

Dawn of Tomorrow

Published weekly in the interests of and for the Advancement of the colored people of Canada.

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Editorial

CHRISTMAS AND THE COMMON PEOPLE

"God must have loved the common people because He made so many of them." As the Christmas season approaches our thoughts naturally turn towards Christ and the common people, the poorer classes, among which He was numbered. If we have ever desired to possess wealth it was for the purpose of elevating suffering humanity. The wish has always been the father of the thought. If we were asked the question, what in this life we should like to accomplish most of all, we would readily respond, "To feed His sheep, to feed His lambs, to feed and clothe the poor, to build hospitals which administer to the cure and comfort of the sick and suffering, to create industry for all who are willing to labor, thereby banishing the unemployment situation forever, to administer in every possible way to that part of humanity which suffers and groans, to teach men to know and to understand that one Christ is our master and that we are all brethren.

During the next few days many societies and individuals will be busy giving out of their copious wealth for the purpose of making thousands of poor people happy on Christmas day. And this spirit is born of a noble impulse. But the poor we have with us always and Christmas day is not an eternity. What shall become of the poor for the remaining 364 days which are still to be lived through after the yuletide has come and gone? Christ has told the world that it were better that one should tie a mill-stone around his neck and cast himself into the sea than to offend one of His little ones. Did He have reference to the poor when He referred to His little ones? He most certainly did. Did Christ love the poor of His day? If He did not then He loved not His Virgin mother, Mary. "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs." But he meant that this should be done on Xmas day and every other day. Let us be careful lest we offend one of his little ones—the poor.

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. What a beautiful sentiment expressed therein. Such a spirit has in it the latent power to cure all of the evils of the world. Shall we not, my weak brethren and sisters, not make the keeping of the golden rule our resolution of the coming year of our Lord, 1931?

The Number of Negroes in Canada

Continued from page 1

rest of Canada put together. Windsor, Sandwich, Amherstburg, Chatham, Buxton, Dawn and Colchester were all places in the most westerly part of Ontario having a large Negro population, while farther east London, Ingersoll, Hamilton, St. Catharines and Toronto all had their share. To the north of Toronto there was a settlement in the Queen's Bush.

The first annual report of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada gives some information regarding the population at the various places. It reports a colored population of 500 in Dawn, 1200 to 1500 in Colchester, 20 families at New Canaan, 300 families at Sandwich, 2000 colored people in the Queen's Bush, 800 at Hamilton, 800 at Toronto, 1500 at St. Catharines and Niagara, 20 families at Wilberforce and 50 "Actual settlers" at Buxton.

Benjamin Drew's estimates in 1856 were as follows: Toronto, about 1000; St. Catharines, 800; Hamilton, 274; Galt, 40; London 350; Chatham, 800 in the town and probably 1200 round about; Buxton, 800; Dresden, 70; Windsor 250 (50 families and their boarders).

Rev. W. M. Mitchell, writing in 1860 gave these figures with regard to the settlements: Toronto, 1600; Hamilton, 600; St. Catharines, 200 to 250; London, 500; Chatham, 2000; Windsor 2500; Sandwich, 2000; Amherstburg, 800; Elgin Association, (Buxton) 800. He refers to Chatham as the headquarters of the Negro race in Canada.

The 28th annual report of the American Anti-Slavery Society published at New York in 1861, gives some data with regard to the population in two of the larger places. Quoting the Boston Courier it states that there were at that time 1000 Negroes in Toronto, including six grocers and one physician. One Negro fugitive was estimated to be worth \$100,000. The Boston Courier is also quoted as saying that the Negroes in Canada are better farmers than the French or Irish.

The New York Tribune's correspondent who had recently visited Canada is quoted as saying that many of the colored people in Canada are amassing wealth and that "all parties testify that the colored man's position is as good as that of any other emigrant."

Extracts from the Philadelphia Friends' Review are also given in this report. An account is given of the visit of Joseph Morris, an Ohio Quaker, to Chatham where he found 2000 colored people out of a total population of 6000. Their homes compared favorably with the whites and there were no cases of extreme destitution. Buxton colony presented an impression "very agreeable and encouraging," further "he never saw any people more willing to rely on their own resources." He also visited Shrewsbury, on the shore of Lake Erie, where the colored people "manifested a spirit of independence in respect to obtaining the means of living and educating their children. He thinks the unrestricted enjoyment of the privilege of citizenship largely promotes their improvement." All in all he reports being much gratified with what he saw in Canada.

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