

CHAPTER I

DEATH OF A COLLEGE

The little school died hard. Despite the spirited^{UAL} and humanitarian commitments of its trustees and alumni, the pangs were heart-breaking and tragic. So much love and devotion, so much pride and satisfaction in its history and its family, held its friends and beneficiaries tightly to its survival. The end came because the College could no longer meet its economic pressures. Faculty capacities weakened as funds ran short and then dried up entirely. The times had changed, and the school was too weak to change with them.

The day of the small private college, secular or religious, racially segregated or coeducationally oriented, with few exceptions was in its twilight. The Supreme Court decision of 1954 led to an ironic and unanticipated withdrawal, and finally the complete drying up, of support from the West Virginia legislature, whose contributions hitherto had supplied the margin of financial security.

With a tiny endowment, a student body of severely limited means, and few scholarships available, mene, mene, tekeli, upharsin could in truth have been written on the school's blackboards.

What happens when a school dies? To its alumni, its sons and

daughters, it is a true bereavement. And when the institution has been a cherished symbol of achievement, of acceptance into the treasured world of the mind, the loss can be a devastating experience.

A college is a living thing -- its children are its own, and the college belongs as well to them. When intellectual, moral, or political leaders are among this family, this interaction attracts public attention. Benjamin Nnandi Azikiwi, first President of the independent Republic of Nigeria, Storer Class of 1926, even his wife and nieces, came under the school's influence as students and alumni. This native Nigerian remembered enough and thought enough of his school to send his wife ^{FLORA} ~~Flora~~ there as a student in 1952, a full twenty-six years after his own graduation.

And how count the scores of teachers and ministers, alumni of Storer, who founded and manned other schools and churches of the Shenandoah and Potomac valleys, or the hundreds of their students who in turn moved in ever-widening circles to extend the influence generated at Harpers Ferry from the first post-war days?

The earliest principals of West Virginia State College and Bluefield State were from Storer. Chartered in 1891 and 1895 as "Negro" institutions, ~~they~~ ^{THEY} were designated as such; ~~until 1955; they~~ ^{until 1955; they} received their present names in 1919 and 1943, after discarding the original titles of West Virginia Colored Institute and the Bluefield Colored Institute. John Hill was the second principal appointed at the West Virginia Colored

Institute after its founding. Hamilton Hatter not only took part in erecting the first building at Bluefield State, but became its first principal.

What, too, of Harpers Ferry itself, praised or challenged by friendly or hostile critic as the violent scene of John Brown's raid in 1859? That event, comparable only to the bombardment of Fort Sumter, was among the final elements in the script of the scenario for the cataclysmic disaster of the War between the States -- the shattering of the first great modern democratic Republic, even before its one-hundredth anniversary. It had taken only this short time to divide a creation so zealously nurtured by the designers of the Declaration of Independence of 1776 and the Constitution of 1787.

The town of Harpers Ferry was bound up in America's being, her infant history, on the onetime trail of the migrating Shawnees and Senecas. A militarily-supported community until wartime, with railroad and canal traffic connections, it was situated at a spot selected by President George Washington for its commercial and strategic location. It was a gateway to the unexplored West, blessed with abundant waterpower. Its thriving population of several thousand was sustained by employment at the Armory and the Arsenal, the modern Hall's rifle works, as well as the canal and railroad enterprises and various small manufactories.

At the end of the Civil War, with the town's weapon-making facilities in ruins, came the almost instant transition from a community

which produced means of destruction to an elementary educational and religious center. Harpers Ferry was in addition a goal of the refugee as he followed the river valley to the North and the hoped-for "land of freedom."

At the heart of this community, on Camp Hill, stood the four similar government-constructed buildings. Large and almost square, of two stories, with substantial basements, they had housed the Superintendent, the Paymaster and their Clerks, the chief officers of the military establishment. These buildings, partially damaged by shell-fire, and the hill upon which they stood, would soon constitute the campus, dormitories and instruction rooms of one of the first institutions for the Freedman.

In the metaphors of the times, books would replace bullets, the Bible would supplant the bayonet. These combined offices and residences were to house the teachers and students already assembling. From this pioneering college would travel black teachers and ministers, carrying their messages for many miles around to the smaller schools and churches they founded.

That this particular place should be so avidly sought for educational purposes was not solely due to its physical location, its natural beauty, the recognition that it offered a temporary haven for the refugee, or the availability of its war-damaged buildings. John Brown's raid had inevitably made Harpers Ferry a symbol of emancipation. Not at

all worldly in their experience or outlook, the founders of the College-to-be were nevertheless practical about realities and values. They fully appreciated the public interest in a site that symbolized the very image of the War's goals.

What would John Brown have thought of this new school, launched only five years after he died just six miles away on the gallows at Charles Town, on December 2, 1859? The school opened only a few months after the end of the desperate struggle whose explosion Brown's attack on the Armory and Arsenal had done so much to hasten.

Whatever his emotional response, the tormented old figure could hardly have imagined that the tiny firehouse at the Arsenal, where he mounted his brief but memorable stand and where two of his sons were mortally wounded, would one day serve as a school library and museum for the descendants of the bondsmen he strove to free.

And who could dream that this war-battered Camp Hill, now the school campus, would be host to the second meeting of the organizers of the "Niagara Movement," the Negro militant association inspired and developed by Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, in 1905? This group grew into the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in May, 1910, with the active participation of liberal white leaders aroused by race riots two years before at Springfield, Illinois.

Frederick Douglass came to the Storer campus on Memorial Day, May 30, 1882, to dedicate the school's main building, Anthony

Memorial Hall. Editor, orator and leader of his people, Douglass delivered on this occasion an historical address on John Brown, to an audience that combined white and black, "Confederates and old Virginians." Among the latter was the prosecuting attorney of the John Brown trial, one Andrew Hunter; that trial had been barely twenty years earlier, and the dedication took place a mere seventeen years after Appomattox. The meeting between Douglass and Hunter was cordial, and Hunter invited Douglass to visit Charles Town, the scene of John Brown's execution.

There would be many problems in the College's century-long history, and always drama and historic association. Storer's existence and influence had their source in the determination of a group of New England abolitionists and religious and secular teachers, whose efforts dated from the earliest moments of the Freedman's plunge into a new and unknown world.

No wonder, then, that its friends were grieved as the hundredth anniversary approached and the struggle to keep the College alive failed. At the end, the distribution of Storer's resources became a matter of grave concern, that the inheritors be worthy of these bequests, the product of the founders' labors, the teachers' dedication, and the loyalty of the alumni.

A solution was finally found. In 1960 the physical properties of Storer, the lands and buildings, were sold to the Federal government

for the use of the National Park Service. The purchase price of the property, which had been conveyed to Storer by the United States in 1867, along with the school's small endowment, was divided, with the approval of the trustees, between Virginia Union University at Richmond and Alderson-Broadus College at Philippi, West Virginia. Both schools had been sponsored by the American Baptist Convention since their establishment. Each institution had a coeducational enrollment of about one thousand students. Virginia Union, predominantly black, had opened in 1865; Alderson-Broadus had begun as a white institution in 1871.

With the dashing of hope that Storer might survive as a private college, alumni, trustees and friends could take comfort in knowing that its long tradition of education and service would continue. The historic campus, with new buildings and facilities, became a school and training center for the personnel of the National Park Service.

The founders of Storer College had been motivated at first by an intense conviction of the indefensible evil of human bondage. After Emancipation they equally believed that only by training leaders and teachers of the black race to educate their own people could the new freedom be fruitfully nurtured.

Sometime between Reconstruction and the Supreme Court decision of 1954, the eager solicitude of the first generation of postwar leaders, and of the American public as well, was diluted by the new issues and

perplexities of a rapidly expanding America. Within only a few decades a continent of wilderness, small farms and seaports was converted to an immensely complex and interdependent urban society.

Until after World War I, halfway through this hundred years of history, the plight of the Negro vanished from view. America's burst of growth was accompanied by an influx of multiracial and multilingual immigrants from Europe. These newcomers poured into the nation's cities, not unlike the refugees of Reconstruction, to create ghettos which became the new homes of the northward-moving Negro of the 1920's and later.

A school solely for blacks may be a concept of the past. Today the need is for adequate education for all, with equal opportunity regardless of background or race. Simple as this statement may be, it is the crux of the matter.

And yet the question must be asked, does not the black school, at least for the present, represent a vehicle for transition from the past to the future? Apartheid is an unworkable solution for millions of people, black and white, who live side by side. Neither history nor reason can support such a form of life. Yet the black college did, and may for a period in the future, supply the opportunity for the black student to discover his identity, to learn his own culture and history, and to prepare himself for participation in a world composed of many diverse

people with widely varying beliefs, conditions of life and degrees of sophistication.

A number of points of view may be debated. University cultural centers, city-wide participation among black undergraduates of different schools in a joint seeking for personal and group understanding, inter-racial gropings by black and white students toward a common goal -- all these concepts and experimental programs reflect a turbulence which may give the needed stimulus for a constructive form of coexistence.

Whatever direction the course of Negro education takes in the years to come, the past cannot be passed over or erased. Never to be forgotten are the men and women of both races who struggled and labored to establish the earliest sources of aid to the Freedman. They were heroic even for a time of spectacular social motivations, and they offered the golden treasure of education to a deprived people. They showed the way, but the journey is far from done.

CHAPTER II

THE PRE-WAR SCENE

Negro education in a formal sense, although certainly rudimentary, existed in America from Colonial times. Its nature varied with changing social and economic conditions. Gradually, as the slavery system became more entrenched, regional patterns developed.

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

The Friends were apparently the first group to assume educational responsibilities among Negroes with broader than evangelical, salvationist motives. Imbued with their belief, for which they sacrificed much, in worship outside the familiar forms of religion, they easily carried their convictions about freedom of worship into a championship of the freedom of the person, and thus extended their interest to blacks.

The significant impetus toward eventual freedom and away from a system of education tied to religion came in the early 18th century. As the philosophical contentions of French writers and thinkers gradually infiltrated the American colonies, the applicability of their ideas to American conditions became obvious. They fitted into the Colonial impulse toward man's determination of his own affairs, although they shocked many conservative and conventional leaders.

Rousseau with his Social Contract (who inspired Sieyès and in turn provided the ideological basis for the "rights of man" set forth by the men who framed the American Declaration of Independence), Montesquieu's Spirit of the Laws -- such formulations were exciting and heady wine. Aside from the obvious inconsistency of slavery with individual liberty as a natural right, the ferment of new ideas led to a broadening of discussion and consequently of education per se among the Colonists. Education came to be more than an adjunct or attribute of religious instruction.

In the North a school for Negroes was opened in 1728. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, operated by the Methodists, and again the Quakers, supplied schools and teachers for both white and black. At Newport, Rhode Island, a major center of the slave trade in the North, a school for blacks was commenced in 1762. Historian John Hope Franklin, writing in From Slavery to Freedom, states that "...the New England Negro was the best trained and most articulate of all Negroes

in the New World." This was undoubtedly due not only to the interest of certain whites, but to the fact that so many New England blacks were free people and not slaves.

But what appeared to be progress in the North, as contrasted to latent or limited opposition toward even religious schooling in the South, almost suddenly, around 1810, in response to pressure from two directions, was due for drastic change. The development of educational programs for blacks was ended for the long period until Emancipation. Again, the pressures were different in the two regions. In the Northern states the impulse was negative, in the South it was positive.

Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin in 1794 opened up a whole new field of opportunity to the Northern textile manufacturer, whose requirements for raw cotton multiplied immensely. He sought vast new sources in the South. Cotton truly became King, and the black field hand gained new value.

The door began to close on educational opportunities for Southern Negroes in 1800. As the years went on, it was barred and locked. The Southern concept of education was based upon a different social and economic environment than that of the North. Education for the white citizen in the South was individual; it was private, and it was largely a privilege, with the possible exception of religious instruction in white churches. Not only were the Negroes -- a group with no legal status -- educationally deprived, but thousands of ordinary white farmers and town

workers had no opportunity for schooling.

In the early 19th century, the attitude toward teaching even fundamentals to blacks was more than negative, ~~It~~ grew increasingly (ve/ and actively hostile. Did education, religious or secular, enhance the value of the servant or field hand, or did it instead open his mind to dissatisfaction, dreams of freedom, and plots of violent revolt? Nat Turner's small but widely publicized revolt in 1831 rekindled among plantation owners the fears and memories of the bloody revolts in Haiti at the end of the previous century.

Unhappily for any attempt at rational or moderate treatment of the problem, at this very time abolitionism of a crusading and evangelical temper was gaining ground 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 across the Atlantic, there now arose in the United States a storm that would rage and howl as a gathering tempest, to subside only into the still turbulent but less violent days of post-bellum Reconstruction.

This, generally, was the provocation. The South took measures which it considered necessary for its self-protection. Tragically for the future, these acts principally embraced, after the natural first course of controls on weapons and heightened surveillance, limitations on movement and on congregations -- religious or social. Most damaging of all,

restrictions were placed upon learning, and particularly the fundamentals of reading and writing.

Southern religious circles, which were disturbed by the moral or ecclesiastical implications of depriving blacks of the Bible, introduced an extraordinary palliative in the form of memory training in the Scriptures. Possibly this indoctrination explains some of the articulate and colorful language and forms of expression of the early Negro orators, although they had no monopoly on the gilded and ornamented phraseology of America's ante-bellum platform and pulpit speakers. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, an early and militant abolitionist in the inner circle of John Brown's responsible supporters, said, "Frederick Douglass learned to read by studying the street signs of Baltimore" -- another and pragmatic approach to the damming-up of the stream of learning. Douglass, indeed, progressed from the study of street signs to a comprehensive knowledge of literature, indeed borrowing his name from The Lady of the Lake . He said of his own hard-won education:

The pendulum had swung against the Negro's education, but some whites, practical or impractical, emotional or rational, began to rally to his assistance. The very nadir of his fortunes would further stir the ardor of the emancipationists, but the course was to be long and

bloody before his fate reached a turning-point. By 1840 the morally and socially unwholesome lot of the Negro coincided with an earlier period dating from the 1820's -- a time of resolution by the American of the Northeast to improve his nation, his environment and himself. Stung by the visiting foreign authors and journalists who frequently disparaged the atmosphere of the frontier, Americans felt an urge to create a culture, an environment of art and literature that was native in subject, although the form and style adopted might stem from the Continent or Great Britain.

Americans, and particularly those of the Northeastern states, began to take their country, its mission, and themselves with a very considerable seriousness and sensitivity. Between 1820 and 1860, the way was charted for self-expression in the fields of human rights, 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 period.

New England, as socially and temperamentally constituted in the mid-19th century, did not lightly carry the cargo of its heritage. Conceived in Calvinism, its people serious to a fault, the region bore almost ostentatiously its burden of good works, its famous conscience, and its all but self-flagellating drive to improve itself and almost anyone else.

By no means was this a phenomenon of New England alone.

The nation as a whole in the second and third decades of this first full 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 for this awakening may be credited to a number of factors. A frontier nation, inhabited to an unusual degree by persons of strong intellectual and religious heritage and convictions, finally matured sufficiently to cast off its vainglorious but understandable self-laudation, which had been needed to establish and defend a new country on a newly opened continent. In place of this patriotic but sometimes bombastically expressed reverence for the heroes of Bunker Hill, Valley Forge and Independence Hall there was substituted a more outward-looking curiosity about the rest of the world's culture, and a desire to emulate or exceed. Basically, this was not new. In the late 18th century, the Colonies had borrowed heavily from the liberal philosophies of government and organized society across the seas. But a quarter century after the War for Independence saw the formation of a Congress, the establishment of a government of laws, and the availability of men to see that they were carried out. Thus the conversion of loosely related and diverse colonies to statehood, with their own executive powers, 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; dropping some of her pride of birth, she could also peer within herself, at least with some degree of objectivity. Driven to this self-examination in part by the often merciless criticism of visitors from Britain and the Continent, she experienced a counter-movement of cultural curiosity and stimulus.

One literary figure of the time, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, sensed his country's need and knew what he would try to contribute. His Commencement oration at his graduation from Bowdoin College in June, 1825, was titled "Our Native Writers." In it he said:

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 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 new political institutions. Again,

. . . as yet we can boast of nothing 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 that has formed us, and -- the land in which we live.

With the desire to perform came a sister impulse to reform,

to render more perfect. Societies with this purpose proliferated.

DeToqueville is well quoted on the subject:

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.

Characteristically, the reformer of the time reflected the social changes which were going on in the North. New England and New York State produced most of the reform leaders, typically the descendants of middle-class New England families of assured status as professionals -- teachers, clergymen, physicians, farmers -- the predecessors in social standing of the newer class of manufacturers and merchants. In a way what the reformers believed was less important than how they believed it. Zealous, dedicated and evangelistic, whatever they espoused they wedded body and soul. While this quality may be a hallmark of the mid-19th century in America, in its broadest sense it represented rather a catholicity of causes -- memory training, prison reform, temperance, transcendentalism, that radical notion of women's enfranchisement, and finally, most emotionally exciting of all, abolitionism.

The Old World had its causes too, but they seemed to have broader bases; they were social movements arising largely from Europe's more developed economic status, culminating in the national revolutions of

1830 and 1848, and in the enormous agricultural and industrial metamorphosis which marked this burgeoning century.

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

In the areas of slavery and education this was particularly true. Slavery had immense emotional, moral and religious influence. Education, though less sensational, was of general and personal interest.

In the half century between the War of 1812 and the onset of the Civil War, the variety of reform issues was muted in the gathering thunder of the anti-slavery and abolition movement. Slavery and temperance seemed linked in the minds of many reformers. The elimination of slavery would constitute a political as well as a moral victory at an Armageddon brought to contemporary reality.

A Freewill Baptist of Indiana County, Pennsylvania, the Reverend William B. Bingham, spoke on July 4, 1853 to some six hundred of "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 noted by Louis R. Filler in his Crusade Against Slavery that particularly strong

. . . anti-slavery 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 Missionary Society (of the Freewill Baptists), was strongly abolitionist.

Conscience, self-righteousness and evangelism, secular and religious, may exist anywhere, but in mid-19th century America their major home was in New England. Massachusetts and its former appendage Maine, along with New Hampshire, appeared to be the center. Vermont was remote, agriculturally more unyielding than even New Hampshire. In these four northern New England states of the less-than-century-old Union, Boston was properly and reasonably described as the Hub of anti-slavery activity.

In these states, constituting the "northern tier" of New England, lived 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 to help each man so to profit himself.

Interwoven in the complex and vivid fabric of the immense drive to create an indigenous American cultural aura of life was a thin but colorful thread represented by the religious groups. Their intense dedication to improving themselves and their fellow man was archetypical of the universal cultural self-examination. The range of religious belief was wide; devotion to the faith and the competitive instincts of proselytism and conversion were concomitant.

Into this warp and woof went the group with which this history is concerned, the Freewill Baptist Church that founded Storer College at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Although not the largest nor most sophisticated element, this body of deeply religious people was typical of the merging of religious spirit and active good works. The faithful felt a deep identification with the anti-slavery movement.

Fifty years after the Revolution had brought freedom from outside control, America was ready for a "new look." The days of the Southern plantation aristocrats and the intellectual New Englanders as political leaders were gone, at least for the time being. Washington, the Adamses, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe had done ^{WORK} their; the foundation ^A had been laid. Then came the era of the boiling frontiers, the crowding spaces of the new lands, filling up as they did with emigrants along the Erie Canal, the Great National Road, the Natchez Trace, and the Wilderness Road.

The year 1832 signified much in proof that the spirit and mood of the times were different. The elections of Andrew Jackson and of Van Buren, men of simple origin, encouraged a reappraisal, not always skillful or enlightened, of existing mores and ideas. Development of the interior was the cry, and movement was the order of the day. Moral issues were being raised 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

swelled, and in 1833 an amendment to the constitution of Massachusetts removed compulsory contributions to the Congregational, or "state," church.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, there was an instant and zealous reaction. A whole new area of conversion and good works appeared. Pent-up energies, hitherto limited to anti-slavery propaganda and allied activities such as the Underground Railroad, could be released into more open measures. To some these meant war service as combatants or as civilian workers with the armies. To others they were expressed in carrying the Gospel, the "Good Book," and the school book to people newly accessible to the "domestic" missionary. As will be seen later, the relatively small foreign missionary groups now would have to struggle for their positions in order 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-Americans of the United States seeking cultural models and stimulation from across the Atlantic, adopted from the British limited religious and charitable programs in India, Africa, Asia and the West Indies.

The Freewill Baptists matched in character and durability the granite hills of New Hampshire whence came their founding father, Benjamin Randall. They never constituted a large group; paradoxically, they

almost seemed to discourage affiliation by their stringent approach to the qualifications of those they sought to enlist. Many were the grapplings of soul and mind which occupied the elders as the new denomination sought to apply its basic principles and establish its beliefs and its church.

The American economy was overwhelmingly agricultural in the 19th century. The long, cold northern winters, with little farm activity possible, lent themselves to ecclesiastical debate, to consideration of every tenet and every minute point of denominational belief. Politics served as the other popular conversational and intellectual exercise; the end of the 18th century saw a review of all the old beliefs, political or religious, and the emergence of new and timely concepts. The Calvinism of the Puritans had served its purpose. The real problem now to "free thinkers," aside from such details as total immersion versus "sprinkling," or infant baptism versus church membership by conscious choice, was the question of the relationship between the dominant Congregational Church and the states. While "sprinkling" and "conscious acceptance" were energetically debated and discussed, it appeared that over all was the individual's desire to separate his church and personal faith from the civil authority. Roger Williams led the way in the New World when he established in his colony of Rhode Island in 1638 the principle, set forth in a compact among the colony's members, that its duly enacted laws need be obeyed "only in civil things."

While this civil and religious separation was the basic division (the Pilgrims were also "Separatists," in their first reincarnation becoming Congregationalists, then Baptists in time), it is likely that "conscious acceptance, total immersion and the like were the lifeline, the vehicle of conversation that engrossed the town elders. These early settlers listened to and afterwards discussed the views of the itinerant preachers who travelled about the Northeastern countryside.

The messages of these ministers were not always generated by the Holy Spirit. However, moved by all kinds of motives and purposes, these men, ordained or not, carried preachments that fitted into the revolutionary and inquiring mentality of the time. The wonder is that with all the variations and alternatives of belief, any few denominations ever achieved sufficient unity as to tenets to permit the establishment of a single homogeneous church body with an effective brotherhood of members.

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

Yet one Benjamin Randall founded in 1780 a church with such a body of belief and tenacity of faith, religious and moral, that it survived as a force of 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.

Randall's relatively short life by today's standards -- just under sixty years from 1749 to 1808 -- spanned the birth of the new nation from the ideological debates through the physical revolution and final independence linked with a new social concept of government. In his lifetime he saw the commencement of the 19th century's great expansion, the construction of the symbolic new capital midway between the bustling North and the agricultural South.

The beliefs and convictions of a Freewill Baptist are nowhere more clearly epitomized than in the inscription on the Italian marble obelisk, on its base of New Hampshire granite, above the graves of Randall and his wife Joanna. Dedicated before a thousand persons on September 14, 1859, four days before John Brown, another evangelistic New Englander, made his furious but climactic raid at Harpers Ferry, the inscription included these words:

The human will
free and self determining.

