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**THE SOUTHERN WORKMAN**, founded by General Armstrong in 1872 and published monthly by the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, is a sixty-four page magazine devoted to the interests of the black and red races of this country, and to the work done for them at this school. Each number contains information about some of the school's 1031 graduates, who have since 1868, taught more than 130,000 children in 18 states in the South and West.

Our subscribers are distributed among 35 states and territories and we believe that the paper has had an important influence both North and South on questions concerning the Negro and Indian races.

Rev. H. L. Wayland, D. D., of Philadelphia said of it. "The **SOUTHERN WORKMAN** published at Hampton Institute, seems to me to give fuller and juster information in regard to the condition and wants of the Southern colored people than any other periodical."

It contains direct reports from the heart of Negro and Indian population with pictures of reservation, cabin, and plantation life; local sketches; a running account of what is going on in the Hampton School; studies in Negro and Indian folk-lore and history; and editorial comment.

**TERMS:** The price is One Dollar a year in advance.

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**CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES;** The editors of the **WORKMAN** do not hold themselves responsible for the opinions expressed in contributed articles. Their aim is simply to place before their readers articles by men and women of ability without regard to the opinions held. In this way we believe that we shall offer to all who seek it the means of forming a fair opinion of their own on the subjects discussed in our columns.

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# THE SOUTHERN WORKMAN

AND

## HAMPTON SCHOOL RECORD

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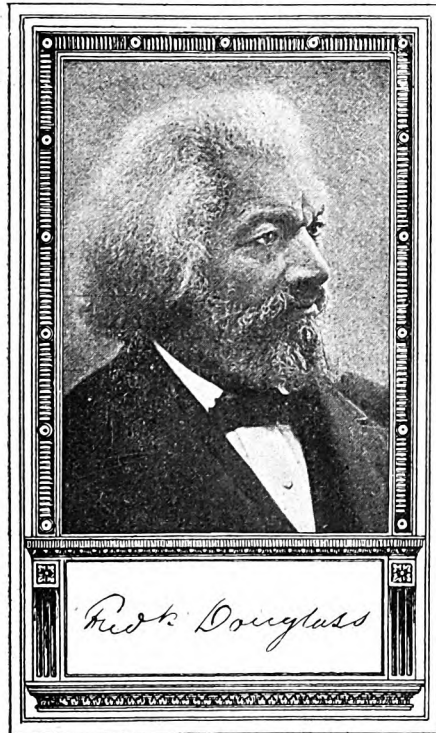
No. 1

THE Indian office has dropped the Hampton School from its estimate of appropriations for the coming year. The reason for this is certainly not that the Commissioner fails to recognize the work that Hampton has done, for both publicly and privately he has expressed his appreciation of it. Hampton and Lincoln Institutes are the only remaining contract schools except those under Catholic control. The Catholics are making a hard struggle to retain their appropriation. It makes the Commissioner's position a somewhat easier one if he takes off his estimate all contract schools, and this is the probable reason for his action.



Hampton intends to fight in Congress as it has in former years for its appropriation. In the first place it is not a sectarian school. There is nothing in its charter or in its administration that places it under one sect. It welcomes Catholic and Protestant students. Its board of trustees is unsectarian. It has received support from both Catholics and Protestants and both are represented in its corps of workers. The undenominational character of the work done at Hampton has been one of its strong points. It not only teaches its students to say, "I believe in the holy Catholic Church," but it teaches them to be catholic in the best sense. It urges them to go back to their homes and work in the schools and churches from which they came. It already receives help from the Land Scrip Fund through the State of Virginia because of its agricultural work, and from the Peabody Fund which gives no help to sectarian institutions. There has been the strongest testimony from government officials and others as to the results of Hampton's work in the West. Eighty-seven per cent of its returned students are today engaged in regular work. The recent inquiry made by the Indian Office showed that Hampton had sent into the field a larger number of successful workers in proportion to its numbers than any other Indian school.

