm. In company with him were several million white, impoverished share croppers, and north of them both were the first and second immigrant generations of industrial laborers. These latter too suffered from neglect and exploitation. It would remain for yet another generation, in which the Negro race itself would play a greater part, before anything approaching adequate progress, or suitable goals would be established.

In the meantime Storer College is preparing for its adjustment to the 20th century. In 1897, after 30 years a principal of Storer and 33 years teaching and missionary labour in the Shenandoah Valley, Nathan Brackett was to step aside from active administration, though continuing an association with the school as its treasurer, until his death in 1910.

There is a moving letter to Nathan Brackett from his old friend and counselor, Orem Cheney, dated three years before this time:

Lewiston, December 20, 94

Dear Bro:—

Your letter received and request granted - How rapidly the years have taken flight - '65, '75, '85, '95 soon - 3 times 10 are 30. I only wish that 3 times 10 at least may be added to the years of both of you.

It seems but yesterday since, finding that John Storer would give no more for Bates College, I plead with him until after midnight to help our denomination do something for the colored people - since I took $10,000 in City Scrip to William Pitt Fessenden to hold on certain conditions— since I borrowed $1000 from a Lewiston Bank to make the first payment on my Harpers Ferry Farm - since I went up the Valley with you - to Washington with you, pleading there with Fessenden, Garfield, Stanton, and Howard to aid us. Oh, pardon the running of my pen— I did not think of saying a word in this line when I sat down to write you— It all rushed in upon me in a moment, and I have been fool enough to write it down ————

What a grand work you have done for a people whose friend our denomination was when their friends were few in number— The Lord reward you— by you, I mean both of you— Thy twain are one— ....

Love to you all,

Yours,

O. B. Cheney

Brackett's influence continued strongly until his death in 1910. In 1903 he takes the lead in raising funds to match a larger appropriation from the State for a new "trades building", in the "industrial department."

Now, after a brief two year period, from 1897 to 1899, when the former instructor in *"Biblical Literature, Physical Culture, and Oration", the Reverend Ernest Earle Osgood, was to serve as Principal, there would appear a much beloved teacher, who for the long span of forty-five years would serve, until the final expiring decade of the school, as Principal and President.

Henry T. McDonald of Blue Earth, Minnesota became a part of the stream of history at Storer almost despite himself. Though a Freewill Baptist

Influence of immigration restriction on Northern immigration of Negro, and hence his joining other economically weak segments of the/the population ingghettos and as industrial urban residents, where their problems became intensified as they occupied the better level of subsistence.