Salvation free and
possible for all.

The name of this new or, in modern popular phraseology, "splinter"¹³ sect was intriguing and suited to the times and the beliefs of Randall's converts. "Freewill" Baptists were characterized by a revolutionary and original tone which sprang from the temper of the age. This tone did not quite imply "free thinker," but it did indicate that the believer was at liberty to think and to choose, thus going a long way

toward independence, self-determination, and self-respect.

It was this message that Benjamin Randall proclaimed 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, where possibly they were over their heads. Many claims for intellectual attention competed in the self-proclaimed "Hub." The Freewill Baptists were hardly sophisticated; they had had limited opportunity for education. While they might argue interminably the basics and the refinements of their creed, fundamentally they were moved from the heart rather than the head. They were "single-tracked" in their thinking; no deviation from their convictions was permitted, and the Bible was their witness. Boston might have thought them anachronistic in their habits and beliefs, but no one could question their dedication.

Gradually small actions pointed toward a greater involvement in the affairs of the secular world. In 1823 a Free Mission Society was organized in Maine, and in 1835 this became the Freewill Baptists' Home Mission Society. The first issue of the Morning Star was published in 1826 at Limerick, Maine, and before long it became the organ of the entire denomination. Its editorial offices soon moved to Dover, New Hampshire where it remained until transferred in 1885 to Boston, against

considerable opposition among the elder brethren.

During the first General Conference at Tunbridge, Vermont, in 1827, the delegates early showed a basic position in their secular as well as their religious thinking. The Conference trampled the pro-slavery prejudice against color beneath the delegates' 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, Robert Tash of Exeter, New Hampshire.

One goal was an itinerant ministry sufficiently organized to avoid encroachments and misinterpretations by "self-called and heretical Men" travelling through the countryside as Freewill Baptists. Home missionary work thus became an important field of endeavor, engaging the serious attention of the denomination's most active men and women. /L.C

In 1829 Silas Curtis of Maine, at 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; preachers visited that state, and also a small branch in South Carolina.

The introduction of the church to foreign missions came from "General Baptist" missionaries in India and the West Indies, who described the condition of the heathen and appealed for cooperation. This laid the foundation for growing interest in the Foreign Mission Society, and

attracted leading members of the church to its organization and development.

Activity at home was of a different nature. The Home Mission Society was established in 1834, two years after the foreign group. It would appear that the timing of this step was largely one of organization. The assignment of domestic "missionaries" to the towns of Maine, Massachusetts and Vermont had been common practice. Support of itinerant and proselyting preachers was advised and encouraged. Probably the impulse which brought the new agency to life, however, was the opening of new Western territories. The internal expansion pushed by Andrew Jackson gave the opportunity; the roads, the canals, and very soon the railroads were to clear the way.

The missionaries' vineyard then was the frontier settlement, the farming community and the homesteader. The Mississippi was the farthest limit, and the distant territory was often hostile and dangerous. Yet we are not speaking only of the frontier town, but rather of the new community settled not by foreign immigrants of the late 1840's, but often the pious and determined farmers from New England and upper New York State. The first missionary of the Home Society was the Reverend Jonathan Woodman, prototype of the evangelical brethren, especially of the Freewill Baptist and his mission of good deeds. From the beginning Silas Curtis, William Burr, and later all the other stalwarts took their places in this vital missionary work -- men like Perkins, Sinclair,

Stewart, Dyer and Anthony.

Jonathan Woodman was an unusual example of the Freewill Baptists. He was born in Vermont in 1798 only two decades after the beginning of his church. His life of ninety years spanned all but the last decade of his denomination, after which 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 atypical, both in its drama for that day and 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 to 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 the church."

Such 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 the Reconstruction. They learned to survive the most arduous living conditions, surrounded often by unfriendly or impious people.

The next important groundwork for the later effort was the

founding of The Education Society in 1840, with Silas Curtis among the organizers, to provide "Biblical instruction for pious young men who promise usefulness to the church." This was a difficult step, because many of the early Freewill Baptists, who were principally from rural areas and accepted the Bible and their hearts as sufficient guidance for all denominational needs, regarded the new Society, if not with suspicion, at least with misgivings regarding the blandishments of broad secular and general education.

The ~~the~~ ^{ER} 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 sophisticated intellectual atmosphere, Elder Jeremiah Bullock "with quite a constituency, mostly in York County, Maine, permanently withdrew from the denomination." He opposed the temperance commitment (presumably for health reasons), and declared he would "crawl on his knees to set fire to all books." The antipathy to book learning passed, however; 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 opened in various communities, some as part of the tasks of the Home Missionary Society.

The Parsonfield (Maine) Seminary, launched in 1832, was granted a \$700 library by the Society, and other schools were encouraged. In all, three score schools, seminaries or colleges, as they were variously called, performed as best they could during the half century from 1832 into the 1880's. Some became substantial institutions, such as Bates College at Lewiston, Maine and Hillsdale College 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 this story.

But fundamental to all was the vital fact of the missionary and educational experience garnered through the Foreign and Home Mission Societies and The Education Society during the three decades prior to 1860. These were important not only for the experience they provided, but also for the deliberate acceptance of educational and missionary work as a province of the denomination. The knowledge gained and the techniques acquired would mean much when the deluge of freedmen and refugees turned toward the schools and the churches for that precious education, the magical "three R's," and that spiritual succor which would be their support in the first great challenge of emancipation. This challenge would come de facto through the fortunes of war and the movement of troops, legally by the Proclamation of September, 1862 and later the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Constitutional amendments.

But before this missionary work could embark on 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. Knowledge and sentiment would have to be crystallized among the Freewill Baptists and among all religious groups and the public as well.

It had required three or four decades, really a half century, until 1833 and 1837, for the British Parliament to effect emancipation. 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 arouse the public conscience. Much of this material flowed to America; it was applicable to the situation and convincing to the eager missionary heart. The road was to be a long one. Conflict of interest, as old as time, is as hampering as popular inertia to any effort required for change. Harriet Beecher Stowe's imaginative but stirring Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly, was yet to be written, but the times were ready for it.

The Freewill Baptists shared the handicaps of uncertainty and divided counsel, though to a lesser degree than other denominations. By 1850 they had grown to a membership of almost 50,000, largely domiciled in New England, with 862 ministers and 1158 churches. Although the number of church members showed a substantial decline in the ten years after 1840, this was considered only a temporary and possibly a cleansing phenomenon. Most of the departed were held to be "Millerites,"

These were the deluded followers of William Miller, who promised them the end of the world by the year 1843, and told them that "the Freewill Baptist Church was Babylon and they must leave it to be saved." Having been disappointed also in the anticipated "coming of Christ in 1843" they "lost all confidence in religion and became worse than before." But the membership was to remain at 50,000 until the eve of the Civil War, when at the very time of John Brown's desperate act at Harpers Ferry in 1859, there was recorded a gain of ten thousand, or twenty per cent, in the three years just preceding. Except for the understandable variations of the war years, membership was to increase regularly for most of the balance of the century.

But soon a determined position had 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 height; mobs were frequent; churches were divided, and the question was sure to come before (the) 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 ruin the nation; that the denomination should urge abolition of slavery in all states; that all Christians must frequently and fervently pray for its removal; and that the Freewill Baptists had "Abundant cause for gratitude to God" that they were so generally united on the "distracting subject."

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

Despite the harmonious atmosphere of this important eighth 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, than were the decisions of the Conference itself.

For twenty-five years the United States was to grow with all the ebullience of what we have come to call the "American spirit." And despite the growth, the empire-building and the personal opportunity to work or gamble for personal and financial rewards, there still stabbed in the side of the public and private conscience, with ever-increasing pain, the anachronistic institution of human slavery. The enslavement of the black captives from Africa was archaic morally, and becoming so economically, but this latter aspect was not generally realized or accepted by the slave owner. Many battles, spiritual, 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 other denominations, 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 now principally concerned, would have shown a shifting of emphasis. In the early period William Lloyd Garrison could barely escape lynching by Boston's State Street commercial clerks; in the final days, on the eve of war, a young Unitarian minister, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, could rush from his pulpit to lead a group of armed plotters against United States marshals legally renditing from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts a fugitive piece of human property in the form of Anthony Burns.

By 1846 there existed 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 were the Reverend David Frost and several other distinguished elders of the church. In fact it would be difficult, owing to the leadership position of these men in general church affairs, 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.

Society's pioneer participants was a Freewill Baptist minister. In 1833 this man, probably William Burr, became an associate editor of the Star. In 1834, a year before he was appointed editor-in-chief, the paper published an equivocal 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 claimed to be humanitarian, if somewhat tempered 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 Star's editors, leading to a staff reorganization. In 1835 the Star's governing body, the "Publishing Committee," declared that slaveholding was a sin, and that though politics should be eschewed, "all the moral influence within our power" should be used to "reprove sin." Continuing, the Committee agreed that ". . . under the existing critical circumstances of the country, the subject should be treated with caution and the sin of slaveholding be reproved with great kindness." The same year the denomination as a whole unanimously at its General Conference condemned slavery in an unmistakable fashion.

A decade or two later this still equivocal position, in terms of

action other than prayer, was considered courageous in view of the public mood of the 1830's. "Popular feeling was boiling with emotion against abolitionists," according to the Freewill Baptists' Anti-Slavery Society's Fifth Annual Report in 1851, "and mobs, imprisonment and death had been the fate of some."

But for the denomination itself any position was 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." Their petition was refused. Yet the publishers, "the Printing Establishment" of the denomination, owed a debt of \$15,000 for books and for the Star. Of this, \$6,000 was a charge against the trustees personally. The times were hard, and the Star's position on slavery was attacked by numerous dissidents; some expressions were "vile and abusive," and the subscription lists declined markedly.

By the time of the General Conference of 1837, assembled at Greenville, Rhode Island, the issue was becoming critical. "To reconcile its disaffected members, to avert the public odium heaped upon abolitionists" (remember the rather mild tone, a spiritual condemnation, that alone represented the stand so far adopted), "to prevent the financial collapse of the treasured printing Establishment, and to receive an act of incorporation" required that "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 with no disposition to retract, which were adopted without a dissenting vote. The trustees must have rejoiced. Only a few months earlier they had gathered, 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 negative vote, and the "glorious news went forth to the millions in bonds!"

Despite the determination of these anxious people, or it may be 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 better. After three annual appeals to the Legislature, it was granted incorporation. Similar chartering obstacles were encountered in Ohio, where the Freewill Baptists' little Geneva Seminary, a "manual laboring" school and farm, opened in 1842. However, the state authorization in ✓

~~18~~ 1843 prohibited colored persons from attending, a restriction removed later before the church would accept its charter.

The next great position against slavery was taken at the 14th General Conference which convened at Providence, Rhode Island on 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. A Spartan band" (in the U.S. Congress) "to freedom pledged, stood unmoved while their colleagues quailed, but might prevailed against right and the North became blood hounds for the South in hunting the panting fugitive!"

At this Conference a fleeing Negro preacher, a Freewill Baptist, pleaded his case and his plight, describing the risk at any hour of being "torn from his home, his family and his pastorate." The Conference was emotionally aroused, and before disbanding unanimously adopted strong resolutions which in effect pledged the denomination to disobey the law -- an action which William H. Seward had already, in March 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 complain if we obey God, and without resistance, suffer the penalty." The Conference 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, the denomination announced that ". . . 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 9,000 weekly, mainly among devout, earnest readers in northern New England, and abolitionism had become a strong bond of the sect's union. By 1860 the Star's circulation had reached 11,000. The members, with few exceptions, were talking, praying and voting abolitionists.

By the end of 1851, the Freewill Baptists had gone almost 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's 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 occurred 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 dedicated. New Hampshire in mid-19th century America was a prosperous and key state, and the Freewill Baptists were active there in public as well as religious matters. They have been credited with being the first to break the power of the pro-slavery forces in New Hampshire by the election of John P. Hale to the United States Senate in 1847. Clearly they were still aroused by their continued failure to win their cherished Printing Establishment charter from the State Legislature.

Oliver Johnson, one of William Lloyd Garrison's biographers, singled out these determined 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 two hundred ten 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.

CHAPTER III

THE WAR AND THE REFUGEE

Mobilization in wartime means one set of compelling emotions and actions to most people -- a rush to arms, hopes and fears, disruption in the lives of the great and the modest, the brave and the timid. All this was true for the American citizen in the spring of 1861. On April 12, Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor was fired upon and fell after two days. Abraham Lincoln, President for only five weeks, called for 75,000 volunteers, and a fortnight later for another 40,000. By July, the total authorized approximated three quarters of a million men.

The Sixth Massachusetts "took the cars for Washington," and 400 Pennsylvania troops arrived there on April 18. Congress was not to convene until the Fourth of July, in time to be dismayed and probably badly frightened by the first Bull Run. And all this time from the White House the flags of the Confederacy could be seen flying over the port of Alexandria just down the Potomac.

The War of the Rebellion, as the official history termed it, was thus still very young when a new and unanticipated crisis arose to plague the already overwhelmed infant administration. Into prominence came the Negro refugee. Lacking any capacity for self-support except the

the most rudimentary, with or without his family, ignorant of the factors causing his uprooting, he headed for military camps where he soon learned there might be some possible charity subsistence from the troops.

The first experience was at Fortress Monroe, where General Benjamin Butler arrived and took command on May 21, 1861. Twenty-four hours later a small group of Negroes, working on Confederate defenses nearby, slipped through the Federal lines and was brought before the General. Determining their previous status and seeking some legal and reasonable procedure for their treatment and retention, this skillful and imaginative trial lawyer, temporarily in uniform, seized upon the term "contraband of war," and directed that they be assigned by the Quartermaster to the construction of a bakery building then under way at the Fortress. Thus did the South's acceptance of the Negro slave as property constitute a convenient means and excuse for expropriating him. The term "liberation" as applied to private property by the soldiers of World War I three-quarters of a century later would have been even more suitable in the 1860's.

For the next several weeks the flow of refugees swelled rapidly. By July they were laboring on the breastworks, their dependents supported in part at least by rations issued in exchange for this employment. One Edward L. Pierce, a private soldier of the Third Massachusetts Regiment,

was placed in charge of the activities of the refugees, and with some assistance from fellow troops he made use in early July of half a hundred Negroes. This assignment, whether fortuitous or owing to some special interest of his deriving from his convictions as an abolitionist of responsibility, led to a series of events.

A week later Private Pierce and his comrades were discharged, having completed their terms of enlistment. Edward Pierce was no callow youth. Forty-one years old and a graduate of Brown University and the Harvard Law School, he was the secretary to Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase when he enlisted as a "three months volunteer" in the first week of the war.

After his discharge Pierce naturally would have reported immediately to his former employer -- the Treasury Secretary at Washington -- a man who at his Ohio home had been deeply engrossed in benevolent and political activities and associations in behalf of the Negro, and had earned the soubriquet "attorney general for runaway slaves."

The fugitive slave, the "contraband," the wandering plantation worker and his problems, and equally pressing, the problems which he was heaping upon the harried military commanders at the beginning of a dreadful and overwhelming war, occupied an important part of Pierce's report and his discussions with Secretary Chase.

Another concern of the Treasury Department involved the availability of cotton fibre to the New England textile mills, as well as

those of England which even now saw a two-fold opportunity in the fratricidal conflict -- dividing a future potentially powerful nation, once its rebellious colony, and enlisting a valuable economic ally in the Confederacy.

Pierce looked like the answer to Secretary Chase's problems in the South, in any event. On November 30th the Secretary placed him in charge of the accumulating Negro colony at Fortress Monroe. Here Pierce could observe the progress already made with his erstwhile charges and the many additions from behind the lines since his departure in July, four months earlier. He had hardly then left for the North, a mustered-out volunteer, when General Butler received an offer of civilian assistance for the relief of the Negro refugees who were proving such a source of increasing anxiety.

This offer came from Lewis Tappan, Treasurer of the American Missionary Association which he and his brother Arthur had originally helped to establish in 1846, in connection with the "Schooner Amistad" incident. This had to do with a slave ship mutiny which aroused much public and legal controversy. The Association explicitly committed itself to the cause of the Negro.

Butler still had no clean-cut instructions from Washington as to a government-approved method of handling the refugees. In response to his report and inquiry of May 25th, both General Scott and War Secretary Simon Cameron had given their endorsement to his work proposals,

but Scott apparently failed to answer his further query of May 27th. When the flow of Negroes and their families swelled further, he had put the able men to work, applying their pay to the maintenance of their families. Butler never did get the desired authority from the War Department, although on August 6th Congress legislated vaguely around the matter, declaring slave-owners had forfeited their ownership claims when permitting their chattels' labor for Confederate military purposes.

In a letter of August 10, 1861, Butler accepted Tappan's and the American Missionary Association's proposal to make available clothing, supplies and teachers. Promptly, in later August, the Reverend C. L. Lockwood and his associate the Reverend Reuben Tomlinson arrived at Hampton. Both were to be prominent in Negro educational work in the ensuing period. Tomlinson was an officer of the Pennsylvania Branch of the American Freedmen's Union Commission. He served two years on the staff of General Rufus Saxton, who interested himself extensively in Negro matters, particularly those relating to plantation labor and economic rehabilitation in South Carolina. Tomlinson was a notable business figure after the war.

General Butler had moved on, but his successor General Wool extended full cooperation to Lockwood and his companion. A Sunday School was opened on September 15th in former President Tyler's deserted mansion, and on September 17th the first day school for freedmen was established, a seed which was to flourish in many ways. In

this particular case the school finally grew into Hampton Institute, where many early Negro leaders, including Booker T. Washington, would be educated under the direction of General Samuel Chapman Armstrong.

This first missionary to the freedmen on the scene in August, the Reverend Lockwood, had a good start, "the way having been opened for him by an official correspondence and interviews with the Assistant Secretary of War and Generals Butler and Wool." Lockwood's initial work was the establishment of Sunday Schools and church societies "mingled with inculcation of industrious habits, order and good conduct." He sent for "primers and two or three female teachers to open week-day schools." He asked that the need for assistance be brought before the public.

That year from Fortress Monroe he wrote, "I ask especial interest in your prayers that I may be endowed with wisdom for these peculiar and momentous responsibilities. Parents and children are delighted with the idea of learning to read." A day school was opened on November 17th with twenty scholars and a young colored teacher, Mary L. Peake, daughter of a mulatto and an Englishman "of rank and culture." She had been educated in England and had taught in the United States before the War. This was the background of experience when Port Royal and the islands of the Georgia coast opened up as another major scene of refugee need.

Pierce must have communicated this to his correspondents in the anti-slavery societies in the North, and to Secretary Chase. In the meantime, General T. W. Sherman, not to be confused with his fellow West Point alumnus and more famous colleague, General William Tecumseh Sherman, had set forth from Hampton in the fleet of a Union naval Captain, Samuel F. Dupont. On November 7, 1861, Port Royal fell, and shortly thereafter control was gained of most of the South Carolina and Georgia coast, and the cotton-producing Sea Islands as well. There alone the plantation owners had fled, leaving 9,000 slaves behind. It is interesting that this "namesake" general was also to reach the Georgia seacoast, but almost exactly three years later, after his devastating march from Atlanta.

Fortress Monroe and Hampton had been the testing ground. Port Royal, Beaufort and the Sea Islands confirmed the need for aid and rudimentary education for the freedman, so titled by the benevolent, philanthropic and religious societies that began to spring up throughout the North, dedicated to his relief and assistance.

Secretary Chase, and Senator Charles Sumner of whom Pierce later became the official biographer, listened, with greater interest evidently than had Abraham Lincoln or the Congress in general, to the later report Pierce made after his winter tour of duty at Fortress Monroe and Port Royal. Early in the second year of the war the struggle to secure for all peoples an absolute equality of civil rights regardless

of race or color had begun. Pierce's proposal for financing the school expenses of Negroes by the sale of confiscated cotton crops was accepted by Secretary Chase. While such a system worked for a while in this area, and was undoubtedly used elsewhere, the basic pattern which continued throughout the war was one of improvisation. The funds and the books, the teachers and the missionaries, were constantly on a "make-do" basis. Sources of aid were always uncertain and generally behind schedule, a condition which is never remarkable in wartime and which must have been accepted as conventional in the light of delays in mid-19th century communication and transportation.

Early on the scene at Port Royal in November, 1861, was the Reverend Mansfield French, "government agent for Negro inspection," who advised the military commanders of the condition of the Negroes of the coastal areas, and arranged an appeal by the military to the "government and philanthropists for rations, clothing and teachers for the hordes of uneducated, ignorant and improvident blacks, abandoned to anarchy and starvation."

While they were still at Port Royal it became equally obvious to Pierce and to General T. W. Sherman that far more extensive aid was needed, and at once. Pierce wrote the Reverend J. M. Manning and Samuel Cabot, Jr., of Boston, "setting forth the condition of Negroes within the lines, their disorganized state, their destitution and their exposure by contact with the army to injurious influences." He asked

for clothing, money and teachers.

At almost the same time, General T. W. Sherman at Hilton Head issued in February, 1862 his General Order No. 9, which also had the effect of an appeal to private sources. He stated that he was dividing the area under his control in South Carolina into districts, and that teachers were needed there to educate "both old and young in the rudiments of civilization and Christianity."

These appeals opened a whole new field of activity to the non-military communities of the North. Until now the American Missionary Association had been the only formal body engaged in missionary and educational work. The United States Christian Commission, accompanying the military in the field and in the hospitals, had been founded at a special convention of the Young Men's Christian Association called for that specific purpose in New York City on November 16, 1861. It was eventually to have much contact with the refugee Negro, but its first duty in wartime was to the soldier and his relatives.

What was needed was organized philanthropy, coupled with the government's cooperation. The various pleas for help of French, Pierce and Sherman -- a minister, a lawyer and a soldier -- and of others already familiar with current conditions, received wholehearted and prompt response. The establishment and proliferation of the Freedmen's Aid Societies that followed these Macedonian cries were phenomena in themselves. Perhaps they were the answer to the prayers of the abolitionist groups, who wanted a final civil victory and were seeing the first

fruits of all their mighty efforts. It is worthy of note that the word "freedmen" was generally attached to all refugee Negroes, although emancipation was still a year away and technically, at least, few of those who had fled were in fact free.

In January, 1862, the American Missionary Association, having preempted the field of freedmen's relief by its good works, sent a second reinforcement of missionaries and teachers. In the meantime, the other calls had gone out, particularly those from General Sherman and Pierce at Port Royal. The owners had abandoned many excellent plantations as well as thousands of bewildered slaves.

After the American Missionary Association representatives at Fortress Monroe, three teachers were sent to Hilton Head in February 1862 by the Reverends J. W. Manning and Edward Everett Hale, and by Samuel Cabot, Jr., in response to Pierce's call. Manning held a meeting at his home in Boston on February 4th; three days later at the Young Men's Christian Union, the Boston Educational Commission was organized, and at the Old South Church there was a large gathering where Governor John A. Andrew was chosen president of the Commission, soon renamed the New England Freedmen's Aid Society.

Before the New England Society was organized, however, on January 8, 1862, Bostonian Solomon Peck had opened a school for freedmen at Beaufort, South Carolina, a short sixty days after the capture of nearby Port Royal. The Boston organizers were joined in the immediate weeks

by groups in New York and Philadelphia.

