

The Dawn of Tomorrow

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74th B. M. E. Conference Will Meet at Brantford

THE NEGRO IN RURAL AMERICA

(From the Congregational Adult Bible Class Magazine)

The first Negroes did not come to America as slaves in 1619, but as explorers—some free, some enslaved, a hundred years earlier. The pilot of one of Columbus' ships was a Negro. Others came with Balboa and Cortez. The territory now forming New Mexico and Arizona was first explored by a party led by a Negro and Negro artisans helped found St. Augustine in 1565. The second settler in what is now Alabama was a Negro member of the De Soto expedition of 1540, who liked the country and settled among the Indians. Therefore, nearly all the present Negro population has a background of several hundred years of American-born ancestry.

Slavery was first permanently introduced in this country in 1619, when a Dutch trading ship landed twenty Negroes at Jamestown, Virginia. These were sold to the colonists as slaves, or indentured servants but some of them became free after a time. Until 1688, it was easy to get white indentured servants from England, but after this date, the importation of Negro slaves as a labor supply began in earnest. By 1775 there were 500,000 slaves in the colonies. Hundreds of ships were engaged in the slave trade, importing Negroes from the West Indies and Africa, until in 1800 there were one million here. About this time Congress passed a law prohibiting the further importation of slaves, but it continued illegally until there were nearly four and one-half million Negroes here in 1860. While most of these lived in the South, northern states built slave ships and shared in the responsibility of importing, buying, and selling.

These slaves were not unintelligent savages, as we have sometimes been taught. The natives of Africa were perhaps the first to smelt iron and forge instruments of usefulness and beauty. They were skilled in the arts of weaving, rug-making, pottery and wood-carving. So in America the Negroes soon were doing practically all the mechanical work in the South, either for their masters or as hired laborers earning enough to purchase their freedom.

There were 486,000 free Negroes in the United States in 1860, or more than one-tenth the total Negro pop-



RICHARD T. GREENER

Who was the first Colored Graduate of Harvard University—in 1872. He was a poet, writer and diplomat and served as U.S. Consul at Vladivostok.

ulation. Many were property owners, and some were wealthy.

Slavery gradually declined and ceased in the North, but persisted in the South, because the latter was chiefly an agricultural community. Slave labor was particularly profitable in the production of tobacco, cotton, rice and sugar. We must recognize, therefore, the vast contribution of the mechanical skill and labor of the Negro to the economic development of America.

Besides this usefulness, these early Negroes showed a loyal spirit of devotion to their country. Three thousand proved their loyalty during the Revolutionary war and many sacrificed their lives to win independence for America.

The Effect of the Civil War

During the Civil War, although the Negroes knew that the victory of their masters would mean permanent slavery, as slaves they were faithful and loyal to the white women and children left in their care. No record of crime stands against them to mar the glory of the gift of freedom which came after years of waiting.

With the Emancipation Proclamation, four million slaves were set free—a helpless, uncertain company. Yet there was no revolution, as had been feared, no attempt at revenge, but speedy effort for readjustment to the new conditions. Many influential friends assisted in this upward

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MASSACHUSETTS' FIRST GOVERNOR WAS A NEGRO

(from the Boston Chronicle)

The first Royal Governor of Massachusetts was a Negro, Sir William Phipps. Although this truth is history, the fact has been so obscurely recorded that it is not generally known.

The biography of Sir William Phipps has been written by many authors and is in many publications as well as in the Encyclopedia Britannica, but in most if not in all of these accounts his racial identity has been cautiously concealed. No mention of his color is made in them.

It remained for the Tercentenary booklet, a literary key to the three hundredth anniversary celebration of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, which is being observed here this year, to definitely mention Sir William Phipps as being a "Negro boy." This fact is recorded in the Historical material section of the book under the general subject, "The Times in Which the Puritans Lived" and are extracts from Albert Bushnell Hart's "Commonwealth History of Massachusetts."

Cotton, Mother, educator, minister and author of note in his time, in his book "Life of His Excellency Sir William Phipps", says: "He was born in Pembaquid (Bristol) Maine, February 1651. His father was James Phipps, a gun-smith. His mother gave birth to 26 children, 21 of whom were boys. William was one of the younger set. He was 18 when his father died.

"Sir Phipps married the young widow of John Hill, a well-known merchant. She was the daughter of Captain Roger Spencer, spoken of in the language of the times as "a person of good fashion."

"Sir Phipps was successively a shepherd, a carpenter, and a trader, and in 1687 recovered from a wrecked Spanish ship off the coast of the Bahamas, bullion plate and treasure valued at several million dollars, of which the British government awarded him the sum of \$1,500,000. This gained him a knighthood and the appointment of sheriff of New England.

"In 1690 he captured Port Royal (now Annapolis) in Nova Scotia, but failed in the following year in a naval attack on Quebec. In 1692, thru

B.M.E. CONFERENCE AT BRANTFORD NEXT WEEK

Much interest will be shown within the next few days as the Ministers, delegates and visitors prepare to meet in the City of Brantford for the Seventy-Fourth Annual Session. It is significant in the history of the British Methodist Episcopal Church, Seventy-Five Years of unbroken administration has been given to our people.

The 18th General Conference will convene on Wednesday June 25th.

We are sure that Rev. C. A. Johnson and his committee have gone the limit in preparing to entertain all who will attend.

The Annual Conference work will occupy Monday and Tuesday, 23rd, and 24th, because of the limited time for annual reports, etc., and etc., the Conference Executive would urge upon all to have statements accurate and presented on time.

The Woman's Missionary Society will hold their session on Friday 27, when reports will show an increase in the interest of Mission Work among our people.

The convention of S.S. and Y.P.S. will be held on Saturday and Monday. Youth is the future church, and it will be revealed to any who attend their session and observe the manner in which they deliberate that the church of tomorrow is being well established in the life of our young people.

The influence of Increase Mather, Sir Phipps was appointed first Royal Governor of Massachusetts.

"During his reign this Negro governor put an immediate stop to witchcraft persecutions. He appointed a commission of seven magistrates to try all such cases. During this period the Elizabethan age had risen to magnificent heights, leaving an imperishable heritage in the arts and sciences. No man of the times in the British colonies contributed more to this progress than did Sir William Phipps. Though his education in letters was limited, his knowledge of affairs of state was termed "most extensive."

"He died February 18, 1694, in London, England.