7-12-41



*Engraving by Small, Hayward & Company*

## Frederick Douglass

ARCHIBALD H. GRIMKÉ

Ex-consul to San Domingo

STRANGER than the strangest fiction is the story of the life of Frederick Douglass. It was aptly said of him by a friend, "He was a graduate from a peculiar institution, with his diploma *written on his back.*" Cut the leaves of his story and open at almost any page, and we shall find facts and situations hardly credible, so palpably do they appear to violate all the known laws of human probability, did we not reflect that, in epitome, that story is at once the black record of American slavery, and a brilliant chapter from the noble volume of freedom—the agony, the pathos, the hope, the struggle, the despair, the triumph, of that terrible middle state between the hell of the one and the heaven of the other. The plain unvarnished tale of this man's life outdoes in surprises the romances of Dumas or Scott, and moves mind and heart like the unfolding plot of a tragedy, or the flashing movement of an epic poem.

What picturesque and dramatic contrasts of light and shade, personal degradation and elevation, social heights and depths, illustrate his seventy-eight years among us. Chattel and citizen, slave and orator, fugitive and

reformer, pariah and philosopher! Yesterday he was herded with cattle, today he is companion and equal of presidents and statesmen, poets and scholars. Yesterday saw him scrambling and fighting with dogs for bones and crumbs from his master's table; today acclaims him anointed leader and tribune of a race—hero, patriot, philanthropist. He rose from abject poverty to affluence, climbed from a point in the social scale below zero to a freeman's estate, and thence to greatness; from the legal status of a mere piece of human property in the American Republic to the rank of one of its most illustrious citizens.

Born in a slave hovel amidst densest mental darkness and deepest moral degradation, he lifted himself to the sunlit hills of a life of marvelous achievements, and when he died in fullness of years and honors, the thoughts and emotions of two worlds gathered in homage about his more than royal bier. The sorrow of his mother, the crime of his father, he yet mounted unaided, save by his genius and character, from the lowest circle in the inferno of Southern slavery and American caste prejudice, to the lofty table-lands of freedom, home, country, to immortal deeds and an immortal name.

What amazing obstacles, what amazing progress! Bruised and weary, sad and bleeding, he trod unshod the roughest ways, climbed to dizzy heights, overcoming all difficulties, when every inch onward and upward wrung his brave soul with agony. But behold a miracle!—the slave's agony has turned to orphic music, his sorrow to the wail, the sob, and the heart-breaking anguish of millions of bondsmen, his blood to the lightning and the drenching rain of a wondrous eloquence which falls in golden showers upon a land parched and devoured by power and oppression.

Draw nigh who will, and hearken to the cry of a slave boy, naked and shivering in the cruel night and dungeon of his woe, weeping with hunger of body, of heart, and of soul, and with no language but that child's cry of weakness and misery, appealing from the oppression of men to the moving mercy of God. And then presto!—the scene shifts and the slave boy in his dungeon of woe has vanished, and another picture rolls across the stage, vivid, thrilling, kaleidoscopic, likesome fantastic pageant of dreamland. The slave boy has attained to the tall stature of a man, and no cry breaks now from his sensitive but indomitable lips. For he is flying with freedom's spark in his breast, beneath a brightening sky, holding fast as he flies to the long, shining fingers of the North Star.

They race and converse together, the star and the man, under a brightening sky, and the spirit of the star sees the soul of the man, and the soul of the man is akin to the spirit of the star. "What seekest thou, what dost thou wish?" whispers the spirit of the star from its quiet blue into the ear of the man. "I seek freedom, I wish to be brave and true," answers the aspiring soul of the man. "Thy prayer is granted," saith the bright spirit of the star, "and more, for hereafter I shall walk among men, and speak to them through thee, to those sad slaves clanking heavy chains in their house of bondage, and to their wicked oppressors as well, and thy words shall have something of the mystical might of my own potent beams to beat and blaze for them on the hard earth a shining way to freedom." And then the spirit of the star stooped and embraced the soul of the man, and breathed its white breath upon his dusky lips, and they twain, the star and the man, passed together from the dim, sweet glow of that Easter night to the glorified morn of freedom and manhood.