The American Missionary Association is appealing in many ways. With its early formation it covered a longer period of work among Negroes and needy whites than some contemporary agencies. It had originally been established in 1846 as a protest against the comparative silence on the slavery issue of other missionary societies. The Tappan brothers, who dominated its affairs for many years, were typical of the pious and dedicated people who early sought freedom for the bondsman, and later his religious and intellectual improvement. First at Fortress Monroe and Hampton in mid-1861, then six months later at Port Royal and Beaufort, it undertook its work. By 1863 it was active beyond Virginia and the Carolinas, in the refugee crossroad points of St. Louis and Cairo, and in 1864 it went into Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi.

The American Missionary Association deserves great credit for its early work. It had behind it fifteen years of non-denominational missionary work in the South prior to 1861, attempting to develop there under enormous difficulties an opposition to the institution of slavery, and to fill the slaves' religious vacuum. Knowledge and experience were thus accumulated regarding the educational status and requirements of the plantation and town worker, white and black. For the first six months of the noble experiment, from Lockwood's arrival at Hampton and the establishment of his first school there in the late summer of 1861, until the next stage on the Carolina and Georgia coasts, the

American Missionary Association largely dominated the scene.

Numbers are hard to determine, and there is possible duplication, but in the first six months, which might lead into a year after the war broke out, "seventy men and sixteen women were in the field, representing a number of societies."

At the end of the war, in June, 1865, the American Missionary Association became the vehicle for the good works of some smaller denominations -- the Freewill Baptists, the Wesleyans, the Reformed Dutch Church, and the Congregationalists, to which faith most officers of the Association owed allegiance.

In early February, 1862, the New England Freedmen's Aid Society was next, after the American Missionary Association, to send its aides to the South, responsive to Pierce's call and its own objectives. On March 3, 1862, less than a month later, 37 teachers and agricultural superintendents, 27 of whom were men, sailed from New York to Port Royal. Later that year, another 41 went to Norfolk, the Sea Islands, Washington, and St. Louis. This century-ago "domestic peace corps" had been carefully selected on the basis of "their enthusiasm and good sense," and included an outstanding older and successful Boston businessman, E. S. Philbrick, who contributed a thousand dollars and offered his services. He later profited handsomely (and apparently fairly) from his operation of abandoned plantations and the trade in cotton.

These people came from varying backgrounds. Many were

women schoolteachers who found a new career in the vacancies left by their male colleagues now in the armies. These men had represented a phenomenon of the early days of the first half century when the school-teacher predominated, particularly near the frontiers where stamina and authority were equal in importance to book learning. At this time teaching could be no longer solely a man's job. The war and the following burst of economic growth and developing industry would draw men away from pedagogy and into new fields in increasing numbers.

In the meantime girls were filling the gaps. Much has been written about them. A fellow shipmate, John Murray Forbes, on the steamer Atlantic which bore the first teachers to the Sea Islands, wrote,

Our passengers consist chiefly of the "villaintropic" society . . . bearded and mustached and odd-looking men, with odder-looking women You would have doubted whether it was the adjournment of a John Brown meeting or the fag end of a broken-down phalanstery! . . . Frantic women, unprotected females, appealed to the captain and to Mr. E. L. Pierce to let them go and teach young nigs; others in despair about their traps, some tearful at parting

Yet the author of these unkindly critical words was not only a successful Boston businessman and financier of railroads, but a strong Union man and aide to the abolitionist Massachusetts Governor Andrew. Forbes' most distinctive Civil War activity was organizing Massachusetts Negro regiments, and his insistence to President Lincoln that blacks be armed as an essential to Northern success. Perhaps the most dramatic -- certainly a more generous -- tribute to the teachers

is paid by Negro historian W. E. B. DuBois, when he speaks of

. . . the crusade of the New England schoolma'am . . .
The annals of this Ninth Crusade are yet to be written, --
the tale of a mission that seemed to our age far more quixotic
than the quest of St. Louis seemed to his. Behind the mists
of ruin and rapine waved the calico dresses of women who
dared, and after the hoarse mouthings of the field guns rang
the rhythm of the alphabet. Rich and poor they were, serious
and curious. Bereaved now of a father, now of a brother,
now of more than these, they came seeking a life work in
planting New England schoolhouses among the white and
black of the South. They did their work well. In that first
year they taught one hundred thousand souls, and more.

All was not always so colorful, but the experiences of many teachers
were indeed hazardous. Conditions were not happy, prosperous nor
safe in the war-swept valleys and mountains of the Eastern theatres of
conflict. And as we shall see, Appomattox did not ease the tensions.
For years the schoolteachers of the North and South (and there were a
good many of the latter) faced social and physical hazards as they intro-
duced broader opportunities for learning to the people of both races.

We have already noted that Northern economic development
and the ^{RELATIVELY} ~~predominantly~~ urban form of life of that section of the country
had laid the foundation for a common school system. ⁴¹ Horace Mann,
following years of controversy and labor, had created the structure a
decade before Sumter. A sister of Dr. Mann participated with Miss
Myrtella Miller in an early school of "higher" education for girls in the
District of Columbia in the 1850's. Clearly the conversion of the
specialized, largely private school system of the South to broader

common school programs would inevitably have come in the late 19th century as a matter of logical evolution. The war, which shattered accepted concepts of organized living, made rebuilding subject to the influences of the new thinking and methods of the North.

The complications were two-fold. The psychological bar in the South was strong against accepting innovative methods of a democratic nature, imported from a recent enemy. And there was a mass of ignorant, superstitious black people of all ages, until then regarded as inferior, and drastically limited in their capacity to absorb what they were offered. The South reacted violently in most areas to the uneasiness caused by educating its former slaves.

That the Reverend Lockwood should capture our attention is not because he was first in the field, but rather because the American Missionary Association commissioned him. The Association is important in its own right, but it happened also to be the vehicle which carried the Freewill Baptist missionaries and teachers into action, helping to sustain them in war and in reconstruction.

The American Missionary Association became the coordinating agency for a number of relatively small denominations in their relief and educational work, as earlier described. Their dramatic choice of the violent ground of the Shenandoah Valley offered the Freewill Baptists an exclusive area of vast public interest for their evangelical efforts. They were well aware of this, and frequently mention, in their

correspondence, the opportunity which the public's historic association gave to their work in the Valley.

Although the Association was largely made up of Congregation-
alists, it was organized as interdenominational. This appealed to many
churches that, while wishing to retain their identity in their missionary
work, still recognized the advantages of wartime cooperation within a
larger group, and in the early days of Reconstruction. The story of
education in the war period is one of emergency measures, which often
set the pattern for later years. This came about principally because
many of those engaged in this work during the war carried over into
Reconstruction their ideas of what could and could not be accomplished
among the untaught freedmen. L
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The Army was deeply involved, to its regret and handicap.
Each invasion of Southern territory meant a new horde of assorted
refugees, many ill, and most without livelihood or shelter. Each Army
reacted as best it could. Not only General Butler, but Generals Banks,
Halleck, Saxton, Sherman and Grant were forced to Draconian measures.
In the early days there was no agreement as to the legal means to be
taken. General Butler's off-the-cuff reference to "contrabands" at the
very beginning cut the Gordian knot for some commanders, but it was
not until Emancipation that many of the contradictory legal aspects could
be clarified. "Military necessity" was another helpful pretext, as always
in war, but no true order could come until the end of hostilities brought

less divided attention to the four million freedmen's plight.

From this wartime experience prominently appeared Army Chaplain John Eaton, assigned by General Grant to supervise freedmen's affairs in the Mississippi Valley; Samuel Chapman Armstrong, a twenty-five-year-old Colonel of Negro troops, later a Brigadier, who was to shepherd Hampton Institute into a commanding position; and many another soldier or military associate who wished to convert his abolitionism, after the military period, into the final and more fruitful stage of Reconstruction. Among these more modest figures we should note particularly a youthful alumnus of the Christian Commission, Nathan Cook Brackett, a Freewill Baptist from Maine.

The New England Freedmen's Aid Society continued its work longer than the others. In 1872 it summed up its accomplishments of ten years in this fashion: ". . . to relieve bodily suffering; to organize industry; give instruction in the rudiments of knowledge, morals, religion and civilized life; to inform the public of the needs, rights, capacities of the freedmen." At the final meeting of the Society it was stated, ". . . we may still claim to have been the first and last society to base our work on the broad ground of national secular education, having no sectarian or party interest."

Whatever pardonable pride may appear in this announcement or that of any other association, the history of the American Missionary Association and of the New England Society, without diminishing the

sacrifices and generous labors of others toiling in the vineyard, does supply a good view of these many workers and their supporters. They seemed tireless, and they wanted to "help and relieve" above all else. With few exceptions they had come directly from the ranks of anti-slavery, most of them being abolitionists who recognized that their responsibility continued after Emancipation. They saw the task through; thousands of drifting and simple folk benefited from their exertions. The twentieth-century Peace Corps would be proud to acknowledge a kinship.

Speaking of all the teachers as a class, it was said that "many of the teachers were also ministers, and practically all were religious to the point of fanaticism . . . They must be men of fervent piety . . . Surely there were victories to be won for Peace, surely the Church militant had its heroes to give to what is but a continuation of the previous conflict." The war was over, but the work of Christianity was just commencing. "We might withdraw our swords but we should send spelling books and Bibles to the front. The military might be disbanded but the missionaries should organize." They need not go to Africa or India -- more important work demanded help at home, close at hand "among a people with a wonderful reverence for the Bible" and stimulated by a "wild desire to know."

The 19th Triennial of the Freewill Baptists, at war's end, served to emphasize the sect's passionate devotion to the freedom of

man's soul as well as his body. The name "Freewill Baptist" was a stirring and explicit term for the devoted followers of Benjamin Randall, founder of the denomination.

At this 19th Conference in 1865, new thinking was evident. The Committee on Church Policy recommended that "as far as practicable the word 'will' in our name be disused, especially in connection with our labors among the Freedmen." This was a significant concession to the spirit of the times, and evidenced a hard-headed, practical sense of public relations mingled with an emphasis on the spiritual.

As the war drew to a close and other objectives began to develop, the Federal government appeared on the scene in a non-military guise. A month before Appomattox, on March 3, 1865, the Congress legislated, within the War Department, a Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, popularly known as the "Freedmen's Bureau," an agency which was to have much impact on Storer College and Negro education in general.

Despite the Freewill Baptist Church's basic tenet of the separation of church and state, Storer College, the principal fruit of its labors in the Shenandoah Valley, was at its inception largely a melding of a zealous drive toward evangelism and education, and the physical property and monetary contributions of the Federal government.

Part of this was accidental and might have been duplicated elsewhere. The war over, vacant and badly damaged buildings, public

and private, were adapted for school and similar purposes. That the American Missionary Association should have allotted the Shenandoah Valley to the Freewill Baptists must have come about partly from the presence of the one-year veteran of the United States Christian Commission in that area, young Nathan Brackett, who also carried the commission of the American Missionary Association from the autumn of 1864. Later, in July, 1867, he was also commissioned by the Freedmen's Bureau.

After the tragic holocaust of any war comes the superb human conduct which tempts back renewed faith in mankind. So it was when the Civil War ended.

The Sanitary Commission, the Christian Commission, the Army itself, working among the freedmen, all strove to assuage the immediate anguish and distress of wartime. But not until toward the end, with the dawn of Reconstruction visible, could organized and extensive attention be directed to the potential new citizen. The Freedmen's Bureau and the far-reaching and controversial legislation of Reconstruction would appear after Appomattox, but before this came what we have called the private "Peace Corps" of a century ago.

Nathan Cook 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 being at a campus abandoned by others who had joined the troops, he

transferred to Dartmouth and was graduated with the Class of 1864 in July.

Freed from financial responsibility to his parents at twenty-one, he had saved enough money in a year to enter the Maine State Seminary at Lewiston, which later became Bates College under the guidance of his and Storer College's earliest friend, Oren B. Cheney. From there he went to Colby in 1862, prepared to graduate in 1864. Determined to enter the ministry, a popular profession among serious-minded youths in those days, he was constrained by his sense of duty and his anti-slavery convictions to participate somehow in the critical national struggle now reaching its climax. He was debarred from military service by a mild respiratory handicap. Therefore he turned, as a dedicated Christian servant of the Lord, to the United States Christian Commission. This was a body organized early in the war by the Young Men's Christian Association and manned by a heterogeneous but devoted group of men and women who asked only to serve the armies' personal and spiritual wants.

Perhaps to describe the Christian Commission as a combination of the Salvation Army, Red Cross and Young Men's Christian Association at work in wartime is to characterize it superficially, but conditions of battle a hundred years ago were unique. Burial parties, families and friends roamed the battlefields, sometimes while gunfire still sounded, looking for lost ones, succouring the injured, claiming the

fallen. Warfare had not become an organized business; it offered an opportunity for the most basic personal service and invited a Christian dedication. While patriotism and loyalty to a cause were deeply rooted, sensitivity to one's 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 (the latter to become embodied in future military medical and supply services) received volunteers of a high degree of public and social responsibility, although they might not have then used such words to describe their feelings and motives.

The United States Sanitary Commission, sometimes deprecatingly called the "fifth wheel" of the military machine, was organized in 1861 with special reference to the new area of preventive medicine, healthful and sanitary surroundings and procedures. Also within its province was developing regulations and standards for the operation of hospitals and all encampments and "tent cities" where troops were stationed or quartered. The work was of immeasurable value and saved many lives; as such, it strengthened the armies as combat forces.

The Christian Commission enjoyed less official status, although it was recognized for its great contribution in ameliorating the conditions of the soldier's life in the field and away from home. Let its fourth and final Report 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 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.

The Commission surrendered its mission promptly with the cessation of hostilities. It folded its tents and little libraries, and departed. The final report 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 had given the Commission a specific mandate, it had been pursued strictly unto the end, and now an accounting of the stewardship and the surrender of the trust committed to it was the proper 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, home agents, and permanent army agents, as well as "lady managers of diet kitchens."

Four hundred libraries were opened in the various theatres of war. Two-thirds of them were called "large" but actually numbered only 125 volumes in cases three feet square by eight inches deep, while the "small" cases were two feet square and seven inches deep, containing 75 volumes. Most of the large libraries were made up of new books; the

balance were donated by families and friends from household collections. After the war these libraries became "permanent institutions, blessing our national defenders on land and sea for years to come."

The account of these libraries and the following sampling of their contents evidences the atmosphere of this agency: History of the United States, Irving's Sketches, Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation, Temperance Tales, Miller on Alcohol, Lizors on Tobacco, Gibbons's Rome, Uncle Tom's Cabin, and a Life of Wesley. Stiff reading, most of it, for the common soldier, but this was a dedicated age, and the religious wants 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 in the hospitals, but the titles tell the story of the Commission and its personnel. They were high-minded, Victorian, and devoted to the soldier's spiritual and temporal needs.

What soon became apparent was that sanitation, diet and auxiliary non-military support for the million men who ultimately served in the Union forces were matters beyond the limited foraging and campaigning procedures of the recent Mexican War. In the physical health aspects the Sanitary Commission took the major initiative, made up as it was generally of medical practitioners. But as we have seen, the Christian Commission participated when there was a call for such activity on its part.

The men and women in this exhausting work were sustained by

high principles of belief and conviction. They were mainly abolitionists, and deeply religious; they were prepared to suffer many hardships.

Walt Whitman, himself hardly religious in the accepted sense, wanders in and out of the scene, having a tenuous and brief association with the organized work of the Christian Commission. He preferred to visit the hospitals with baskets of fruit on his arm, or with writing materials and conversation, or did what he could at nightfall on battlefields and in encampments. He was typical of the volunteers who roamed the military scene, helpful and courageous, but with little supervision or hindrance from those responsible for carrying on a vicious war.

Nathan Brackett too was a typical volunteer in the Christian Commission. In July, 1864, just graduated from Dartmouth College, the young churchman joined the Commission as a six weeks volunteer and was placed under the direction of the Reverend J. R. Miller at Philadelphia. Miller promptly sent him to Baltimore. Here he was assigned to head the work of the Christian Commission with Sheridan's Army in the Shenandoah Valley, and with this army he served until the end of the war.

This seems an odd combination of personalities, yet such associations were not unusual in those days. Gallant Phil Sheridan, the dashing military leader, only 33 years old, sometimes profane, pleasure-loving but aggressive in combat, found as a junior aide this young, profoundly religious college graduate whose record in the remaining months

of the struggle was also to attest to his ability and devotion to duty in the battle-ravaged valley of the Shenandoah.

The young clergyman found himself in a bed of thorny roses in the early autumn of 1864. Whether he had traveled beyond Portland, Maine, by this time is not known, but this busy seaport was probably his early framework of city life. In any event, he undertook his association with the Christian Commission in an atmosphere of horror and destruction on September 21, 1864, two days after the battle of Opequon, or Winchester. This was disaster, not in a Union military sense, but from a humanitarian aspect, for 9,000 men were lost between the two forces; of these a thousand were killed and almost six thousand wounded.

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 -- hardly lavish equipment. By this time Sheridan and his forces were following up their advantage against Confederate General Jubal Early with a spirited sunset attack at Fisher's Hill overlooking Strasburg, some twenty miles up the Valley. There was enough work to face at Winchester; Brackett teamed up with the Agent of the Sanitary Commission to do what he could. This was his baptism, and the pressure of active warfare was to continue relentlessly in the Valley until the final dispersal of Jubal Early's command at Staunton and Waynesboro at the end of February, 1865.

Before this time, a month later, the young clergyman witnessed

Sheridan's dramatic ride. Brackett was with the General at Winchester the day before the fifteen-mile foray to Cedar Creek and the hard-fought battle which opened at early dawn on October 19th. Something under 50,000 men were involved, and the losses approximated those of the fight at Winchester four weeks earlier -- a thousand dead, 5,000 wounded and over 2,500 missing. How could men with merely a double mule team of supplies cope with such disaster? Of course they could not. To be sure, there were other workers and there was additional help from the Sanitary Commission, the medical corps and the citizens of the Valley communities. But it must have been grisly and shocking to a relative newcomer, even after Winchester a few weeks before.

Somehow troops in war accommodate themselves, and so must young Brackett have done. 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 divided their time between battles at the hospitals or in the encampments "caring for the spiritual and temporal wants of the soldiers. . . ." 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 were to find him up and down the Valley, as General Sheridan advanced and retreated with the fortunes of war.

This series of Shenandoah campaigns had been exhausting. The hardships of life and war in the Valley are readily comprehended in

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 Sheridan wrote on August 6 to the effect that "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 a 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 flagpole a large banner with the single star of a Brigadier General.

The impressive, if war-battered, brick building commands a magnificent view of the gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains where the Potomac River is swollen by its confluence with the slower-moving but wide and overflowing Shenandoah. In this temporary headquarters, only slightly more than a year later, Nathan Brackett opened a freedmen's school, and in this building in 1867 Storer College itself received its first small group of students.

Until directly before the young Christian Commission volunteer arrived, the Confederates remained based at Winchester. They broke camp on the eve of September 19, 1864, and the Battle of the Opequon, or "Winchester." For a month Early and Sheridan advanced up and down the Valley "burning mills, storehouses, barns, grain and forage, driving before them all livestock and devastating the whole width of the Valley

from Staunton northward." The scene for Brackett's arrival and the final decisive task of the Christian Commission in the Valley was set by the late summer and autumn orders of Grant to Sheridan:

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.

In after years Nathan Brackett reminisced about a battle he had witnessed. The view is that of a month-old veteran fresh from his ministerial ordination in rigid, rural Maine, and his remembrances ring true of the colorful event.

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 18th of October and it was from Winchester to the army that General Sheridan made his ride now famous in history

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

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 ~~and~~ 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."

To all intents and purposes the final battle in the Shenandoah Valley was at Cedar Creek on October 19, 1864, an engagement which involved a serious near-defeat of the Federal troops. This battle occasioned "Little Phil's" famous ride on his beloved horse "Rienzi," later renamed "Winchester," to mark the Union victory there.

Meanwhile, Brackett was learning his duties and his mode of life the hard way. A few days before Cedar Creek he described another 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 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 "**Z**ion"; far different from the Lewiston Seminary and from Dartmouth and Colby Colleges. Yet he fitted into the scene of turmoil and

carried on with marked success. The final report of the Christian Commission was generous to him as the responsible head of its work in the Valley; 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 me 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 lifetime endeavor -- a fertile valley, destroyed and desolated, where thousands of soldiers had struggled backwards and forwards for close to four years. The atmosphere into which Brackett was plunged made him a perfect example, emotionally, of the fervid abolitionist gone to war. He had suffered with the troops and the refugees, and represented the very essence, the epitome, of all that the Civil War has come to mean -- death, suffering, heroism, terror, and ultimately peace and glory.

CHAPTER IV

THE CRISIS OF PEACE

The headquarters of the Christian Commission in the Valley was at Harpers Ferry throughout the war; also in the location were a major hospital and a supply center. These were so placed as to take advantage of the priceless availability of the railway to Washington and to the West and Southwest, together with the valuable canal. A dozen satellite stations surrounded the town, among them Frederick, Summit Point, Martinsburg, Winchester, Cumberland and Clarksburg. Brackett spent much time in Winchester. One historian lists him also at Staunton, Virginia, but this was later, after his marriage in late 1865, when Mrs. Brackett was with him there.

As one reads the reports and accounts of the Commission's works, those of the companion Sanitary Commission, and of all the other volunteer workers in the vineyards "where the grapes of wrath were stored," one has an impression of lively action and unstinted dedication in any effort to aid and comfort. Brackett, for example, conducted a school for Negroes in Winchester with the war still in progress.

There were other personalities at Winchester. Brackett must have known Miss Rebecca Wright, a fellow schoolteacher and Quaker, whose espionage activity for Sheridan earned her generous credit from the General for his capture of that city. This victory took place only a few days before Brackett appeared there with a companion and a two-mule wagon of supplies. On the day Sheridan entered Winchester he ended up, unplanned, at the home of Miss Wright, where he wrote out on a desk in her schoolroom the dispatch announcing that his troops had sent Early's army whirling back up the Valley.

Other impromptu schools sprang up among the armies, both for the Negro refugees and for the soldiers. 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. No effort was too great to obtain schooling, and during this tragic and

divisive conflict, the damage and harm of war had a partially balancing grace; service in the army introduced some semblance of order into the lives of thousands of inexperienced and frequently ignorant men. War is not an ideal school for living, but it often presents unanticipated and collateral openings to broadened understanding.

A Negro educator, Horace Mann Bond, wrote in The Education of the Negro,

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 naïve faith, but simple only in the pathetic assumption by Negroes 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 than in the enthusiasm with which it was initiated.

As the final 1866 report of the Christian Commission set forth, the task for which it had been created was done. Now the real problem emerged. Peace brought its reliefs, but the healing and the quest for a normal and peaceful life for the people of a reestablished Union was almost as tortured as the pangs of battle. The recovery took far longer than the destruction. And like anything which must be rebuilt, the nation in its reconstruction required that new materials and designs be added, sometimes with unhappy results, to the basic plan of the Union.

In the meantime, during the last year of the war, the missionary

and philanthropic bodies, civic and religious, had not forgotten the problems which peace might intensify. The ex-slave, untrained for freedom, could be a burden to himself and his country without a means of participating in the broader life from which he had so long been debarred. From an altruistic point of view, he was entitled to a helping hand if he was to benefit from his supposed new opportunities.

The Freewill Baptists through their Home Mission Society saw special opportunities for labor among the Southern freedmen during the war. As early as 1863, the Reverend Ebenezer Knowlton, a United States Congressman from 1854 to 1856 -- he later refused the Republican nomination for Governor of Maine in order to work in religious fields -- was made the Society's agent for work among the freedmen. In December, 1863, the Reverend Samuel S. Nickerson, aged thirty, was placed in charge of this work upon graduating in that year from the theological department of the New Hampton (New Hampshire) Literary Institution. Nickerson was the Society's "first missionary to bear the word of life to the long oppressed race." He arrived at Roanoke Island, South Carolina, that month, and labored in North Carolina and Virginia for four years until October, 1867. A church had been organized in March of 1863 at the heart of the missionary effort among all denominations, Beaufort, South Carolina, where a meeting-house was soon erected and the "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 during such a four-year period: soldiers, slaves, freedmen, former plantation owners, Yankee schoolteachers, male and female, fervid missionary workers always ready for a prayer meeting or a revival. Then there were the Treasury representatives, the Army officials, eventually the Freedmen's Bureau agents, plus Northern investors looking for a good plantation or two. Among them all there flourished the rascals, Northern and Southern, white and black, who were ready to prey on the victims of war's disaster. Despite this chaos, the good work was carried on in seven Southern states; in 1864-65, for example, by forty-six Freewill Baptist missionaries and teachers. However, the Reconstruction period was not deemed favorable to missionary work in the South, and after a brief time it was centralized. The church and mission at Beaufort was closed. Silas Curtis, so active in the earliest days of the Freewill Baptist Anti-Slavery Society, was beginning to direct the postwar operations of the missions. His energy and devotion to the denomination's activities emerge in the constant flow of his correspondence to Nathan Brackett. He was pained at seeing the waste in teachers' talents, and tried to find jobs for them in 1867 in more promising fields at Harpers Ferry and in the lower Shenandoah Valley.

The Shenandoah Mission of the Freewill Baptists appears to

have been junior by a few months to another in Cairo, Illinois, and was the product of several circumstances. The Cairo Mission then was the Western prong of the church's lance, responding to the devil's pitchfork, a fork pointing northward "from the ramparts of ignorance and un-Christian ways." The Army, General Grant and Chaplain John Eaton had recognized and met the need as best they could in the Western areas. The Shenandoah Mission's location at Harpers Ferry was not at first a settled fact. Rather, within the general oversight of the "catch-all" American Missionary Association, the Freewill Baptists undertook religious and educational work in conjunction with several other denominations, along the Federally-occupied maritime areas of the Confederacy, particularly at Beaufort, South Carolina. The withdrawal to the Shenandoah region resulted partly from disillusionment with President Johnson's reconstruction policies. Considered outrageous by Silas Curtis, he wrote in December 1865 that as "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 consequence left in the place."

Eventually the mission, church and school were closed out in the Southeast. The Baptists then looked for a more suitable site for their vigorous evangelism, again on the "border of civilization," as Silas Curtis said, between the slave and free states. Such new fields

for the missionary work were at Cairo, and also on the well-worn route down the Valley of the Shenandoah. Nathan Brackett did make an inspection tour of the Carolinas.

Appropriately enough a niece of Horace Mann was already teaching blacks at Harpers Ferry in the winter of 1864-65. She was a schoolmarm, not a church representative, and little is known of her activities. Florence Mann must have labored in a hectic atmosphere. We have seen the community's history in that year of Sheridan's and Early's see-saw movements on the town's southern doorsteps. Brackett was acquainted with Miss Mann. He presented her with a military chair from which she presided over her charges. When she departed, whether for home or to new fields is not clear, she left her chair behind at her schoolroom in the Armory Paymaster's quarters. (The very chair is now preserved at Harpers Ferry by Nathan Brackett's grandson, John N. Newcomer.) In the Paymaster's quarters in late 1865 Brackett ^{EMPLOYED IT AS} ~~launched~~ his own "seat of learning," when with his bride he set up the little school which ultimately became Storer College, one of the earliest of the war-generated academies.

Released from the Christian Commission when it wound up its affairs, Nathan Brackett headed for Maine and home. In October of 1865 he was on his way to Lewiston and his delayed theological course, and also planned to attend the triennial General Conference of the Freewill Baptists in that city. This, of course, was the first postwar

meeting. In October, 1862, the Baptists had met at Hillsdale, Michigan, and in both years the moderator was Dr. Edmund B. Fairfield, president of the denomination's Hillsdale College. The clerk, chosen for the ninth and last time since his first term in 1841, was the redoubtable Silas Curtis, president of the Anti-Slavery Society and afterward firm champion of Storer College.

These meetings were no small affairs. Though the "Delegates" numbered on this occasion only fifty-five, the event lasted nine days. The Conference also issued an estimate that 1500 persons were visitors during its sessions, of whom 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. After a year at war, exposed to every danger that might face a fighting man, yet unarmed himself, he had been commended generously by the Christian Commission. He had undertaken with a representative of the Sanitary Commission the first negotiations looking toward resumption of commerce and trade up and down the Shenandoah Valley, between erstwhile enemies and hostile civilians.

Brackett in later years took much satisfaction in this activity.

As he related it in his ^{LETTERS} ~~memoirs~~:

Of one thing connected with my life in the Army I am proud: At the close of the war the valley of Virginia was in devastation, Sheridan had destroyed everything in the shape of crops and 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 midst of such bitter feeling, who could be trusted as agent for both sides? A large delegation of both Northerners and Southerners met and unanimously 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 genuinely moved by the success of the Union arms only a few months earlier. Prayers had been answered, sacrifices had been made, and "right," as they saw it, had prevailed. Fifteen years before, the Anti-Slavery Society had ended its fifth Annual Report with the words, ". . . we shall join in the rapturous song, 'Jehovah has triumphed -- his people are free.'" And surely these good people must have sung those words "rapturously" in October, 1865.

More practically, 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 cry to the brethren for help

of a sacrificial nature.

Nathan Brackett may have had second thoughts; there were complications. For a young man of his age from rural New England, he had travelled widely, although one hundred years ago the seaports of New Hampshire and Maine brought the world and its ways nearer to home than was the case in the country's interior, where the railroad and the telegraph lines were only then penetrating. More important, Nathan had become engaged to a classmate of the days at the old Maine State Seminary. Louise Wood had taught at Lewiston since her graduation in 1860, while her fiancé had gone on to Colby, Dartmouth and the Christian Commission in the field. When Nathan arrived home in September he found the little Freewill Baptist community with which he was affiliated at a "white heat with zeal" for missions among the newly emancipated Negroes. Young women were volunteering as teachers, and the Home Mission Society was eager to send them into the vineyards, but a leader was needed. Who so likely as this youthful ministerial candidate, recently returned from the Shenandoah Valley where the teachers were to go? He was familiar with the country, had connections in the Valley, and would know the most desirable sites for schools and how to secure places in which to conduct them.

Louise Wood was glad to join the eager group of young missionaries offering their services to the freedmen. Brackett postponed -- he thought briefly -- his career in the ministry. He accepted the

appointment on the condition that it was for one year only. Louise agreed that they should marry at once, and that 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 joined in marriage by their teacher and friend, the Reverend Oren B. Cheney, founder and principal of their Maine State Seminary. Later, the Reverend Cheney was to become the first President of Bates College, the successor institution to the Seminary.

Silas Curtis rose to the occasion with arrangements for free ship transportation from Portland to New York; a well-known ship captain extended this courtesy to migrant bands of teachers and missionaries. Nathan's plan was to check in at the American Missionary Association in New York, then proceed to Baltimore or Washington and up by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to Harpers Ferry. This was his goal, despite, or it may be partly on the ground of its severe wartime devastation, as well as its association with the martyrdom of John Brown. Here, too, he was at home. From Winchester to Staunton, at Berryville, Charles Town, Martinsburg and other nearby towns and villages, he had ridden and tramped with the troops.

Brackett was accustomed to suspicion and hostility in these proud formerly Virginian communities. But he had also been trusted and admired as he courageously and generously performed, without distinction between friend or foe, his duties in the hospitals and camps.

He had frequently worked for the comfort of the ill or wounded enemy civilians.

Having left the area soon after the fighting had ceased, he was doubtless unprepared for the harsh antipathy he encountered in his new role. As a Samaritan bringing succor to the soldiers and families of both sides he was accepted, but as a Christian teacher and minister to the former slaves, he found that the opposition to him was vicious.

His reception varied from cool to violent. Brackett felt that he owed his survival one day in Charles Town, where he had made many wartime visits, to the timely appearance of a former Confederate officer whose life he himself had saved on the battlefield the night after Cedar Creek. This was the engagement which introduced young Brackett to active warfare in October, 1864, only a year earlier.

There was much to do before the young teachers could follow him to their posts. He had to find shelter and lodgings for the group, as well as facilities for the proposed schools and for religious services. By this time Brackett was commissioned an agent, representative or delegate by several societies. His Christian Commission certificate seems to have expired, but he had those of the Freewill Baptists and the American Missionary Association. In July, 1867, he received certification also from the Freedmen's Bureau as an agent at a salary of \$20.00 per month.

Earlier, on October 17, 1865, the day after Nathan's wedding,

Silas Curtis sent him a letter from Dover, New Hampshire, which must have reached him during his week-long honeymoon. It was the first of frequent, sometimes twice daily, detailed, lengthy epistles of instruction, encouragement and admonition to the teachers and preachers in the field. Themselves deeply conscientious, these young people still received the benefit of renewed reminders of their New England copy-book 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 the letter in question, Curtis added that

. . . there may be a little delay about your journey south. The recent strange movements of President 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 societies which were sending out teachers. Still we hope there will soon be brighter skies.

Also, "I send you the articles of agreement between us and the American Missionary Association," referring to the assignment of the Shenandoah Valley to the good offices and labor of the Freewill Baptists.

On October 20th, the Reverend Curtis forwarded Brackett's commission. He was to proceed to New York by boat and report to the Reverend George Whipple, corresponding secretary of the American Missionary Association, at 61 John Street. When Brackett showed Whipple the Freewill Baptists' commission, the American Missionary Association was to issue its similar document, and a reduced-price

passage to Baltimore. 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, the "border of civilization" with its proximity to the railroad.

The towns in the "district" embraced Harpers Ferry, Shepherdstown, Charles Town and Berryville, to which were soon added Martinsburg and Winchester. Missionaries and teachers came to organize churches as well as schools. Ultimately the area extended up the Valley as far as Staunton.

Curtis sent four lady teachers at once: Ann^S. Dudley of Lewiston; S. J. Foster of Gray; S. L. Gibbs of Wells -- all from Maine -- and A. A. Wright of Montpelier, Vermont. They were instructed to proceed in pairs "and have bedding so that each couple shall furnish one bed for the two." The new Mrs. Brackett, armed with a commission, might also accompany the others, said Curtis. 121

Two or four teachers then at Fortress Monroe might also be assigned, abandoning the mission there, as the American Missionary Association had done. At the Rhett plantation school near Beaufort, and at Hilton Head, the future too appeared unfavorable due to "fears

the President's policy would break them up." It was hoped "to concentrate our freedmen's mission work to some one locality, instead of having it scattered so far apart."

In early November, Silas Curtis expressed pleasure at success in obtaining rooms at Harpers Ferry, but concern about the whereabouts of his selected "lady teachers." He had heard from only one. Where the others were, he could not conceive. Brother Whipple of the American Missionary Association had said that any of the teachers at Fortress Monroe could be transferred to Harpers Ferry if desired, and concluded with the admonition, "May the Lord prosper us and direct us in all our steps."

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

The teachers had no easy time in the Valley. Sword and gun were set aside, but other weapons replaced them. The temperament of the teachers could not have enhanced the comfort of their reception. They journeyed South, if not as avenging angels, often at least cloaked in self-righteousness, with a burning desire to reform all about them.

They had no doubt that such correction was required as a purgative to diseased minds and souls. It is a wonder that there was not more bloodshed and physical violence than occurred. A proud people, now humbled, were the unhappy hosts to a flood of rigid, stern and uncompromising reformers. And all this came within a few months of the terrible final events of a long war. It is not enough to say that memories were still fresh and vivid. The events themselves, for all practical purposes, were contemporaneous.

Even without 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, a mere eight miles from the school and mission at Harpers Ferry. Here, in 1862, the old Court House had been burned by Union troops, leaving nothing but its blackened portico columns standing. Nightly, in 1862, the 12th Massachusetts Infantry, credited with popularizing the song John Brown's Body, had met a quarter of a mile from town, at the site of the gallows where Brown was hanged, to infuriate the townspeople with endless renditions of that tune. Doubtless this was sung with all the colorful variations and inventions at which troops in the field are particularly gifted.

On November 28 Mr. Curtis was 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," he wrote; 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 reached their destinations eventually, but they were met with the Reverend Curtis' request for a prompt accounting of their twenty-five-dollar advances, and each was to inform him at once "what, if any, they were willing to discount monthly from their salaries of fifteen dollars per month, for the Freedmen's Mission of the Freewill Baptists." He added, ". . . last year we paid all our teachers ten dollars per month, the same as the American Missionary Association did theirs," 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 added practically that little reports like these would sustain the interest of donors. This legitimate and pious solicitation precedes by two or three generations the elaborate financial campaigns of our present charitable organizations.

But money was not the only requisite. In fact, a "make-do" economical approach is typical of these early efforts to repair and rebuild, to establish and promote, and any tool that came to hand was

cheerfully and gratefully accepted. Books and clothing were in urgent demand, as was furniture, not to speak of schoolrooms and dwelling rooms in which to place it. These furnishings were to be found in a countryside where soldiers had frequently gone so far as to burn staircase balustrades and fireplace mantles in the winter months as fuel or for cooking fires.

On December 1, 1865, Brackett reported that he had installed Sister Anne Dudley, his first teacher, at Charles Town. Curtis wrote a week later that he was "glad you have got into Charles Town. Push on and keep the ground you take if possible." These militant words and phrases from a clerical man are identical with the field orders of troop commanders, and they vividly portray the mood and the atmosphere. "The Bible follows the bayonet."

At this very pious denomination's General Conference at Buffalo in October, 1868, noting the political campaign and election just one month away, the Brothers and Sisters were enjoined, ". . . the same question is to be decided by the ballot in 1868 which was submitted to the arbitrament of arms in 1862," and declared the secession of 1861 a high crime against God, liberty, and humanity. These fighting words seem to ^{ECHO} ~~foreshadow~~ the startling contemporary cry of the politicians: "Vote as you shot!"

Christmas was approaching. On December 11th Brother Curtis

planned to augment 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?

Then, on December 15th, Brother Curtis wrote Brother Brackett good personal news. His bride of two months was on her way and expected to be in Harpers Ferry December 19th or 20th, in time for their first Christmas together and the first holiday celebration of the little band of a half dozen teachers. All seemed to be quartered in the Lockwood House or former Paymaster's quarters, where instruction had commenced the year before and where it continued for another two years before the Freedmen's Bureau arranged the additional grant of three more buildings with the War Department.

The scene must have been moving. Lockwood House had been battered by shot and shell throughout the war, vandalized after the immemorial custom of soldiering, and its partially destroyed walls had been exposed to the elements. General Sheridan briefly set up his quarters there, but one may be sure that no bivouacking colonel or major, one after the other, Blue or Gray, could resist the imposing brick structure. Built in 1847 and remodeled in 1858, with an impressive view of the mountains and the gap through which flowed the joined rivers, it was spared the indignity of the Episcopal Church nearby,

which was employed as a stable, or the more merciful use as a hospital, the fate of most other public buildings in the community.

For a Christmas celebration the setting was bleak. Camp Hill had been virtually denuded of trees, by shell or by the axe of the soldier seeking fuel. To the west, graves of Union soldiers filled much of the ground between the dwelling of the Paymaster's Clerk and the Superintendent's residence. In the town few buildings had escaped damage from fire or shot, and the ruins of the Armory and the Arsenal added to the depressing atmosphere.

The Lockwood House itself was in shambles, despite periodic efforts at repair by the military custodians left in charge of government properties at the Ferry. ^{DANIEL J.} Major Young and a small military command [^] responsible for the buildings were friendly to Brackett and his undertakings. Major Young, in fact, became an early trustee of Storer College.

Lockwood served as schoolhouse, church and home for the teachers. Its roof and nine rooms had been practically wrecked. Mary Brackett, daughter of Nathan, described it as follows:

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 sashes 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.

One wonders about this first Christmas. Were there simple decorations of pine boughs, a tree with popcorn trimmings, a bit of tinsel paper, or possibly an orange or two and some packages of nuts? Everything indicates that the walls were bare and any color must have been improvised. No matter what the surroundings were, one may be sure this little group of Christian adventurers with their hymnals brought from home must have been as cheerful themselves as the glow in the open fireplaces of the scarred building.

The next December, in 1866, a friendly witness, Miss Mary C. Ames, viewed from her window in Harpers Ferry the arrival from their various posts of new schoolteachers for the Christmas holidays. Writing to the New York Independent, she described the scene.

From my window I caught a glimpse of "animated nature," caught from the blending here 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 lowly, to deliver from ignorance and vice, that victim race.

Making full allowance for the contrast between the new arrivals and the "blending here of ruins, rocks and rivers," it does seem that this home-sick observer exaggerated the smartness of the schoolmarms just off the panting coal and steam locomotives after the long and arduous trip from the North. Yet Miss Ames brings alive these teachers at Lockwood House, at that time serving as "the abode of the superintendent of the freed people's schools in the Valley, the Reverend Mr. Brackett of Maine." She described the scene vividly, writing that

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. Those 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!"

Overly sweet, indeed, and emotionally portrayed, yet these young teachers, barred from the unfriendly local churches, must have had something strong beneath the fresh voices and trembling hearts, beneath the "gay scarfs and natty jackets." And their predecessors -- were they "dissolute men" only, with their "jests and oaths," or were they the heroic common citizen-soldiers of both sides, thrown into uniform and handed gun and sabre to preserve the Union and free the slave, or to justify their passionate conviction that their states were

sovereign and free, privileged to care for their own people in their own way?

Drama was plentiful in Harpers Ferry. The peace was not yet a year old when, in the last week of 1865, Nathan Brackett looked with satisfaction upon the progress of his labors of barely two months. At least he had a roof, 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 with the Bracketts, there was little to be seen but naked and battered walls, partially supplied with windows; the roof was still riddled by shells and cannon-balls. Two families, two lady teachers, the school, several pupils and those who attended the religious meetings, all found quarters in this nine-room house. In later life Nathan Brackett reflected, "It was not much like home life."

But if the comforts even of an austere New England home were absent, the record of achievement was impressive. Schools were under way at Harpers Ferry, Martinsburg, Charles Town and Shepherdstown. At Charles Town, the teachers also made a residence for themselves in the school building. Sometimes only a hotel or inn was open to them; occasionally a family impoverished by war risked public opinion to take them in.

But the mission continued to grow. The imagination of the Freewill Baptists had been stirred by the historic associations of the

area -- the entire Valley 120 miles long and thirty wide. Although the records and reminiscences of the early workers, teachers, and elders at home in the North frequently 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, effective three weeks earlier on July 1.

There is good reason to believe that from the beginning of his work with the Christian Commission Brackett had responsibilities closely related to the Bureau. When he opened the first school for freedmen at Winchester in the winter of 1864-65, he may have done it at the request of the Army or a little later the Bureau. The latter was not authorized by legislation until March 3, 1865, and then it was placed within the War Department. The battle between the Treasury Department and the War Department for control of captured property was probably less acerbic in the Valley than elsewhere. The Treasury was more interested in the immensely valuable large plantations and properties of the Southeast, and in that section's cotton, tobacco, sugar, rice, indigo and naval stores.

Whatever Brackett had to do with the Bureau, it is clear that his heart, his interest and his energies were devoted to educating, uplifting and evangelizing the freedmen. 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, and at Lewiston, 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; 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 wrote again on the subject, and the matter was apparently closed, since the Harpers Ferry mission school continued to use that name, i.e. "Harpers Ferry," until the heady events and activities of 1867 resulted in the creation almost overnight of one of the earliest Negro colleges or normal schools.

Thus the year closed, as far as the available records show. A little island of teachers had launched a modest project 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 was pleased with his progress of a few weeks, and particularly with the interest his church's elders took in his work.

Perhaps the next year, 1866, can be best characterized as a time of foundation and consolidation of small and large gains. Much later Mrs. Brackett said that the familiar opposition of the local population and other tribulations were overcome by slightly varying tactics in each of several places: Winchester, Front Royal, Woodstock, Harrisonburg, Staunton and Lexington. In the last town

. . . a building was purchased which answered the double purpose of schoolhouse and home for the teachers. In a few communities the Freedmen's Bureau furnished a building. 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 lived as members of the family at Lockwood House. Several nights every room at their command -- kitchen, church and schoolroom -- had to be converted into dormitories, and tables and benches into bedsteads. The dying Union soldier and his family were still in the best room in the house, and with the basement occupied by black families, only six rooms remained 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 bravely 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 gradually led to the discontinuance of the local mission schools and the concentration of funds and efforts at Harpers Ferry, the principal program of 1867 and the next four years. The conditions of reconstruction prevailed -- or rather construction, since the concept was of a new design, especially 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 conducted the weddings of three generations of black people on the Wager Bridge, the site chosen because once on the bridge they were in Maryland; Virginia and West Virginia did not then recognize the sanctity of Negro marriage.

Relations with the community were tenuous for decades, even into the twentieth century. Yet Mr. Brackett won respect by reason of his wartime experience, service and acquaintance in the Valley. Though the Brackett family found it advisable to send their children to school in New England to avoid threatened mistreatment locally, ultimately Brackett became a member of the Harpers Ferry Town Council on which he served for several years. He had been named

County Superintendent of Schools as early as 1870, but this may have been an appointment by reconstruction organizations such as the Freedmen's Bureau, rather than the result of a sudden change of heart by the often bitter local population.

The new year opened with a letter of January 4, 1866 from Brother Curtis. He was still concerned about the teachers' welfare. They should have been housed with the most efficiency yet with the least expense, they should have boarded themselves, "or in clubs, yet not expose their health -- enjoin it upon all to take care of their health." He had teachers available from the fading South Carolina area. He wrote,

We must entirely abandon 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 could 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 there was expanded, on a scale sufficiently broad to make it effective, that agency which would be a principal sponsor of the school about to be established. The Freedmen's Bureau, or Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, was authorized by Congress on March 3, 1865; the legislation was one of the very last

acts approved by President Lincoln. It was "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 South's economy had long owed its prosperity to the system of chattel slavery. Now that system was abruptly ended, and immense confusion, amounting almost to social anarchy, ensued. The terms of the first act were concerned mainly with relieving destitution -- with issues of securing provisions, clothing and fuel, and shelter. Further, the plan ^{provided} ~~embodied~~ in the law for three-year leases of 40 acres of farmland and offered some hope of self-reconstruction. Unhappily this promise quickly receded into the vague illusion of "forty acres and a mule." The badly ^{NEEDED} ~~required~~ strengthening amendments of 1866, amounting in fact to a new bill, included important clauses allowing for aid to education as well as "judicial" protection where Federal or State courts were not available to the freedmen nor, as a matter of fact, to the former plantation owners. Congressman James Blaine believed that Representative Ignatius Donnelly of Minnesota was especially articulate and forceful upon ~~the~~ education: "Education means the intelligent exercise of liberty: and surely without this, liberty is a calamity. . . . Suffrage without education is an edged tool in the hands of a child."