But while the bright day of freedom brought to the new man joy and

deliverance, it brought him to no fool's paradise flowing with milk and honey, but fetched him rather as yokefellows Care and Duty, and the stern necessity which dooms those who would live worthily to toil and sweat. But were these things ever so bitter to others, to him the newborn freeman, they were indeed sweet, sweeter than Folly's milk and honey flowing through a land of social drones and idlers. It was not for him amidst his strange environment, to sit still with folded arms and wait for opportunities to secure employment; he went out and searched for it until he found it. And although he had a trade, he did not consider it the part of wisdom to pick jobs of this sort only, but did with might and alacrity whatever he was able to obtain, whether it was shovelling coal, or sawing wood, or digging cellars, or loading and unloading vessels, or toiling early and late in candle factories and brass foundries. It mattered not to him respecting the character of the work; he was always sure to "make it and the action fine" with an earnestness, cheerfulness, and thoroughness altogether his own. Whatever of labor fell to him to do, were it ever so hard and humble, he did it in the spirit of a brave and true man.

And now while he worked hard with his hands to satisfy the wants of the body, he was not unmindful that there were wants of his mind to satisfy also, wants as real and pressing as those of the body. He had by steady and manly industry rendered himself, immediately after his escape from slavery and arrival in New Bedford, Massachusetts, self-reliant and self-supporting as a member of the community. But this was not enough, he wished to become a useful citizen as well. He would shirk no responsibility which his new condition of freedom imposed upon him. And the duty of self-improvement he deemed justly the greatest of civic obligations.

He was, happily, at the beginning of his new life able to read and write. For strange as it may seem, he had acquired these arts in slavery. Do we at this day of free public instruction comprehend what that acquisition meant for a slave, so much for him, so little for us? Well, let me tell the story. When a small boy Frederick Douglass learned his alphabet and to spell words of two and three letters at the knee of his young mistress. But he got no further on the road to knowledge by her aid. For the husband of the young lady pointed out to her the dangerous consequences of her kind action, explaining that it was expressly prohibited by Maryland law to teach a slave to read, that it would certainly make him discontented, and lead finally to his running away. But the boy who had overheard the conversation did not arrive at the same conclusion from the above premises, as did the mistress. For not wishing to disobey the law, or to make her slave boy discontented, or to cause him to run away, she complied incontinently with her husband's command, and Frederick's education came accordingly to an abrupt end, or at least so she imagined. But the boy, as the result of what he had heard, made up his mind then and there that what was bad for the master was more than likely to prove good for the slave, and so he set himself in secret to seek that good thing until he found it, master's behest and Maryland law to the contrary notwithstanding.

With this object and determination the little fellow made himself a thief of opportunities. He threw his net and caught the shining and flying minutes and hours upon all sorts of occasions, and when occasions were lacking he created them with never-failing skill and fertility of re-

source. Was it playtime or sleeping time, he turned it into study time, and for teacher he made his playmates serve, and converted sights on the street and printed and written matter in the shipyard where he worked, into pages in the primer, into first lessons in reading and writing. All that came to his busy and wondrous net was fish to feed the growing hunger of his awakening mind.