Senator Fessenden of Maine, a "radical" Republican, opposed President Johnson's moderate measures of reconstruction. This

powerful friend-to-be of Storer College is quoted in this vein by Representative Blaine during the debate on the question of enfranchising the blacks: "I take it that no one contends that now, at this time, the whole of the population of the recent slave States is fit to be admitted to the exercise of the right of suffrage." Senator Fessenden added his belief that even Senator Sumner of Massachusetts, "the great champion of universal suffrage," would hardly contend otherwise.

By a close vote, President Johnson's veto of the new Freedmen's Bureau legislation was upheld. A few weeks later, according to Blaine's Memoirs, "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, with less enthusiasm and decreased popularity however, although judged by Blaine "a measure of very great importance to the colored race."

The original legislation of March 1865 had led to the appointment by President Johnson of Lincoln's expressed choice for Commissioner, General Oliver O. Howard. A native of Leeds, Maine, he was known as the "Christian General," and took a determined anti-slavery stand.

It was General Howard and his brother, a Brevet Brigadier General and Assistant Commissioner at the headquarters of the Bureau in the District of Columbia, who were to assist so materially the nascent

normal school at Harpers Ferry. The concrete generosity of money and the existence of Federal buildings at a spot widely recognized for its pre-war and wartime notoriety combined to bestow upon the new denominational school for Negroes a special aura reserved for few other such establishments.

From the seeds so optimistically planted at Lockwood House at war's end the groundwork was laid for the new school to flower.

The early months of 1866 saw continued efforts to build and enlarge the influence of the Mission. Expansion into ^{the} Loudoun Valley ^{of VIRGINIA} was considered. Brother Stockman, held to be a good preacher and businessman, was moved up from Beaufort, along with Sister Smith. Brother Curtis forwarded from the Quarterly Meeting at Haverhill, Massachusetts some \$400 worth of clothing and books, writing, ". . . 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 expressed unusually expansive sentiments: ". . . this 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 cold, black-hearted haters of human freedom." Brother Curtis was in fact surprisingly warm; perhaps he was 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 first thought he had been overcharged a dozen dollars, but learned his error and admitted it like a true churchman.

On February 1 Curtis wrote ten longhand pages offering various teachers who would be free during the year because their schools on plantation properties would "be delivered up to the pardoned Rebs." He also said, ". . . we have never yet supplied school books for any of the teachers," but he would "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 had "Bibles, Testaments and miscellaneous books. . . . First readers and spelling books, enough for four teachers." These supplies would be sent to Brackett at Harpers Ferry, at the office of the Freedmen's Bureau. He was given permission to sell as many as he could; the American Missionary Association would "advise the price of them. . . . We also have sabbath school books and several barrels of clothing." Curtis concluded with the admonition, "Maintain good records, move slowly but surely, and keep me posted on the state and prospects of the mission."

Only a week later something upset the dovecote, but just what is not known; Brother Brackett's reporting letter is missing. But Brother Curtis wrote, more in sorrow than in anger,

. . . how sad and sorry I feel at such an affair as that in Martinsburg -- give everyone of your teachers a good, sound, thorough lecture on their deportment, 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 the 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?

Curtis stated that he had asked the American Missionary Association to sent another pious, experienced teacher.

The expenses of the Mission for February 1866 included food, supplies, board of teachers, rent, seats, benches and blackboards, as well as fuel, light, postage, stationery and travel by the teachers at Harpers Ferry, Charles Town, Martinsburg and Shepherdstown. These costs totaled \$279.46, which included also freight and express charges for some presumably limited purposes, teachers' trunks, books and other necessities. This hardly constituted an overwhelming budget, yet even though part of it was for capital supplies and winter fuel, it seems rarely to have exceeded two to three hundred dollars each month. This amount may have increased by fifty percent as the other schools in the area were opened during the year.

Yet by the end of 1866 the Home Mission Society was able to report that the various schools had enrolled about 2500 pupils, male and female, of all ages and degrees of basic learning.

The records do not yield detail after the first quarter of 1866.

Yet enough survived to show that progress was made, and that the brethren struggled to "keep up good courage" and "stay up Brother Brackett's hand as money is concerned." Teachers were not as freely available as Silas Curtis had supposed. The American Missionary Association did not, or could not, supply all requested, and some of the Freewill 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 wrote 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."

Curtis's interest in the Shenandoah Mission continued over a long period, and there is ongoing correspondence from him. He was in his sixties and served the Lord for another score of years, but others in the church were rising and taking a more active part. This became evident as the important events of 1867 began to unfold. Brother Curtis, after thirty-three years of service since 1835 as Secretary or Clerk of the triennial General Conferences, resigned that office in 1868; his resignation was reluctantly accepted. He was succeeded by the Reverend Isaac Dalton Stewart of Dover, New Hampshire, a man of fifty years whose family was closely identified with the normal school and all things Baptist.

In the meantime new opinions were being reached among those occupied in realizing the obligations and opportunities of citizenship for the recently freed Negro. In the Freewill Baptist denomination, Nathan Brackett in the Shenandoah Valley, and Lincoln Given, another native of Maine, together agreed that the Negro's best instructor and guide was the black teacher himself. Given had spent two years in the West -- eighteen months in Minnesota, and six months at the embattled Freewill Baptist Mission at Cairo, Illinois, working at first hand with the refugees who followed the Mississippi River north as others had the Shenandoah in the East.

In 1866 these two experienced workers suggested to the Home Mission Society that a "normal school" was needed. This conclusion by such capable colleagues must have received earnest attention. Negro preachers or teachers did not constitute a new concept, but now there developed the thought of a training school to make their activities fully effective among their own people.

In the meantime, a local representative of the Freedmen's Bureau at Harpers Ferry, Captain G. H. Wells, asked the War Department early in 1866 to transfer to the Bureau Government Building No. 32, the former Paymaster's Quarters, or Lockwood House. As has been seen, this was then serving as Brackett's schoolhouse, office, residence, and his teachers' dormitory, being utilized not only for the mission work of the Freewill Baptists but also for freedmen's school

purposes. It has been stated earlier that the exact relation between the Freewill Baptists, Brackett and the Bureau are not entirely clear. Basically, it appears that the benevolent hand of the Federal government was extended in support of the church missionaries and teachers, in the manner of a guardian and conveyor of aid and shelter, both formally and informally, in this early period of uncertainty and rebuilding. The seeds of the normal school, as well as the primitive and basic educational program, were being planted. While the request for transfer of the Paymaster's building was at first denied, its continued use until other government requirements for it might appear was approved March 5, 1866. Though neither the Freedmen's Bureau nor the Freewill Baptists could know it, a new chapter was about to be written in this history of cooperation between the Federal government and philanthropic groups in the interest of Negro education.

CHAPTER V

THE BOOK OVER THE BAYONET

The moment when the history of a man, an institution or a movement commences, sometimes long antecedes the precise instant of official birth. The education of the Negro, and the establishment of schools and institutions to accomplish this, appear most dramatically from almost the very onset of the "War of the Rebellion," as its official history termed it. Yet years before this, education had gone on in many forms. It had ultimately been banned in some areas, but it had also been defended on religious grounds and for economic gain. It was feared as encouraging hostile insurrection and as a threat to the entire system on which the social and economic structure of the Southern portion of the United States depended.

That this early education was haphazard and unorganized is plain 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 opportunities.

The establishment by state charter of Storer College at Harpers Ferry in 1867 represented at first a very small effort, almost no more

than an extension of the rudimentary education which had been undertaken there first in 1864. Complicated social and emotional problems were faced at Harpers Ferry at the end of active hostilities. The eastern panhandle of West Virginia had largely sympathized with the South. Much of Jefferson County was comparatively flat terrain; its agriculture, mode of life, and habits were all attuned to the Old Dominion.

Washington was only a long day's coach drive away, and Mount Vernon and the Washington family were familiar subjects of conversation and acquaintance. Three of George Washington's brothers held property in the County; two lived there; and descendants intermarried among the local gentry. The first President had been a frequent visitor as a boy surveyor and as a soldier with Braddock's army. As President he had secured at Harpers Ferry the establishment in 1794 of the new nation's second Armory and Arsenal.

This natural sympathy and understanding of the Southern manner of life and mode of thought could only forge a tie that was deep and binding. Were these local citizens not deeply loyal to the America which their fellow Southerners had created? Had they not joined General Washington without reservation or hesitancy? The splendid and dramatic twenty-day "Beeline" march of forty riflemen from nearby Shepherdstown to join the General "under the Elm" outside Boston in 1775 well portrayed their spirit and their loyalty.

Their state(Virginia until 1863) had contributed, besides the

General, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Patrick Henry and many others. Both Harpers Ferry and Shepherdstown had been considered seriously as possible capitals of the new republic. These West Virginians needed no one to teach them loyalty to the nation, or correct conduct in managing their local affairs, education least of all.

The rest of the new state of West Virginia was strikingly different. With the exception of a few counties like Jefferson that bordered on Virginia, sympathies were with the North. The earliest land battle of the war took place at almost the center of the state, at Phillipi, and there the first Union hero of the conflict, General George McClellan, began to make his reputation. The new state of West Virginia emerged in June, 1863, but Jefferson County was not included until November of that year. Its status remained unsettled until March 6, 1871, when by action of the Supreme Court, the county "rejoined the Union."

John Brown's raid in 1859 was regarded locally as treasonable. The jurors who sat in judgment upon him typified the respectable and respected citizens of the community. The retaliatory destruction during the war of the Charles Town courthouse where the trial took place not only burned deep into the minds and hearts of the townspeople, but the memory hindered reconstruction and reconciliation for years to come. For some time after the war the impressive and huge Doric columns, almost all that remained of the building, served as a constant, gnawing reminder of that tragic incident and the hell that had been the local

harvest of the ensuing four years of war.

Furthermore, the blacks who were to be educated there were outsiders. They were refugees, demoralized and homeless. Their roots were gone and they sought new ones. Jefferson County citizens had held relatively few slaves. Harpers Ferry until the war was a community of mechanics with a relatively high standard of living, employed in the government works. They were of Scotch-Irish stock, with a sprinkling of Germans who had fled oppression in Europe. These people had little acquaintance with house servants. In Charles Town the Negro was rarely a field hand. There were practically no extensive plantations with numerous black field workers, but instead 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 with the backwash of Phil Sheridan's raids up and down the Shenandoah Valley and General Sherman's march to the sea represented to the local residents simply another form of vengeance taken upon the cultivated or at least substantial citizens of Jefferson County by their enemies in the strident industrial North.

It was into this atmosphere that the Northern schoolteacher had ventured. Without the little local office of the Freedmen's Bureau in the old Paymaster's Quarters atop Camp Hill at Harpers Ferry, it would have been difficult or impossible to maintain this outpost of aid

and education on the highway from South to North. Brackett had put down his roots in 1865 and 1866, as Miss Mann had attempted to do in 1864. Now a new experiment was to begin, and Brackett would be a part of it.

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

White teachers from both North and South, increasingly women as conditions grew less arduous and more stabilized, believed that their colored pupils could effectively carry the message of freedom and education if given the chance. The first provision must be for some kind of normal school teaching, which it was hoped would develop eventually to academic or even collegiate levels. This ambition could be overdone, and frequently was. But the movement was natural.

The hard-pressed teacher could surely use assistance from his brighter pupils, and sometimes found welcome surprises. An estimate has been made that ten percent of the adult Negroes at the time of the war had the rudiments of education. This is believed to "explain the demand that came so soon for secondary schools and those of a more advanced grade." It also is the ready key to the swift early development of these schools and the necessity for classes above the

primary grade.

An additional stimulant to the higher schools -- seminaries or normal schools as they were called -- came from the responsibilities assumed by the Freedmen's Bureau under its broader authority conferred by Congress on July 16, 1866. General supervision was at once instituted over all freedmen's schools, whether sponsored by churches, philanthropic organizations, or erstwhile military schools. Reports were to be made at regular intervals; some ^{ED}unusual government buildings were made available for schoolhouses, and transportation and subsistence 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 were stimulated and perhaps made more free to exert greater endeavor than in the past.

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 indications of denominational purpose appear. During the war, considerations of patriotism and humanity were dominant, and churches of every name

united in the common efforts. With the return of peace, however, 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 denominations whose affiliations in the South had been strongest before the war -- the Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians. For the sake of the new churches that were to be, they took measures to build up schools of higher learning at carefully chosen centers. These, 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 had already purchased Wilberforce in Ohio, founded in 1847, and in 1864 it added Western College in Kansas. At Oxford, Pennsylvania, the Presbyterians maintained an important school founded in 1854 as Ashmun Institute, later and now known as Lincoln University. The Society of Friends was active early with the Penn School on Helena Island near Hilton Head, Virginia, 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; Claflin at Orangeburg in 1869; and Clark at Atlanta in 1870. The Presbyterians also established Biddle University in Pennsylvania (now Johnson C. Smith University at Charlotte, North Carolina) in Pennsylvania in 1867. The Episcopal Church founded St. Augustine's at Raleigh in 1867. And of course there was the Federal Government's own Howard University set up by the Freedmen's Bureau in the same year. The Federal Government did not fully accept the financial responsibility for this institution, however, until years later, in 1928, when regular appropriations took the place of unpredictable annual payments.

Most of those who had worked to educate blacks in the war period continued to place this interest ahead of church extension. However, they understood that teachers needed advanced training for the huge task that lay ahead, and thus gave their thought and energies to strengthening institutions of higher learning to this end.

The American Missionary Association is an interesting example. Its funds were drawn from the members of several different denominations. It cooperated with the Freewill Baptists, and its activities were largely ^{NON-~~sectarian~~} sectarian and educational. As the supporting churches gradually embarked on an evangelistic trend, the American Missionary Association gradually returned to its original home among the Congregational churches

and so became primarily an agency of that denomination. Its work was principally in the educational field, which seems to account for its active participation in teacher training schools. Its list of such 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 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 in their founding the will, the thought and the hope were all there, to the everlasting credit of those who tried to accomplish a work of entirely 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 those professing the major religions of the nation, had

led them to a close working relationship with the American Missionary Association, a commitment which proved both wise and happy.

From the very beginning, nevertheless, Brackett's efforts 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 Silas Curtis was disappointed at a crucial time in early 1866 in obtaining American Missionary Association teachers for Harpers Ferry.

Out of the blue came the Freewill Baptists' finest moment of opportunity in this embryonic educational eruption. Upon the structure built by Brackett and his teachers and elders was to be erected "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 rose and fell, struggled and paused and struggled again, as a typical example of the earliest Negro schools. In its history are reflected the good and the bad, the sound judgment and the misguided efforts of all the other institutions designed to help, to train, and to educate for citizenship the hitherto deprived and disadvantaged black.

And for this strongly denominational group, the first major benefactor was 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 Louise Brackett's older friend Oren B. Cheney, who had officiated at their marriage, was an indefatigable and devoted worker for educational causes among the Freewill Baptists. A dozen years younger than Silas Curtis, Cheney was increasingly sharing the burden of the elder statesmen as the active abolitionist groups gave way to those who, while participating in that struggle themselves, yet had been secondary to the established 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 by reason 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 serve as pastor of a Freewill Baptist Church in that community. Here he became acquainted with William Pitt Fessenden and James G. Blaine, who were 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. That Cheney was foremost a teacher is attested to by the list of academies, seminaries and schools at which he served as teacher or principal, sometimes as founder.

Cheney had become acquainted with John Storer during his

pastorate at Sanford, Maine. In a neighboring town he had established the West Lebanon Academy. He remained at Sanford from 1846 until his election to the State Legislature and the almost simultaneous call to his Augusta church.

While Cheney was still in Augusta, the Freewill Baptists received a charter from the State of Maine in 1855 to commence the Maine State Seminary. The legislature appropriated \$15,000 on condition that an equal amount be raised elsewhere. The City of Lewiston met that challenge with the understanding that the Seminary would be located there.

Cheney's first association appears to have been at the Freewill Baptists' Parsonfield Seminary where he had been educated before attending and graduating from Dartmouth in 1839. It had been almost destroyed by fire in 1854, and the new State Seminary was to be the beneficiary of his consecrated interest. Upon issuance of the charter, Cheney was chosen principal and treasurer.

In 1857 he was released from his Augusta parish, and in September of that year the Seminary opened. Financial problems and embarrassment are described, but the little school survived and by 1863 its trustees were emboldened to vote it a college and to seek a charter for it as such. The State Legislature granted this in 1864, together with a conditional gift of 51,000 acres of State-owned land.

Further, Dr. Cheney, to whom Wesleyan University had awarded

a degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1863, had prevailed upon a Boston capitalist with substantial manufacturing interests in Lewiston to help financially. The Honorable Benjamin E. Bates had become deeply interested in the fledgling college, so that 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 subscriptions of an equal amount, this matching sum was eventually raised. With 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.

The times were decidedly not calculated to hold youths on the campus. Enlistments began with Fort Sumter and continued throughout the war. Cheney's diary reports: "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 this Reverend Oren Cheney did not waste his time, even in traveling. Returning from Washington to his post for the fall term, he called on the presumably apprehensive Mr. Bates as he passed through Boston toward Maine, and received a pledge of five thousand dollars more "as soon as the times would warrant,"

to aid in building another hall.

A second significant trip to Washington took place 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^C with the victorious -- and talked hopefully with the Confederate prisoners." But he was especially interested in another group. "What is to be done with, and for, the Freedmen, hundreds of whom are flocking northward?" he asked.

Part of the answer, not unexpectedly, came from three of his former students at the Maine State Seminary who had been working for his denomination among these new freedmen at Harpers Ferry. He had performed the marriage service for two of them, Louise Wood and Nathan Brackett; the third was Anne S. Dudley. This devoted young woman was the sect's first female teacher and missionary in the Shenandoah Valley, arriving there to join Brackett in 1864, a year after graduating from the Maine State Seminary, in default of her appointment as a missionary to India, which had lapsed due to a lack of funds.

In 1874 Miss Dudley married the Reverend C. E. Bates. She had taken a serious interest in the Women'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 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, and was a staunch prohibitionist. There was little room for a middle ground among these single-minded people.

Still struggling, however, to elevate his beloved Bates College, Dr. Cheney turned in early February, 1867, to a friend and supporter of twenty years, John Storer of Sanford, Maine. Storer, a prosperous merchant of the general store variety -- in the sense that he dealt in the regional products of the farms and forests, and imported the commodities which met the needs of the area's population -- had proven himself a friend of education. He had been a faithful donor to Bates, and "Dr. 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 Storer had the papers before him preparatory to the execution of the plan. Cheney rose to the occasion and proposed the Freewill Baptists as 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; he had written about the Freewill Baptists that "some of their representatives are already at work establishing schools 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 offered to the upward-moving black student.

Oren Cheney was convincing, and he prevailed. The next day, on February 7th, "Mr. Storer signs the papers, giving to Free Baptists \$10,000 for a Freedmen's College." There were conditions to satisfy and work to accomplish, such as matching the gift by the end of the year and the question of a charter, as well as a meeting of the men Storer named to take the enterprise in hand.

In only a few days Brackett was apprised of the potential wind-fall in a conversation with his old teacher and pastor. Then Cheney wrote him on February 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 Capital/. . . . The denomination should do something for its own honor. . . . I hope you will remember next Thursday, the day to pray for colleges. . . .

In mid-March, Cheney wrote the Reverend Dr. James Calder,

in the early 1850's a Methodist Episcopal missionary at Foo-Chow and Hong Kong, later a pastor of Freewill Baptists at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Within two years Calder became president of Hillsdale College in Michigan, the pride of the western Baptist churches, and at the end of another two years, in 1871, he was named to the presidency of Pennsylvania State College. He was a trustee of Storer College from its inception. Cheney wrote 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."

Brother Calder was cool to the plan for a "colored college," if not downright suspicious of a gift from a member of another church. He replied to Brackett 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 untiring Brother Cheney was in constant and incredible motion. A day after his March 14th letter to Calder, he again wrote Brackett from Bates at Lewiston that he was off for Boston to attend the education meeting at Haverhill to settle the location of the Bible School, another project close to his heart. He had heard from the good Brother Stewart, now sixty. Cheney replied, "I have written him

/Calder/ that Brother Storer will not consent to any such change. He is a Congregationist, and if we tamper with him, we shall lose all -- he is as fixed as the hills."

Oren Cheney was planning to get down to the Shenandoah Valley to see the schools and missions, and plan for the college -- but there was much to be done besides raising funds to match John Storer's gift. In April, 1867, Cheney was at Harpers Ferry. He was off down the Valley -- Charles Town, Winchester, Harrisonburg and Staunton, a night at each.

After two weeks of visitations and inspections he turned up in Washington, whence he reported on really important matters. On April 17th, at 11:00 a.m., he had just been in Secretary of War Stanton's office with Senator Fessenden of Maine, his old friend and fellow abolitionist. The Senator's experience with and knowledge of the needs and plight of the contraband and freedmen had been reinforced by his term as Treasury Secretary in the last months of Lincoln's first term. With Representative James A. Garfield, who came under Free-will Baptist influence as a youthful student at Geauga Seminary in Ohio, he would be largely responsible for the impressive legislative accomplishments of the church in the establishment and building of Storer.

Secretary Stanton was away from Washington, but Cheney waited him out ("It is my duty"), even though he was due in Harrisburg to consult

with Brother Calder. At least he would be present for the adjournment of the Senate next day, although he regretted that his objective -- the acquisition of government property at Harpers Ferry -- was as yet unaccomplished. And he had a "new idea -- to secure all of the government property at the Ferry, water rights, buildings, ruins, 25 acres and all, by lease and to purchase eventually," presumably for a lesser price than others, "for we want it for the public good." Its eventual sale "at a good profit" would produce an endowment for the college.

He had been to Richmond, and after Harrisburg he would return to his college presidency, after only a month's absence, by way of Providence and Boston. In these two cities the good merchants Lewis W. Anthony and Benjamin Bates respectively could certainly expect to hear of the financial needs of Bates and Storer Colleges. Deacon Anthony, by way of background, served as president of the trustees of Storer for a number of years and donated \$5,000 as a memorial to his children who had died at an early age. The main school building was named for him.

While Cheney awaited Secretary Stanton's return, he saw General Howard of the Freedmen's Bureau again. The General hoped to secure funds for the new Howard University from "President" Sears of the Peabody (Educational) Fund. He thought it a meritorious idea to found a college in Harpers Ferry and would follow suit in behalf of the Storer-to-be.

The next day Secretary Stanton was in his office and "favorably disposed." He raised a question about the title to the government property, but promised a decision in about a month and would confer with Brackett. Upon his arrival, Cheney visited Senator Cameron of Pennsylvania with Professor Ball and Calder, and obtained his pledge of aid in securing the Harpers Ferry property. Then it was agreed that Calder would visit the Governor of West Virginia at Wheeling, where he wanted to seek out \$50,000 from the State for the new school. Brother Ball's task was to see General Smith, the well-known abolitionist and intimate supporter of John Brown, to seek financial aid.

The planning was done here among the three -- Cheney, Ball and Calder. An organization was needed; it was set forth on paper and circulated for approval and signature. Ball and Calder instructed Cheney to have General Howard's conditional subscription delivered to this "provisional" committee, having in mind that he might die or President Johnson might dismiss him before the college could be incorporated.

On the way home Cheney also stopped at New York and called on the Reverend Barnas Sears; the latter undertook to send Brackett a circular on freedmen's education. George Peabody, the merchant philanthropist who had set up the Peabody Fund, wished "to encourage and aid common schools in the South; schools established, supported and superintended by the Southern people themselves." Normal schools would receive particular attention. Funds were not to be used for

"literary or professional schools." Cheney thought normal schools might receive \$75.00 to \$100.00 for each student, equally divided between the institution for tuition and the student towards his board. "Dr. Sears sees no reason why Storer should not stand on the same ground as General Howard's college," Cheney reported. Sears was also a President of Brown University as well as a general agent of the Peabody Fund.

Sears meant to call on General Howard shortly and to visit the South, inspecting schools. The Freewill Baptists had to establish a "first class Normal School at the Ferry in connection with our University -- Stanton University (don't laugh)." Brother Cheney had caught the infection in Washington. General Howard's university must have sent his hopes soaring.

Cheney was back at Bates after the month's journeyings. He counted on having done the cause some good and no harm. "To the noble young women, 'not a few,' who are laboring for Christ's poor in the Valley," he sent love. He added that he was circulating the "provisional committee" papers for signature to Brothers Day, Knowlton, Curtis, Brewster and Goodwin, but would first consult Storer.

Two days later he wrote from Lewiston that Brackett should inform 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 planned to write General Howard and Secretary Stanton. "What about Charles Town if the property at the Ferry is not available?"

Two days later he wrote again. "I did not get your letter in New York -- what did you write? Did you get my Richmond letter? Did you find my cane?" Through all the confusion, Brother Cheney showed a singleness of purpose. He wished Brackett to close the bargain at once on the William Smallwood farm on Bolivar Heights. If government property could not be procured for "our University . . . we will put it on our land," the Smallwood tract. "The school should be at Harpers Ferry -- the ground is historic -- we can 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." Cheney was prepared to sell his house or borrow money if necessary.

Then Brother Curtis wrote more conservatively. He decidedly favored a normal school as soon as a place could 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 Curtis was worried just then about money: "The truth is our funds are becoming low. . . . If the Pennsylvania brethren are so anxious to establish churches 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 Cheney telegraphed Brackett to

"purchase the whole" Smallwood farm. "Shall payment be made in Bank bills or in United States 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 of twenty-five gentlemen was organized as "The Commission for the Promotion of Education in the South." The Commission was incorporated by the New Hampshire legislature on July 24, 1867. During its early existence the college's interests were protected and its affairs conducted under this Commission.

In July also came 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 wrote that he would visit the Valley schools in September and would arrive at Harpers Ferry after the normal school was in operation. He was personally disposed to act favorably, but the grants were less than earlier believed to be required.

In the meantime the descriptive and moving circular of August 15, 1867 was issued at Dover, New Hampshire, by the Commission, for "The Promotion of Education in the South." The Commission's membership was listed, with the exception of one unknown absentee, and the circular contained in addition to the familiar Freewill Baptist names those of the Honorable W. F. Fessenden, briefly Secretary of the Treasury under Abraham Lincoln, now United States Senator from Maine,

and the noted black abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

Douglass is too often characterized solely as the "great Negro ^{OR}~~speaker~~ator." While this description is deserved, he had many other qualities of intellect and leadership. Apparently the only Negro on the Commission, at the age of fifty he had long since distinguished himself in a number of directions, dramatically as an alleged participant with the New England group which supported the plans of John Brown, and as an active conductor in the Underground Railroad; more peacefully as the editor of the black abolitionist newspaper the North Star, later called Douglass' Monthly. The editorship continued until the Civil War. Afterwards his interest was in reconstruction and education, including industrial training. He was named Marshal and Recorder of Deeds of the District of Columbia by presidential appointment, and also served as Minister and Consul General to Haiti.

The use of the name North Star had carried significance. The star was a steadfast point, of course, but in this time of slavery it was the great and unwavering beacon which the escaping black might fix in his sight to bring himself across the imaginary Mason-Dixon Line and into sympathetic territory. He would "follow the Dipper Gourd" (the old refugee phrase), or the Great Dipper in the night skies.

Douglass' son Lewis was the original sergeant-major of the black 64th Massachusetts Regiment, commanded by Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, who led these troops against Ford Wagner, South Carolina,

where Shaw fell dead across the fort's ramparts. Another son of Frederick Douglass also served in Shaw's regiment.

Douglass was a witty man, which contributed to his success on the platform. Upon his second marriage in 1884 to a white woman, there 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."

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

Another was Captain D. J. Young of the United States Army, who supervised, really as caretaker, the government properties at Harpers Ferry. Among the earliest trustees of Storer, he helped in the acquisition of the buildings.

The Commission's Circular which stated its purpose was so praiseworthy that a considerable portion of it is quoted here:

With this stirring series of objectives as its banner, the denomination undertook its solicitation. As we shall see, a welcome major grant came from the Federal Government through the Freedmen's Bureau and the Army, but John Storer's gift was the largest in money, and many a Baptist family contributed what it could, not rarely after mortgaging a farm or home, so profound was their dedication.

In late September, the 25th, in 1867, Silas Curtis, E. A. Stockman, George T. Day, J. N. Brewster, Isaac D. Stewart, James Calder and Nathan Brackett, Hamilton E. Keys and Captain Daniel J. Young of Harpers Ferry agreed to 'unite and become a corporation to be known as the Storer College in Western Virginia for the education of pupils of both sexes, and without respect to color."

Three weeks later, on 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 was to expire in just over ~~three~~^{Two} months, or December 31, 1867, when if all went well a charter for the college would have been issued by the West Virginia State Legislature.

This charter did not materialize until adopted by the Legislature on March 3, 1868. Its passage was bitterly opposed and ultimately passed by a margin of only one vote. The credit for success against a hostile legislature is granted to the Honorable J. G. Hoke of New Creek,

West Virginia, a member of that body and an early trustee of the college, but not a Freewill Baptist.

In the meantime the Reverend Silas Curtis and the Reverend I. D. Stewart had followed Cheney's spring visit with a trip of their own. They called at various towns of the Mission and concluded that Harpers Ferry was the most suitable location for the projected school.

At about this time, in May or early June, 1867, Dr. Cheney was able to convince others of the wisdom of venturing a considerable sum to purchase a farm on the southeast slope of Bolivar Heights overlooking Harpers Ferry, known as the Smallwood property. The reason behind the acquisition was stated by Brackett to be as a measure 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 magnificent situation "would make it valuable to the college to sell off for building lots" was realized only to a limited extent. However, to this day Cheney Avenue ~~Avenue~~ and Day Street cross the old farm in Bolivar.

CHAPTER VI

THE DREAM BECOMES A REALITY

It should be appreciated that the Freewill Baptist leaders were convinced that right would prevail and virtue triumph. All these preparations were made optimistically and courageously without the availability of the funds to match John Storer's gift, the possession of land or buildings, dependable sources of continuing income, or any adequate teaching staff.

It was late in June, with only six months left to meet Storer's January 1st deadline, before any marked success in raising money occurred. "Inspiration came" to the Reverend George Ball of New York 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 Freewill Baptist ministers, to give a few hundred dollars a year and to pledge nearly double the sum required above the \$6,000.00 from the Freedmen's Bureau.

While all the complicated preparatory work was going on, the "Normal Department of Storer College" opened in the Lockwood House on October 2, 1867. Nineteen pupils, all above the second reader (one as high as the fifth) were enrolled, with Mrs. 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 said that backless benches and lack of desks were not reckoned a hardship in those days. The best room in the house had finally become available for use, with the passing of the German soldier and the departure of his family. The big shellholes left by the war in the wall toward 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. Morrell brought to the Mission both the religious and educational work which were one to him -- he regarded them as indissoluble. He had with him his wife, a young son, and a younger daughter. Brackett's family now consisted of his wife and an infant boy. Years later Brackett dated the arrival of Reverend Morrell to this time "because he came near stepping on the baby once as he was lying kicking on a rug in our common sitting room, the baby also couldn't go to the service when he preached because the baby thought he was talking to him and responded."

Brackett reported a good number of visitors that first winter; 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

Alexander H. Morrell 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." Morrell was an older friend of Brackett from Phillips, Maine.

His meetings were described thus:

. . . he never sought to arouse the noisy demonstrations so characteristic of worship in those ^{TIMES} but rather to substitute for them, reflection, high resolves and honest purposes, yet every now and then the storm would come with 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 Morrell'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 had said, this was surely a busy and exciting atmosphere as the little school got under way. Morrell served at Storer from 1865 to 1881, then was elsewhere until 1885 when he died at Harpers Ferry. He is buried just in front of the school's Curtis Memorial Church.

After the first Christmas the number of pupils in the Normal Department increased to thirty-six and grew to seventy-five before the close of the session. Mrs. Brackett later commented that in those

earliest days no one thought of undertaking anything until after Christmas. "After Christmas seems to have been when everything began, before the war." The blacks "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 Year's."

Brackett reminds one that the initial 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 for the founders of the school. It would not be until December 1868 that the four impressive buildings and the surrounding seven acres of land were won. Before that triumph, 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.

Senator Fessenden, the executor of the donor's wishes, was concerned that Mr. Storer's heirs might challenge the gift, and he had advised Brother Brackett that every "jot and tittle" of the terms must be complied with, but with the ultimate raising of the matching funds, the money was turned over as promised. Moreover, although Mr. Storer

had expressed only an oral wish to give an additional \$1,000 for the library, the heirs respected his request without obligation other than moral.

There were still some days of worry as January 1st approached. The school was open, the small staff of teachers and Brother Morrell were on hand, but little was yet certain regarding the future.

The concluding and intensified efforts were started around Thanksgiving Day. The six thousand dollars from the Freedmen's Bureau had recently been received, amid much rejoicing. Senator Fessenden had John Storer's final instructions about his gift, which indicated that the ten thousand dollars must be in hand and invested on or before the first of January, 1868. The Treasurer of the Freewill Baptists was required to take oath to this effect. Isaac Stewart wrote from Dover on December 6th, ". . . if it is not shown to be raised, all is lost."

The brethren were busy in this project so dear to their hearts and their convictions of duty. On December 17th, only two weeks from the time of decision, Brother George Day sent Brother Brackett some practical advice: "Whatever amount of time, painstaking, lobbying, buttonholing, etc., etc. of a reasonable and decent sort may be necessary, or deemed necessary to success, should be unhesitatingly accepted. I don't presume it is pleasant, but I trust you will be

able to 'bear the cross.'"

By December 19th there was some nervousness. No word had yet been heard from Senator Fessenden. An idea had developed. Isaac Stewart wrote Brother Brackett that they would wait until December 23rd, then

. . . go to the Bank and hire whatever may be necessary above the \$6,500.00 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 Senator Fessenden in Washington immediately.

On December 23rd, Brother Day wrote that "we hurry off the documents this morning." The day after Christmas, Brother Stewart sent letters of introduction to congressmen who might be influential: Senator "Patterson is one of my personal friends, and a Christian man." Representative Ela, 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 answered Brackett's telegram: "Sent proof of \$3,500.00 invested on Monday. Go to Washington Wednesday."

On the 30th Brother James Calder of Harrisburg was calm enough to write Brackett please to forward his application for renewal of his special rate ticket on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. On the same day Stewart also wrote, "We have done everything we could to secure the Storer gift."

In early January, the matter was finally consummated. January

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, however, was hectic. On that morning a telegram was received at Dover stating that the money must be actually collected and invested; notes and pledges would not be accepted. Brothers Stewart and Brewster were the only two available on this final day of grace. Stewart's decision was made at home after brief consultation with his wife, who was busy with her knitting in the kitchen while her husband debated with Brother Brewster. The two men persuaded a bank to loan them personally on their own notes sufficient to cover the pledges and promises of the brethren already received or in the custody of their agents. Although a blizzard raged, telegraphic communication between Stewart at Dover and Brackett at the Willard Hotel in Washington was successfully accomplished, and thus were secured the endowment of John Storer and a name for the new college. There were still delays and concerns among the Baptists, as Senator Fessenden deferred action until satisfied as to all the proprieties and particulars. Now they could turn to him and to Representative James Garfield for aid in securing the government buildings and the surrounding seven acres of land.

And at the state capital at Wheeling the Honorable Judge J. G. Hoke was struggling with the West Virginia Legislature regarding the permanent charter. In February, 1868, he wrote Brackett that he must remove his name from the roster of trustees, since as a member of the Legislature, he might not vote on a measure in which he was

personally interested.

As Judge Hoke described the attitude of the Legislators, "the (L.S. /
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."

Cheney pointed out that the impeachment proceedings against
President Johnson helped none of the schools 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, all doubts were resolved and the Charter was
granted, but by a margin of one vote only, that of Judge Hoke, who had
qualified himself by resigning from the board of trustees.

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

This was accomplished by the Act of December 3, 1868, and
again there was fervent rejoicing and thanksgiving. Yet there were
snags in the transfer and occupancy. The community was not entirely
happy with the new school. A full year would elapse before, in December,
1869, the newly granted buildings, to constitute the school for nearly a
century, could be occupied. The contributions of the Freedmen's Bureau

were exceptionally generous and valuable. The first donation of \$500.00 came in September 1867 in time to repair much of the war damage to the Lockwood House by the time the school was fully in operation there in October. As we have seen, the promised \$6,000.00 was paid over soon after the school opened. Another \$4,000.00 arrived to renovate the shattered government buildings, and about \$1,500.00 for running expenses. An important amount of an additional \$4,000.00 was allocated in 1868 for the first "new" building, Lincoln Hall, completed in 1870 and serving at first as a boys' dormitory. This four-story frame building lasted almost forty years, when it was destroyed by fire on April 12, 1909. It was then immediately replaced by a good-looking stone structure named in honor of Nathan Brackett. All in all the Freedmen's Bureau is credited with total grants to the school of \$18,000.00 in educational assistance.

In the meantime Principal Brackett was engaged in many other projects. The Freedmen's Bureau regional office for education in Virginia wrote in May, 1869, that it was not justified in paying more than \$10.00 per month per student for the Port Republic, Virginia, or any similar school for blacks. The Superintendent told Brackett, ". . . there are many to be served, and that is as thick as we shall be able to spread the plaster." Lesser superintendents of small schools in the Valley or in nearby Maryland asked for modest amounts; only \$50.00

for the first quarter of 1870 was the request of Brother Baker at Laytonville. S. J. Gould wrote in June, 1870 from Smithfield, Maine that he had closed his school in the South for the present, and come to Maine where "wages are very good until after haying."

Other homely happenings included a letter dated^r Christmas Day^u, 1870, from Brother Curtis describing gifts from him, and also the Free-will Baptist Church at Concord, New Hampshire, \$30.00 to \$35.00 each, \$25.00 to finish a wing room, and something under \$10.00 to furnish it.

More important things came to occupy the 1870's. At the beginning of the decade the Freedmen's Bureau wound up its educational assistance programs. In September, 1870, J. W. Alvord, General Superintendent of Schools for the Bureau, sent Brackett a letter in the form of five questions, seeking to learn from experienced persons and "reliable" ones what might now be done in this field by "the several states or by the freed men themselves, without the aid from general Government." Alvord assumed that the "northern societies" would continue to operate to some extent.

Alvord inquired whether there ^{WAS} ~~were~~ an efficient public school system in West Virginia for all classes; if not, local patronage by influential persons, white or black? Were freed men capable of carrying on efficiently their own schools? And more basic was the real question, "What will be the general effect if schools for freed men

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 proceed on a completely benevolent basis, thereby precluding any efforts to develop a program of ~~self-help~~. ^{OUTSIDE HELP.} Otherwise the answers to Alvord's questions had to be largely negative.

By 1870, as noted previously, Lincoln Hall had been built as a dormitory for boys. Lockwood House and the Superintendent's Clerk's office adjoining were variously used as quarters for Brackett or Morrell and for girls' dormitories. The former Superintendent's Quarters, at the west end of the new campus on Camp Hill, was converted into rooms for a chapel and school purposes, and so dedicated on December 23, 1869. This was ultimately to become the principal administrative and instructional building of the school.

In 1873 the effort commenced for a girls' boarding hall, to relieve the need for larger and 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 ready for occupancy in 1877. Myrtle Hall served for three quarters of a century, until its demolition after the college closed its doors.

The original name "Myrtle" was derived from the same name borne by the denomination's Sunday School paper. Its final designation, Mosher Hall, was in honor of Mrs. Frances Stewart Mosher, daughter of Isaac Stewart and wife of Dr. George F. Mosher, who was president of Hillsdale College from 1885. Frances was the mother of Elizabeth Mosher McDonald. Mrs. Mosher served as editor of the Myrtle from 1874 to 1881; she carried much of the responsibility for assembling the many large and small contributions which eventually completed the girls' much-needed dormitory. Children had also collected pennies for the building on a brick-by-brick basis.

Mrs. Mosher was an accomplished woman. She not only acted for many years as a trustee of Storer, but also taught French and history on her husband's academic staff at Hillsdale.

Possibly of more interest, her daughter Elizabeth married her classmate at Hillsdale College, Henry T. McDonald, destined in 1899 to become principal and later president of Storer, and so to continue for the long term of forty-five years. Mrs. Elizabeth McDonald survived her husband by fifteen years, dying in 1967 at the age of ninety.

Other important buildings were completed in the nineteenth century. More closely related to the earlier days of building was the addition of a chapel and lecture space in the old Superintendent's Quarters, dedicated on Christmas Eve of 1869. The Curtis Memorial

Church, named after the Reverend Silas Curtis, was finished in 1892.

The four government buildings received in 1868 were essentially similar in design, size and material. Approximately 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 elaborate, as befitted the senior rank of its occupant. During the Civil War it had been visited by both President Lincoln and General Robert E. Lee.

In 1881 the munificent sum of \$5,000.00 was contributed by Lewis W. Anthony, a Freewill Baptist and merchant of Providence, Rhode Island. Mr. and Mrs. Anthony had lost three of their eight children, whom their gift memorialized.

This money, with an additional matching fund of the same amount, was used to remodel the impressive main building to contain classrooms, an auditorium or chapel, and executive offices. The improvement was accomplished by converting the Superintendent's Quarters into the South wing of the new building. The remodeled structure was 130 feet long, with a North wing almost identical to the old Quarters, all connected by a fresh main body of the building which was to supply the principal supplementary space in the three contiguous units. The expansion and alterations were done by 1882, and dedicated on May 30th as Anthony Memorial Hall.

In 1883 a mansard roof covering ten added small rooms was placed atop Lockwood, but otherwise the old Armory buildings were little altered over the century of academic use. These first fifteen years of physical growth constituted the major additions to the college's plant until the 1890's, and the emergence of young leadership and refined objectives responsive to the requirements of the twentieth century.

The buildings and the other physical facilities, important as they were to the college, were but structures which provided the setting for an intellectual atmosphere and educational programs. What can one say of the activities and offerings of the 1870's, as the school marked its first decade in the turmoil of reconstruction and a suddenly burgeoning nation?

The college catalogues best tell the story, since little else remains of the detailed teaching records. The first 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 1954 for the years 1954 and 1955, these pamphlets are a primary source of information for courses offered, faculty members, students in attendance, regulations, standards, and physical and educational facilities. The 1869 issue was printed by

Libbey and Company, Dover, New Hampshire. The next year, however, the task of printing the catalogue was carried out by the denomination itself, through the Freewill Baptist Printing Establishment in the same city.

The first President of the Board of Trustees was the Reverend James Calder of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 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. By 1870 the Reverend George H. Ball of New York had become President.

"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," proclaimed 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 charge to students for tuition in the regular course of study was \$3.00 per term, or \$9.00 per year, but "certificates of Scholarships, guaranteeing five years of instruction in the Institution," could be obtained from the Treasurer by the payment of \$20.00 in advance. Room rent was also \$3.00 per term, and board "does not exceed \$2.00 per week." Students could be furnished to some extent with employment, so as to defray partially their costs. "Expenses are reduced as low as possible so that none who are really anxious for an education shall be debarred 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 admission and the character and aims of the training and discipline. The 1870 catalogue states, "A complete 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, habits of industry and self-dependence. "The young man here receives counsel and sympathy, learns what constitutes correct living, and becomes qualified for the great work of life." Attendance upon the devotions of the school and divine worship was to be rigidly enforced, yet "the particular place of public worship may be determined by the scholars themselves, or by their parents."

The first and apparently basic condition for admission to the school was "satisfactory evidence of a good moral character." The applicant, before entering upon the "Regular Course of Study," embracing three years, had to 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 was 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 achieve this, coupled with great deficiencies in the background requirements. The Regular Course sets forth this curriculum:

FIRST YEAR

Reading (Third and Fourth Readers), Spelling, Intermediate Geography commenced, Written Arithmetic, First Lessons in Grammar, Penmanship, Recitations and Compositions.

SECOND YEAR

Reading (Fourth and Fifth Readers), Spelling, Geography completed. Written Arithmetic, Common School Grammar and Analysis, History of the United States, Penmanship, Recitations and Compositions.

THIRD YEAR

Reading and Spelling, Arithmetic, Grammar and Analysis, Algebra, Physiology, Moral Science, Natural Philosophy, Penmanship, Original Declamations and Compositions, and Instruction in the Art of Teaching.

Instruction is given in Vocal and Instrumental Music to those desiring it, and in the Ancient Languages to those who purpose to pursue a Course of Collegiate Study.

TEXT-BOOKS

The following are the Text-Books used in the School: -- Sanders's Series of Readers, Cornell's Series of Geographies, Greenleaf's Series of Arithmetics, Kerl's Series of Grammars, Webster's Dictionary, Quackenbos's History of the United States, Greenleaf's Algebra, Dalton's Physiology, Peck's Natural Philosophy, Wayland's Moral Science.

The formality of the proceedings was also most flexible. When

in residence students were required to be present at 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 not stringent, bearing in mind that a Normal School then and a college later was the concept. The candidate in 1889 had to be at least thirteen years of age, able to write, read in the Fourth Reader, and pass an examination in the simple rules of arithmetic. Knowing the truly dedicated spirit of the missionaries and teachers now conducting the school -- Brother Nathan Brackett and his wife Louise, the Reverend A. H. Morrell, as well as Nathan's sister ^{LORA}~~Sara~~ (later Mrs. Lightner) and a handful of assistants and visiting and lecturing trustees -- it is likely that even the entrance requirements noted were relaxed in favor of tutoring when a seemingly 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 hearty welcome is extended to those who had no opportunity to get an education while they were young; but they are advised to carefully consider before 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 whatever state of advancement were admitted on any day of the session and placed in appropriate classes after an examination. Similarly, students might be promoted

whenever their proficiency merited it. Another caution was to the effect that those attending school for only a few months each, while possibly being able to work to advantage, yet should not expect to be advanced as rapidly as if they attended longer terms.

Finally, "Diplomas" were issued each year at the anniversary of the school, held at the close of the summer term, to those who had satisfactorily completed the three years' Course of Study. Members of the graduating class were to receive "distinction" in proportion to their respective rank, based on their records of merits and demerits.

The library facilities were limited, but probably adequate for the early needs. In 1870, half of John Storer's \$1,000.00 gift for books had been expended. Donations of books from other friends, and an annual grant of \$60.00 worth of the publications of the American Tract Society of Boston, resulted at this time in a library of about six hundred volumes.

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 after a dozen years, in 1887, when the "college" could look back on a history of twenty years, the texts by Hooker, Hall and Thompson were still shown, but the list had been

supplemented by Scribner's Geographical Reader and Harvey's Primary Speller.

In 1870 the school was well under way. By that time a total of 169 students were in attendance, many doubtless on a part-time basis. The upper, or First, Class listed six men and four women students; the Second Class a total of eighteen, while the Third Class was more extensive, boasting forty-nine, of whom just over one-half were young girls or women. The preliminary "Preparatory Class" contained ninety-two. Gradually the total number enrolled increased from the original list of ninety-six in September, 1869. This first list included only one sufficiently advanced to be rated as of 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, according to the catalogue, "mental arithmetic."

The exact numbers seem sometimes to have escaped the Principal and his staff. This is not surprising, considering the flexibility of attendance standards. In 1870 we have seen that there were 169; in 1872, 223. During the years between 1867 and 1900, the largest student body numbered 273, in 1889. In the first forty years of the college the number in the student body averaged 176 men and women of all ages.

Few of the earliest students are listed as coming from any distance, although it is likely that most of them at this time may have

come up the Valley during the war or immediately thereafter. While later an occasional visitor from Africa or other distant places would be admitted, in general the school was to draw its pupils from nearby counties, with a considerable number also from adjoining states.

Interestingly, from time to time in the early days Indian youths attended Storer. However, in 1879 a school was established at the United States Army's Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania to train Indian boys and girls in manual arts, agriculture, home economics and other vocations. The school was organized by Captain R. H. Pratt and continued under his direction for twenty-five years. It was finally closed in 1918.

The Normal School Division of Storer graduated eight men and women in the Class of 1872, five in the Class of 1873, six in the Class of 1874, and seven in the Class of 1875. In addition to these twenty-six, all of whom went into teaching, thirty-six other former Storer students who had not completed the Normal School course were teaching. Consequently, the first four full class cycles resulted by 1875 in sixty-two teaching alumni and alumnae. Many of those who had not then gone through the full Normal School course returned intermittently either to Storer or to other institutions to go on with formal education. By 1877 one hundred former students were teaching, thirty-seven of them graduates, and a semi-annual week-long teachers' institute was inaugurated

at the college to aid in the continuing education and professionalism of the teaching graduates.

It is not easy to measure quantitatively or qualitatively the contribution made by the Normal department to the instructional requirements of the Valley area. Certainly in the initial days of confusion and primary undertakings, even a single teacher contributed relatively more than a dozen in later years. The point is that the door was at least held open and some light shone through. Lest the achievement be minimized, let it be noted again that the early principals of West Virginia's two colleges for Negroes were alumni of Storer: West Virginia State College and Bluefield State College. Many others have served regularly over the years in the high schools or grammar schools of the region, constantly spreading their influence and benefit.

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

Much credit has been given to Storer as a catalyzing agent in the early years of West Virginia's free school system. The presence at Harpers Ferry in the late nineteenth century of up to twenty white

teachers, largely from New England where teaching skills were well advanced, did help in the transition from small private schools and seminaries.

Dean Leroy Johnson of Storer and Lincoln has said that Negro education in the western part of the state of West Virginia stemmed from Storer in the eastern panhandle, not only ^{up} the Shenandoah Valley, but westward to Cumberland, Maryland, Winchester, Virginia, and even into Kentucky, and the first West Virginia state black schools at Bluefield and at Institute near Charleston.

As the free school system made numerous mission schools no longer a necessity, they were abandoned, and only the Freewill churches were left in the Valley towns to mark the denominational work. A black woman teacher stated in 1876 that Storer up to that time had sent out over six hundred teachers and that fifty of its pupils had fitted themselves for greater usefulness by taking "professional" or other advanced courses.

The faculty itself remained predominantly white, even exclusively so until the end of the century. There were exceptions, of course -- impressive ones. Unfortunately their names are largely buried in the dusty records of the past. Among the trustees in the early 1890's appear Frederick Douglass and Hamilton Hutter, the latter to become in 1895 the first principal of the new Bluefield Colored Institute, as then titled.

Years later another trustee, Dr. John W. Davis, was to serve as president of West Virginia State.

Records of the early schools in the State of West Virginia are not available. This is due partly to conditions prevailing in the first years of statehood, but primarily owing to the fact that school laws did not require systematic records for reporting educational data and progress. In 1846, the General Assembly of Virginia passed "An Act Amending the Present Primary School System." This act contained an important change in that it charged the county court of each county to lay off school districts and to appoint one school commissioner to each district.

The schools thus provided for were to be "free public schools" for indigent children, and the people of each county were to vote whether or not they would participate in this type of educational program. Jefferson, in 1847, was the first county to adopt the provisions of this law. A century later, in 1950, W. W. Trent, State Superintendent of Free Schools, indicated that the first "free school" in West Virginia was established somewhere in Jefferson County. In 1861, the county numbered twenty-seven such schools. President McDonald of Storer from 1899 to 1944 held the opinion that this first free school was situated on Payne's Hill at Halltown, not more than five miles from Storer's campus on Camp Hill.

In 1891 Mrs. Mary P. DeWolfe of Illinois donated \$2,000.00 in

memory of her husband to finance a building for "industrial education." It was located in the rear of "Morrell House," originally the quarters of the Army Paymaster's Clerk. Emphasis was on household skills for the girls, such as sewing, mending and the beginning of dressmaking. From other sources six carpenters' work benches were equipped for the young men, as well as a small printing shop.

In addition to the main Anthony Memorial Hall, another structure of fieldstone was given by the heirs of Deacon Anthony in 1903. This building was to constitute the library of the college after 1929. It was first named the Lewis W. Anthony Industrial Building, also to be used for "practical" education. A substantial cinder block wing was added in 1953, when the building came into use as the library, as the trustees of the college strove to meet the standards for the official educational accreditation which was never quite attained.

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

This is the total of physical acquisitions of any significant nature. In addition there were various generous financial contributions, large and small. The greatest over the years was the Anthony Fund of almost \$35,000; another was a gift of \$10,000 from the Reverend John L. Sinclair, an early supporter of Negro education as well as one-time president of the Freewill Anti-Slavery Society. There were many small donations also, some unquestionably larger in proportion to ^{THE} re-
^{OF THE DONOR} sources than those already mentioned. The purposes of the gifts were [^] diverse, and it was not always easy to earmark the smaller funds so as to satisfy the particular intent of each donor. All in all, the total endowment of the college never exceeded \$125,000; it probably averaged considerably less than that even in the better years.

The DeWolfe Industrial Building in 1891, the Anthony Industrial Building in 1903, the Cook Hall Home Economics Building in 1940, and the Smallwood Farm earlier, were the physical manifestations of Storer College's attempt to keep abreast of the practical aspects of black education. The Smallwood Farm dated from the very beginning of the school and then offered the most specific type of useful training available to either a white or a black youth. Post-war opportunities, particularly in the South and West, were largely agricultural, and embraced a wide range of skills such as blacksmithing, butchering and simple carpentry.

Sewing, cooking, preserving, and the essential arts of nineteenth-century rural living were taught the girls. The 1907 catalogue still stated that each girl, in order to graduate, must make her own dress for that occasion.

In adopting these simple forms of industrial education, Storer was ^{ONLY}~~simply~~ doing what seemed practical and essential. Students of all ages needed guidance in the ^{MOST BASIC}~~simplest~~ things. Booker T. Washington later used the memorable expression, "cast down your buckets where you are" to describe this first effort in bringing an untrained people the most primary aids for self-sufficiency and support.

Storer did this as a matter of course from the very outset; later with the addition of the modest facilities and buildings already described it merely followed along in emulation of the much broader land-grant college programs provided by the original Morrill Land Act of 1862 and the subsequent legislation of 1890 and 1907.

Perhaps more striking on the wider scene, and as part of our understanding of early Negro education, Storer reflected in its small way an introduction to what became known generally as "industrial education," and the related philosophical battle among recognized Negro leaders.

The "industrial" concept was introduced 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.

After eighteen months at Williams College in Massachusetts, Armstrong enlisted in the summer of 1862 when Union spirits were low, and was commissioned a Major of volunteers whom he recruited himself at Troy, New York. The final two of Armstrong's three years' military service was as a commander of Negro troops, for whom he developed a strong admiration. Discharged in the late autumn of 1865, he remembered his wartime plans for blacks in the South, and applied to General O. O. Howard at the Freedmen's Bureau, armed with a letter from his late chief of staff and supported by his excellent record as an officer of Negro troops.

Armstrong received a double appointment, as agent under the Freedmen's Bureau having control over ten counties in Eastern Virginia, and also as superintendent of schools over a loosely defined area in that general vicinity.

In March, 1866, he arrived at Hampton to take up his duties. Hampton had been an early pocket of refugees and continued so throughout the war, where "came from all Virginia, daily caravans of Negroes to seek freedom, food and home." General Howard had especially assigned Armstrong to study the existing limited educational opportunities

and to report concerning the need for others.

Armstrong was frank and sometimes painfully outspoken. He developed the position that more important to the freedmen's present and 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 immediate hope of the black.

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

Armstrong proceeded to develop a program through which young black men and women could be trained to be teachers and leaders of their own people. This concept reflected the conclusions that were reached almost simultaneously at many of the early Negro schools, missionary, philanthropic or governmental, including Storer at Harpers Ferry and Howard at Washington. In 1868 the approach was translated into action in the opening by Armstrong, with Freedmen's Bureau support, of the Hampton Normal and Industrial Institute.

Lest it seem that this idea is belabored, it must be remembered that the concept of combining mental and manual training was a novelty.

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, based on his past observation and experience. But the realities were very different.

The best-known disciple of Hampton Institute was Booker T. Washington, born in slavery in 1856 in Virginia, and a student from 1872 to 1875. In 1881 Washington became head of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, a new school just chartered by the Alabama Legislature and aided by Southern philanthropy. The Hampton plan was adopted in toto with perhaps a greater emphasis on agriculture than prevailed in some other institutions.

At the turn of the century, in Up From Slavery, Washington described 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 drudgery and toil by putting thought and skill into it. Third, through industrial education both races in the South could be 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."

The complicated concept of appropriate education for the Negro sometimes confused and obscured the basic intent. It became 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 by whites at public meetings in the North and the South, he found himself embroiled in controversy with the new generation of black intellectuals and leaders. As an outstanding representative of this group, the brilliant and articulate historian W. E. B. DuBois was unmerciful in his criticism of Washington with his assumed acceptance of a subservient position for his race.

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

The disagreement 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. The college seal, adopted in 1915, appropriately bears the Storer motto: LABOR OMNIA VINCIT. It is an important fact that the intentions of the teachers of this small institution were to do everything possible to nurture by close personal attention all the latent qualities in each student.

CHAPTER VII

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY AND THE SECOND HALF CENTURY

By 1890 the pattern and style had been established for Storer. Principal Brackett, aided by his wife and his sister, Mrs. Lura Brackett Lightner, had presided for a quarter of a century over yearly student bodies averaging two hundred young people. Progress had been made toward a higher level of training and education. Though never exclusively denominational, the school was a beloved protégé of the devoted women and men of the Freewill Baptist Church. All connected with the school over these first twenty-five years identified it totally with the valiant days of the Anti-Slavery 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 they came to call themselves, as a monument to the most glorious period in their denominational history. All were older now, and time colored the earlier events. The war veterans at the end of the century were approaching sixty years of age; some were older. 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, at first in livery stable vehicles, later in the early "horseless carriages." They brought their families to follow with them the roads to Manassas, Antietam and Gettysburg.

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

Storer had acquired most of its physical facilities in the form of buildings, and its small faculty was considered adequate to its needs. The days of the smaller college, as then conceived, were drawing to a close throughout America, 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, particularly the state universities.

As the rising generation of Free Baptists reviewed their objectives and pondered their future purposes, so, in the same way, a younger group with changed interests would attempt to establish a valid design for Negro education. In the two decades before and after 1900 the economic somnambulance of the South coincided with an unrestricted inflow of European immigrants into the Northeast. These conditions combined to call into question the style of higher education of youths, black and white, in the South. Was this education only a wasteful departure

from the essential basic training which might at least afford them a livelihood? Such reasoning is specious at best. In the long run education must be universal, by persons and by regions, otherwise the inevitable decadence of both.

The United States Bureau of Education described the interchange of views that arose at the end of the reconstruction era. Although the atmosphere appears quaint, it was valid for the period. 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 northern educational 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.

The Peabody Fund of 1867 had led 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 especially noteworthy for their very practical interest, their continual inspection tours of the schools of the South, and their considerable insight into the needs and failings of existing Negro education.

The Peabodys, the Slaters, the Stokeses, Armstrong and Booker Washington were a part of the war and immediate post-war generation; following them came a leadership with a fresh approach and a broader

view of the basic problem of twentieth-century black education.

At one of the conferences at Lake Mohonk, New York, instituted by Albert K. Smiley in behalf of the American Indians, Dr. Hollis B. Frissell and the Reverend Edward Abbot received the inspiration which led to a series of meetings on the current status and direction of Negro education in America. The first three of these were held at Capon Springs, West Virginia, in 1898 and subsequent years. Capon Springs is a small Southern resort in a secluded valley almost on the Virginia state border, in those days reached with difficulty by railroad, part of the journey requiring travel by stagecoach. Its selection as a site can only be explained by its being near the border between the North and the South, and its peaceful atmosphere must have attracted the philanthropists who attended these gatherings.

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 in the published proceedings.

Dr. Frissell was ideally suited to accomplish this second-generation adjustment of Negro educational thinking to twentieth-century needs. In 1898 at the age of forty-seven he had already served for five years as principal of Hampton Institute, 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 aroused

crusade of the first abolitionist-educators and the second generation of more forward-looking and less emotional educators.

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." Here appeared Robert C. Ogden, a lifelong friend of General Armstrong and Dr. Frissell and a trustee of both the Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes. A successful associate of John Wanamaker in Philadelphia and New York, he had been impressed from the beginning days by the work of General Armstrong among the blacks.

Ogden, with his practical business experience, his wide commercial acquaintance in both North and South, and his deep interest in the problem, brought to these Southern conferences exactly the personal entr e and the practical administrative capacity needed to launch this "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 twentieth century it became known as the "Ogden Movement."

During the dozen years after the first three annual meetings at Capon Springs, conferences were held at more accessible spots throughout the South including Winston-Salem; Athens, Georgia; Richmond; Birmingham; and other large cities, with abundantly increased attendance and publicity. From these meetings evolved the Southern Education Board,

or Conference for Education in the South. Clearly inspired or encouraged by these meetings, as well as by the example and words of Booker Washington and others, there emerged also various new agencies which were to furnish leadership in Negro educational aid for most of the first half of the twentieth century.

The Jeanes Fund was created in 1907, principally to improve the smaller rural schools of the South. In 1909 there followed the Phelps-Stokes Fund which recognized the important part played by Southern whites in black 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 also made many generous gifts.

However, the dominating foundation, which resulted in a large coordinating system, was represented by the General Education Board. Like the Phelps-Stokes Fund, it was not restricted to the needs of Negro education. It was the largest and apparently the most objectively administered of the general education funds. Initiated in 1905 by major endowments from the senior John D. Rockefeller, in 1906 the Board entered into a joint arrangement with the United States Government through the Department of Agriculture. Ultimately it supported state and county units, particularly in the field of farm demonstration work which led to improved agricultural methods and enhanced soil productivity.

This, then, is the background -- a bird's-eye view of the position

of Negro education as the first generation of its supporters passed from the scene. At Capon Springs in 1898, and thereafter, a new atmosphere was to influence to a greater or lesser degree all the educational facilities and opportunities available to blacks. That these facilities and opportunities would continue to be tragically limited and inadequate has become all too evident with the passage of the ^{THREE QUARTER}~~half~~ century since the second generation took over. Yet the principal participants were guided by the ~~on~~most generous motives, and the special concepts of the times.

Even in 1916, when the later private foundations were only beginning their operations, the Bureau of Education was compelled to express itself on the issue:

The beneficent 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 beneficent consequences, even though they have not always fulfilled the cherished expectation.

These are weak words indeed in defense of our second generation's effort to catch up the torch from the earlier heroes. It is probably unfair, in the light of public comprehension in the early twentieth century, to place the blame for the chronic deficiencies in Negro education on any group. The people, the individuals, the committees and conferences

were devotedly doing their best by their own lights. Many other social abuses persisted, of every kind and in every class, as they do to this day, with enormous damage to the nation.

Perhaps the point is that the needs and problems of the Negro race were swamped in the overwhelming expansion of the country and its industrial development. Until the late 1920's the black was invisible. If he was thought of at all, he was presumed to eke out a minimum and 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 too suffered from neglect, exploitation, and damaging environments. It would remain for yet another generation, in which blacks themselves would play a greater role, to approach adequate progress or achieve suitable goals.

With these conditions as a backdrop, Storer College was preparing for its adjustment to the twentieth century. In 1897, after thirty years as principal of Storer and thirty-three years of teaching and missionary labor in the Shenandoah Valley, Nathan Brackett stepped aside from active administration, though continuing as school treasurer until his death in 1910.

There is a moving letter to Brackett from his old friend and counselor, Oren Cheney, dated three years before he retired:

Lewiston, December 20, 1894

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 \$1,000 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 strong until his death, ~~in 1910~~. In 1903 he took the lead in raising funds to match a larger appropriation from the state for a new "trades building" in the industrial department.

No man could have been more dedicated or motivated throughout his lifetime to the cause of the nation and her disadvantaged people. Modest and deeply religious, he did his best as he conceived it. If

General Oliver Otis Howard was the "Christian Hero," certainly Nathan Cook Brackett was the "Christian Soldier."

CHAPTER VIII

After a brief period from 1897 to 1899, when the former instructor in "Biblical Literature, Physical Culture, and Oration," the Reverend Ernest Earle Osgood, was Principal, there appeared a much-beloved teacher, who for the long span of forty-five years served first as Principal and after 1900, as President. His term, in fact, lasted until the expiring decade of Storer.

Henry Temple McDonald of Blue Earth, Minnesota became a part of the history of Storer almost despite himself. His family background was of Colonial, westward-trending farm emigrants, and Union sympathizers. Though a Freewill Baptist and an enrolled student at that denomination's Hillsdale College at Hillsdale, Michigan, he might well have undertaken his teaching career at any of the schools or colleges throughout the country upon his graduation, with an A.B. degree, in 1897. Teaching appeared to be his ordained course, and by 1899 he was principal at the high school in Hillsdale.

However, in 1897, Principal Nathan Brackett, after a third century of teaching and leadership at Harpers Ferry, had felt obliged to relinquish the major responsibilities of administration to the Reverend Osgood. While McDonald was learning the rules and challenges of

teaching at Hillsdale, Osgood carried on at Storer College.

Another native of New Hampshire, Osgood had graduated from the Emerson School of Oratory in Boston and was also a minister and the son of a Freewill Baptist clergyman.

By 1899 a replacement was needed at Storer. A young man trained at a Freewill Baptist college would meet the requirements. What part was played in his selection for the appointment by his future wife and her parents is perhaps immaterial. Suffice it to say that Hillsdale president and Storer College friend George Frank Mosher must have had adequate opportunity to observe the good-looking, athletic and competent classmate of his own daughter Elizabeth. Elizabeth had also elected a career as a teacher after her A.B. at Hillsdale, followed by an A.M. degree in 1898. For two years she taught in the high school at Henniker in ~~the~~^{HER} native state of New Hampshire. As an undergraduate at Hillsdale College she had worked on the school paper with Henry McDonald. Two years after the latter's appointment to Storer, on June 12, 1901, Henry McDonald and Elizabeth Mosher became man and wife, and a lifetime of partnership in education began. The accounts of the day described a lovely wedding followed by a European trip of ten weeks. And during the ceremony a soloist friend sang "Annie Laurie" in tribute to the Scottish ancestry of the couple. By this time the college trustees had elevated Henry's

title from principal to president, and henceforth he was so known. In later years Hillsdale conferred upon him an honorary doctorate, and in 1946 Mrs. McDonald received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the same institution.

There was more than collegiate and career affinity, however, in this union. Mrs. McDonald's mother, Frances Stewart Mosher, was indeed the daughter of the Reverend Isaac D. Stewart of Dover, New Hampshire, one of the three signatories to the Circular of 1867 which put the infant school in motion. Further, Stewart had participated in all the events which led up to the chartering of Storer, the financing of John Storer's gift and the acquisition of the government property for the campus. His signature was on the note executed on the very last day of 1867, which completed the matching of John Storer's vital gift.

Thus a decade before Mrs. McDonald's birth in 1877 her grandfather had been at the center of the Freewill Baptist group that had struggled so valiantly to establish the original school under Nathan Brackett in 1865, and then had accomplished the conversion to a rudimentary normal school which gradually moved upward in its standards of instruction. The transition from the Brackett administration of 1865 to 1897, to that of Dr. McDonald from 1899 to 1944, was almost a family affair. The history and traditions of the college

and the Freewill Baptist Church flowed in an unbroken stream for eighty years. When Dr. McDonald finally retired in 1944, it was to one of the then unused and beautifully situated houses received by Storer from the Government in 1868, and only a few score yards from the main college activity. For many years Nathan Brackett had lived in this house. It was known as Brackett House, and often used as a dormitory.

Before the union of Dr. McDonald with the Mosher and Stewart families in 1901, the then new principal had two years of lonely indoctrination in the procedures and needs of the school. He kept a diary and he studied his problem. The school's twenty-four trustees, who supervised him, included many familiar faces in 1900. Dr. Oren B. Cheney was still on hand, as well as the Reverend G. H. Ball and Judge J. T. Hoke, whose single vote thirty-three years earlier had secured the college charter in the West Virginia legislature. Professor Frances Stewart Mosher, McDonald's mother-in-law, was a board member; also the earliest teacher after Mr. and Mrs. Brackett, now Mrs. ^F~~Ann~~ S. Dudley Bates. Frequent benefactor Lewis W. Anthony served, and Dr. McDonald himself was a member with full standing. The board was long on tradition and proud of its part in the school's creation. It was probably difficult to move such a body dramatically from its convictions.

9/2/

The teaching staff was small. The new principal taught

Biblical Literature and Pedagogy, Nathan Brackett now acted as treasurer, and the latter's sister, Mrs. Lightner, served as "preceptress" and taught Algebra and Botany. Mrs. Brackett taught Drawing, and a half-dozen others gave instruction in the Classics, History, Science and Mathematics, as well as practical tutelage in Needlework, Domestic Science, Bookkeeping and Carpentry. The student body totalled about one hundred fifty, of whom a hundred twenty-five or so came from nearby West Virginia, Virginia and Maryland.

The only blacks on the faculty were two, apparently -- Miss Ella V. Smith, who taught Arithmetic and History, and James T. Hughey. Miss Smith, an orphan brought up by her grandmother (who had felt the privations and limitations of slave life) had entered domestic service at thirteen. In this way she was able to save enough money to attend and graduate from Storer's Normal department in 1886.

Mr. Hughey, born in South Carolina on a cotton plantation, completed the Normal course in 1897 at age thirty-one. Hughey was a skilled carpenter and taught this trade, as well as Bookkeeping. Three summers at Hampton Institute learning "industrial methods" added chair caning and upholstery to his teaching capacities.

Despite the somewhat elaborate programs offered in the school's catalogues, it must be noted that much of the teaching was

still elementary. The minimum age at entry was still restricted to thirteen, and enrollment in the college was permitted to those not over thirty. There were no distinctions by reason of sex, religious preference, nor race.

On the other hand, two oddly contradictory policies were about to appear. Dr. McDonald introduced an increased proportion of black teachers, so that by the time of his retirement the staff was predominantly so. Yet at the same time he moved in another direction to a new ~~school~~ atmosphere as he came to office.

Schools of grammar grade, he noted, were being developed generally in West Virginia, and he spoke of a growing sentiment against the education of the races together. The constitution of West Virginia forbade the "co-education" of the races, leading Storer's trustees to alter their oldest policy (and charter obligation) of accepting all without regard to race. No further white students were admitted after Dr. McDonald assumed his duties. He did say, to be sure, that some whites were tutored privately, including a few by the principal himself.

This was a compliment, at least in some degree, to the school's little faculty, whose members were sought after on account of the "very inferior educational opportunities for the white children," which had led some of them in the past to "bar the sting of prejudice" and come to the school. However, the trustees and presumably the

principal believed they were conforming to contemporary public sentiment and law by this action.

The first generation of white teachers, largely from the North, was passing. One must recognize that due to the "accident of birth," the northeastern states, already settled and partially commercialized and urbanized, imported and fostered many social and economic innovations in the New World. It was a boon to the less crowded rural areas to receive this infusion of new blood, and there is no doubt that the teachers from the older and more developed regions were fortunate to experience new opportunities in these greener fields.

The direction of the school from its earliest days had been to educate and train the black to go forth and share his new skills with other pupils. This would long continue, but now there was appearing an additional objective. This was to prepare the student for a life and career of his own, including but not limited at all by the "industrial" concept, which was certainly legitimate under contemporary conditions. Both tenets were sound -- train the hand and train the mind. And we note that while the Biblical Literature Department was important, introduced by the trustees in 1894 and endorsed by the denomination in ¹⁸⁹⁵1875, there were also the academic and domestic sciences, in addition to the familiar normal and preparatory departments.

The introduction of a black faculty was not an easy matter in the early 1900's. Competent individuals simply did not exist in sufficient supply. Yet there were exceptions, either self-trained or aided by Storer. Henry H. Winters taught in the public schools of West Virginia for twenty years and was a member of the Storer faculty for another thirty-one years. There his specialty was agriculture. After graduating from Storer in 1880, he became the first Negro to attend West Virginia University. Winters was the pioneer -- of any race -- to introduce 4H Club work in Jefferson County, and he conducted such classes in each of the county's fourteen schools.

The Reverend William A. Saunders graduated with the Storer Class of 1895 at the age of twenty-five, having begun in the sixth grade in view of earlier limited training. Immediately upon receiving his certificate, he entered Bates College in Maine, from which he also graduated, in 1899. After teaching in West Virginia and Maryland, he joined the Storer faculty in 1907, continuing there as instructor in Mathematics and Science until his retirement in 1944. He died at 93. Instructor Henry Winters also lived into his 90's.

These were self-made men in the most noble sense of the word, and they gave a character to Storer that stamped its students with what may have been the school's most valuable gift -- a feeling of pride and potentiality of accomplishment. It is not accurate to say that this period was the greatest in terms of the school's

teaching staff, but it did represent a time of a very personal atmosphere of interest in the student and a desire to bring out each one's talents. More sophisticated and more extensively educated instructors later appeared, many to advance in turn to greater responsibilities in larger and better-known institutions.

At the same time that blacks were beginning to join the faculty and trustees, the college was facing major physical deficiencies. The faculty was good, yet it labored under handicaps outside the academic sphere. The circumstances of the school at the turn of the century, when McDonald took over its leadership, reflected changing conditions in many other rural schools, public or private. Funds and equipment were in very short supply; facilities for housing and boarding were frequently primitive and obsolete. In most cases the resources were predominantly local, and in the rural America of 1900 such resources were far from elaborate.

After his retirement in 1944, McDonald and his wife described Storer as they remembered it when they undertook their labors:

The courses were of high school grade only. . . . The school was "self-boarding" except for a few who boarded in a small room in the basement of Anthony Memorial Hall. The latter was heated by an inadequate and dirty hot air furnace. The other buildings were heated by individual stoves.

There were no bathing facilities beyond a washbowl, and the toilets were all outside. Furnishings were scant and poor in quality.

No laboratories existed, and science equipment was lacking. The library of some six thousand volumes was badly outdated and inadequate, with few texts appropriate for teaching contemporary youth. Books had come largely as donations from ministers, churches, and other friends. Only a few papers or magazines were available, for the most part contributed by teachers. No summer school was conducted, since the school buildings were rented at that season to vacationing visitors under the name "Summit House." No organized athletics were offered, nor did the school possess any athletic equipment. Despite all these lacks, however, Henry and Elizabeth McDonald were able to add, "But, students were earnestly seeking education," and ". . . we worked together as one happy family."

The limitations in 1900 were not merely physical. Administration had become lax as the years went by, and had kept practically no useful records. Those that existed were incomplete, and the school functioned without bookkeepers or secretaries. Quite clearly the good Dr. Brackett and his wife had carried virtually all of the burden themselves.

The small number of degree-holders on the faculty, the sparse library facilities, and the indifferent level of attainable academic standards among the poorly prepared student body, prevented the college from securing accreditation. The athletic facilities were unsuitable for winter use (for example, basketball was played in

a converted barn), and the related showers carried only cold water up to the last years -- a grim prospect except in summer.

In this austere setting the McDonalds set to work. Gradually some degree of modernization appropriate to the new century was achieved. Progress was necessarily slow and painful. Funds were never adequate to the needs. The initiation of record-keeping on a sound basis, and the improvement of physical equipment and facilities, were essential.

It was equally important to enlarge the faculty and introduce a greater specialization among the teachers. The annual college Catalogues -- they became known as Bulletins with the 1945-1946 issue -- portrayed much of the development and improvement. The names and qualifications of the teachers were more impressive than in the earlier years. The student body ^Rested at a score or so above or below the two-hundred mark, and the faculty and allied staff varied between twenty and thirty persons, including the maintenance personnel, who were frequently augmented by students seeking needed funds.

The college was known from time to time as a normal school, a junior college, and throughout its life as simply Storer College, its chartered title. Of course its degree of excellence changed with time and circumstances. Dr. McDonald served through the first World War and most of the second. He held the school together

during the depression of the early 1930's, and he never left any doubt how deeply his heart and mind were bound to the little institution.

The precise academic status of Storer College was perhaps more of a philosophical than a practical matter. The original term "college" was inspired by benefactor John Storer's early vision of an institution to bring the highest opportunity to the so recently enfranchised and freed race. There seemed no limit to the achievements that a combination of altruistic teachers, philanthropists, and the new citizens' thirst for knowledge could accomplish. Yet the task was staggering, and there were many ~~tangents~~ ^{DIVERGENCES} in the immediate decades of Reconstruction.

Founder and benefactor Oren Cheney, also president of Bates, could even talk of an eventual "university" after an inspiring visit to General Howard and his Howard University. Nonetheless until well into the twentieth century Storer still accepted students with a minimum age in the early 'teens.

Dr. McDonald argued that once the "sub-freshman" work was eliminated (and he accomplished this), and the institution had acquired the status of a "junior college," Storer could then continue its development and achieve the standing dreamed of by its founders and by Dr. McDonald himself. The truth, as usual, was somewhere between the fact and the dream. Few alumni moved on directly from Storer

to graduate school or an advanced occupation. Most enrolled in another black school. Many favored Lincoln or Howard, or progressed to Morgan, West Virginia State, or Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina; a few entered nearby Shepherd College or West Virginia University. The question is moot, for the college is now defunct. One may justly say that the custodians of Storer did their best, with courage and hard work, to perform their task for the greatest good they could achieve.

The twenty years between Dr. McDonald's entry on the scene in 1899 and the end of World War I represented the transformation of the school from a typical struggling rural training place for those with little opportunity for even rudimentary training in education to a center of relative modernity and pride in its purpose, direction, and academic competence.

Those in charge had attempted to adapt the academic training to fit their clientele -- to give the student the chance to learn a trade or a home or farm skill so as to live successfully in a world of competition and growing complexity. By the 1930's and 1940's the curriculum was sound and diversified. Aiding in this growth of academic values were two new instructors, who were to play vital roles in Storer's final productive years.

Dr. Madison S. Briscoe, Storer 1924, earned an A.B. from Lincoln University, an M.A. from Columbia, a Ph.D. from Catholic

University, and did extensive graduate work at Cornell and the University of Michigan. He taught Biology throughout the 1930's and until 1941-42. For a number of years he served as president of the college Alumni Association and as a trustee of the college. His commencement address at Storer on August 13, 1951 was a moving tribute to the old Storer of the 1920's and a challenge to the students who heard him.

The college dean of instruction from 1941 until the closing in 1955 was the professor of Chemistry, Dr. Leroy Dennis Johnson, an alumnus of Lincoln, holding an M.S. and a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, who had done graduate work at Atlanta University. He had joined the faculty in 1935 and for a number of years served as its secretary. More than any other person, he exercised a stabilizing force and rallying point for continuity in the uncertain and sometimes turbulent final years of Storer.

Doctors Briscoe and Johnson were joined on the faculty over these years by other capable black instructors. The interracial staff influenced the character of the students at Storer. Dr. Johnson believed that this kind of faculty placed a special stamp upon the undergraduates, which remained with them beyond their college days.

The fact that these two distinguished figures attained marked success not only in the academic world, but particularly in science -- biology and chemistry respectively -- demonstrates the direction

in which the college was moving and the distance it had covered. Such specialties were undreamed of and unattainable in the early days of Storer. Then the religious, evangelical spirit prevailed. The road was long from the simple educational offerings and standards of the first half century. Perhaps the intellectual stimulus of the World War I years provided the catalytic agent for change.

The student body went through evolutionary stages too. At times the school was the principal source of instruction in the area beyond grade school for blacks. The goal of a fully accredited, degree-conferring college was never attained. Yet Storer did issue certificates to teachers in the state of West Virginia, and a number of diplomas which in many instances opened the door to further education at more advanced institutions. Almost always a certificate enhanced employment opportunities for its recipient, and perhaps above all, the pride and self-confidence such an instrument engendered were a life-long support and encouragement.

The education of the freed citizens of West Virginia was recognized by the state legislature, which appropriated sundry amounts annually to the school for this purpose. When he retired in 1944, Dr. McDonald estimated that these appropriations during his administration "were increased from \$1,000 annually to a maximum of \$17,500." In the school's final years the state appropriated \$20,000 annually.

Finances were a chronic problem. While this may be considered a constant difficulty for all schools, large or small, Storer was acutely troubled by the lack of resources, and very frequently on thin ice; its payment to teachers was never adequate by any contemporary standards.

The West Virginia state appropriation was often in doubt, and finally ceased in 1955, when it was felt that the desegregation legislation of 1954 would alter the training procedures and needs in the state.

The college endowment hovered around \$100,000 in Storer's last quarter century, approximating \$125,000 when the institution ended its days in 1955. The trustees and the presidents or principals from the outset constantly sought gifts and contributions to support the college's purposes. The Storer "Jubilee Singers," similar in objective to the Hampton Choirs and the original Jubilee Singers of Fisk University, did their best to raise funds in the early days. Around 1873 this group was known as the "Union Chorus."

In 1944, when Dr. McDonald retired, the college trustees provided that he and Mrs. McDonald should have lifetime use of the old Armory Superintendent's Clerk's house, known at the college as Brackett House, the second building to be used by the embryo school in the 1860's, along with Lockwood House.

Here Dr. McDonald lived, near the campus, until his death on Thanksgiving Eve, November 28, 1951. The passing of McDonald was marked by a memorial at the Camp Hill Methodist Church, Bolivar, on December 2 of that year. Dean of the college Leroy D. Johnson paid a moving tribute and closed his eulogy with the four verses and the chorus of the college hymn, "To Thee, Alma Mater," which Dr. McDonald had written in 1935 and set to the tune of "Fair Harvard." Tributes were paid by friends from the faculty and the community. Burial was in the Harper Cemetery, a short distance from the grave of Nathan Brackett and close to old Lockwood House where the school had opened its doors in 1865.

Mrs. McDonald continued to reside at various intervals of time in the Brackett House, where she celebrated her eighty-ninth birthday on May 11, 1966, almost a year before her death. Dean Johnson of Lincoln University delivered the eulogy at her funeral, as he had done for her husband.

The career of Henry Temple McDonald presents one fascinating sidelight. Moved as he was by the pageant of a period which embraced John Brown, Abraham Lincoln, the fratricidal war, and the patriotic emotionalism of the full second half of the nineteenth century, he conceived the possibility of a Harpers Ferry National Monument to be sponsored by the Federal government. After the damaging flood at Harpers Ferry in 1936, he discussed this project,

which he had long held dear, with then Congressman Jennings Randolph, as they viewed the scene from the vantage point of Jefferson Rock. The railroad and vehicular bridges which served the little town were washed out, and the stores and shops were under feet of water.

The concept of a national park in recognition of the dramatic and controversial raid of John Brown seemed, whether Dr. McDonald fully realized it or not, to have a certain logic. This scene had known repeated disaster -- insurrection, constant hostile action between the two forces of the Civil War, destruction by fire, flood and wartime shelling. It was almost a natural setting for a Phoenix-like miracle. Though nearly three decades were required to bring the plan about, the town and the college ultimately blossomed into a remarkable complex of historic scenes, natural beauty, and educational and training facilities that annually bring well over one million visitors to the community and the site of Storer College. The basic intentions and hopes of the founders of the school seem thus to have been finally accomplished in a transcendent form. The fulfilled dream of Dr. McDonald may have been a greater contribution in education than even he himself was aware.

Two other presidents served for shorter periods in the life of Storer. From July 1944 until May 1950, Dr. Richard Ishmael McKinney occupied the presidential chair.

The almost complete conversion of the college staff to an all-black status came at this time. Dr. McDonald's resignation in 1944 was immediately followed by the trustees' appointment of Dr. McKinney as Storer's first Negro president. He held an A.B. from Morehouse College, received in 1931, and earned his B.D. there in 1934. In 1937 he was awarded the S.T.M. by the Andover-Newton Theological School, and Yale University granted him a Ph.D. in 1942. Thus prepared, he was certainly fully equipped intellectually and by training for his academic duties.

Dr. McKinney developed and increased the black faculty. Within two or three years the staff of twenty-one had only three or four white members who had stayed on after many years with Dr. McDonald. The faculty degrees were principally A.B., B.S. or B.D., with an occasional M.A.

Yet the college suffered during World War II from all the disruptions attendant upon the period. The student body shrank and remained low until the post-war years of the "G.I. Bill of Rights." Strenuous efforts were made immediately after the war to attract students, to improve the school's finances, and to secure from the government surplus items useful for educational purposes. Nevertheless the administrative burden was overwhelming, and the college suffered from a failure in executive and business procedures. The trustees were relatively far away, and the average age of these

worthy persons was beginning to interfere with full attendance at meetings and close attention to the detailed problems faced by the faculty.

Dr. McKinney tried his hardest, only to find, as did his successor, that the demands upon his time for other than classroom work, the need to husband and expand resources in this still remote community, constituted an arduous and well-nigh impossible task. His retirement in 1950 to become a professor of philosophy at Morgan State College ^{at Baltimore} was regrettable and costly to Storer.

It was then that Dean Johnson was selected by the trustees to attempt to hold the school on a productive course. Although offered the presidency, he preferred his academic career, but he did succeed, against great odds, in continuing the institution until another executive could be chosen. For two years, until May, 1952, Storer operated through an administrative committee of the faculty under the chairmanship of Dr. Johnson.

This was a crucial period. Committee management was not successful, and many problems went unresolved at high financial cost to the school -- this at a time when it was especially important to strengthen resources and facilities. Basic maintenance simply dissolved into patchwork repair or even neglect because of inadequate funds. The trustees were unable to cope with the situation in an effective way. None had grown younger, and not all were fully

alive to the problems facing the college. Many apparently could not conceive of the possible demise of their cherished ward. In the early 1950's several younger trustees were added as vacancies appeared, but this action came too late to prevent what was obviously drifting into a terminal decline.

Dr. Johnson loyally and generously stayed on to the very last days of the school, serving for two years as the de facto president with, as noted, the duties of conducting the college's affairs as chairman of an administrative committee of the faculty. Shortly after his transfer to his alma mater, Lincoln University, in 1955, he was named dean of that famous old institution.

Introduced to the scene in May, 1952, the Reverend Leonard Earl Terrell became the second black president to serve at Storer, and unhappily its last. His selection as president could not be questioned on educational grounds, given the apparent desire of a majority of the trustees for a figure of religious cast. President Terrell had B.A. and B.D. degrees from Howard University, and he had studied at Columbia University and the Union Theological Seminary. He had held pastorates in New Jersey and Florida.

With Terrell in 1952 came more new replacements and faculty and staff members. Besides Terrell, these numbered nine, of whom seven were blacks. Two of these served as registrar and secretary respectively. Again the problems were administrative and financial.

The buildings were deteriorating, and many standards could not be maintained, some of a serious nature involving fire and health hazards.

It was at this time that one final physical addition was made. In 1953, a small wing was added to the library in another attempt at gaining accreditation.

In 1954 a special survey of the school was conducted by representatives of the National Baptist Convention, and new attempts were undertaken to increase the small endowment. The survey pointed out deficiencies and goals, yet the requirements were beyond the capacities of the trustees, the school's administration, or its well-wishers within the Baptist denomination or elsewhere to attain.

Like Dr. McKinney, Dr. Terrell found that existing resources could not maintain the institution at a standard deemed appropriate by the trustees. Dividing his time among administration, teaching, and fund-raising, the consequent dilution of effort left the president little time for a dynamic drive to improve Storer's quality. And only such a drive could raise the school to the level of the expanded concepts of life and learning that followed World War II. The elimination of financial aid by the State of West Virginia, as the result of the integration movement, virtually doomed the college. By action of the trustees it closed its doors in 1955, ending at the same time the term of Dr. Terrell.

The problems of Storer in its last decade were in fact overwhelming. Changing from the forty-five-year administration of a beloved and familiar figure, in the midst of World War II with all the strains that wartime conditions bring, it was all but impossible properly to conduct a small institution with severely limited financial resources.

The trustees numbered twenty-four during the life of the college, as provided in its original charter. Composed almost without exception of dedicated and religious men and women largely of the Freewill Baptist Church, they worked diligently to advance and perpetuate a Christian school for those who needed instruction and friendship. From the very beginning, women had played a constructive and vital part in the life of the school, averaging roughly one-quarter of the membership of the board. They were always prominent, too, in the teaching staff. Representatives of the Baptist Convention were also regular or ex-officio members of the board. By the 1950's nearly half of the trustees were black, most but not all alumni of Storer.

As the pressures of modern times and the increased demands upon teaching institutions imposed strong competitive demands upon the smaller schools, the trustees of Storer, with support from the Baptist churches, the Baptist Convention, and often from private sources, endeavored to meet the challenge. But it was too great. Major foundations and various departments of the Federal government were solicited, often badgered, but the tide had passed on, and the margin of deficiency was becoming too great to remedy except by extraordinary measures.

In 1958 the national officers and bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church had offered to accept Storer College as part of that church's educational system. Livingstone College, founded at Salisbury, North Carolina in 1879, and one of the institutions of the church, was offered as an example of the denomination's work. Despite considerable interest among black members of the Storer trustees, the offer was not accepted, and attention was turned to certain Baptist colleges.

The final action of the trustees was inevitable. Despite strongly divided opinions and sometimes vivid debate, the majority of the board finally recommended and voted unanimously on April 12, 1960 for the merger of Storer with another Baptist school for Negroes, Virginia Union at Richmond, Virginia. The continuity of scholastic records at the latter site was thus provided for, with some similar

records at Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Film copies of most of the school's basic records were made by West Virginia University at Morgantown.

Added to the Storer endowment of some \$125,000 by the mid-1960's was the sum of approximately \$200,000 provided by an offer for the college property from the Department of the Interior's National Park Service, which envisioned the Storer campus as the location of a national training and refresher school for its top personnel.

Various problems arose. There was doubt as to whether the Federal government could properly buy back its gift of the college campus and its original buildings, donated specifically a century earlier for educational purposes. And the college trustees rightfully pointed out that the campus now contained several buildings added by the college itself and friends and benefactors of Storer over almost ninety years.

Finally agreements were reached among all concerned. Storer College and Virginia Union were merged. The total of the Storer endowment and the purchase price received from the National Park Service, about \$350,000, was divided equally between Virginia Union and Alderson-Broadus at Phillipi. This division served to satisfy the Baptist denomination that its good works would be continued within West Virginia as well as Virginia. The

merger with Virginia Union seemed to provide the most favorable solution for Storer's long-continuing problems.

The matter of the propriety of the United States government's repurchasing its own property was resolved by legislation introduced in the Senate by Senator Jennings Randolph, supported by Senator Robert C. Byrd, and unanimously adopted by that body on April 11, 1960. The House of Representatives concurred.

The actual transfer of property and assets took place in 1962, and the matter was completed by certification of the Secretary of State of West Virginia on April 19, 1964.

From the very beginning the college was inspired by a deep sense of dedication to the advancement of the Negro. Not only this, but from the earliest days the trustees, faculty and friends of the school believed that it should and must be, to be effective, a joint endeavor between the races. Almost from the start black teachers appeared as instructors, and as dormitory supervisors and counselors. The objective was always consistent -- to teach the student to go forth as a teacher himself.

This aim was successful. The alumni records show the many teachers and ministers who were trained at the school. By the turn of the century the concept of education for livelihood, as well as to teach and to preach, had begun to take hold. Emphasized at first principally at the Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes, it became characteristic

of all schools similar to Storer, whether large or small. Though criticized by some as limiting the future of the black, its intent was to afford at least an opportunity for economic self-sufficiency, upon which further growth could be founded.

The student body at Storer found this policy reflected in the curriculum and among the teachers, and as Dr. McDonald said of the students in 1900, they earnestly sought education. The students' interest in science was stimulated in the 1930's and 1940's by two brilliant instructors who reflected the intellectual revolution related to the economic disruptions and self-questioning of the depression years. They represented the higher level of education which the times already required.

As the little missionary and normal school of post-Civil War days ended its history in 1955, it could truly be said that it had experienced and been a part of the entire period of reconstruction and the slowly emerging opportunity arising in the midst of war. Clearly the decisive forward movements in the cooperation and advancement of the races were still to come, but Storer valiantly played its part as it sought its way toward a mutual understanding and improvement of black and white alike.