He had many and apparently insuperable difficulties to overcome, but no difficulty, however great, daunted or deterred him in the eager pursuit of his self-imposed task. He overcame mountains and the lions which crouched in hiding among them, performed the miracle of transforming himself, and passed triumphant into that magic world of the printed thoughts of men, a new creature. He was then no longer a mere slave boy, but that and another boy with the skeleton key of knowledge. It seems incredible that under the cruel conditions and circumstances of his miserable lot, he was able to get and save money sufficient to buy that famous schoolbook of the times, called the "Columbian Orator," but he did. He made that book with its eloquent and elevated sentiments thenceforth his close and secret friend. On the street it walked with him, an invisible companion. And at night it sat with him in his dingy garret and slept beneath his pillow, when perchance the slave boy dreamed such dreams as no slave boy had ever dreamed before. And so, day after day and month after month, he laid up in his young heart the eloquent thoughts, the inspiring truths, which spoke to him from its glowing pages. Thus, unconsciously, the slave lad was fitting himself for his unknown destiny, for the high sphere of activity and usefulness into which his skeleton key of knowledge was some day to admit him.

What wonder therefore that upon his reaching New Bedford, fresh from slavery, after having had due regard for the needs of the physical man, he should straightway cast about him for food wherewith to satisfy the cravings of the mental man also. And so amid his humbly sweet but drudging life, time fled apace with the new freeman. Three years had elapsed since the beginning of that new life, and meanwhile he had steadily grown in manly independence, self-respect, and intelligence; and the things to which he had put his hands had prospered. Nevertheless, all the fresh joy and engrossing duties of this new workaday world of freedom could not make him forget those in bonds, for he was in very truth bound with them. His big and simple man's heart swelled with love and pity for them, his brethren, in their dark prison house, and anon all the infinite pain and tragedy of their terrible lot flamed with sacred fervor in his soul.

Presently in his obscurity tidings reached him of the *Liberator* and of its God-anointed editor, thrilling echoes of brave voices from the resounding battlefield where William Lloyd Garrison was leading the anti-slavery host to the moral Armageddon of the age. And a something divine stirred and leaped within the breast of the former slave and turned his face Zionward, toward the danger and the struggle; set his feet in the footprints of that modern St. Paul of the new gospel of immediate and unconditional emancipation, and of those of his invincible little paper, bravest of the brave and truest of the true among American reformatory journals. And then, amid the din and the conflict, the hour struck for our hero, when he too, panoplied as a knight with the strength of a righteous cause, and with lance in rest, was to enter the lists on the side of liberty,

and to prove speedily his prowess as one of her most valiant champions.

That providential hour struck for Frederick Douglass in the summer of 1841, and in the small town of Nantucket, Massachusetts, whither he had been drawn from New Bedford by the magnet of an antislavery convention, held under the auspices of Garrison and his friends. Douglass went to this meeting without the slightest prevision of what was to happen to him there, never dreaming that the entire current of his life was to be turned by it into other channels. But here is his simple and modest account of that, for him, revolution-making moment: "I had taken no holiday since establishing myself in New Bedford, and feeling the need of a little rest, I determined on attending the meeting though I had no thought of taking part in any of its proceedings. Indeed I was not aware that anyone connected with the convention so much as knew my name. Mr. William C. Coffin, a prominent abolitionist in those days of trial, had heard me speaking to my colored friends in the little school-house on Second Street where we worshipped. He sought me out in the crowd and invited me to say a few words to the convention. Thus sought out and thus invited, I was induced to express the feelings inspired by the occasion, and the fresh recollection of the scenes through which I had passed as a slave. It was with the utmost difficulty that I could stand erect, or that I could command and articulate two words without hesitation and stammering. I trembled in every limb. I am not sure that my embarrassment was not the most effective part of my speech, if speech it could be called. At any rate this is about the only part of my performance that I now distinctly remember. The audience sympathized with me at once and from having been remarkably quiet, became much excited. Mr. Garrison followed me, taking me as his text, and now whether I had made an eloquent plea in behalf of freedom or not, his was one never to be forgotten. Those who had heard him oftenest, and had known him longest were astonished at his masterly effort. For the time he possessed that almost fabulous inspiration, often referred to but seldom attained, in which a public meeting is transformed, as it were, into a single individuality, the orator swaying a thousand heads and hearts at once and, by the simple majesty of his all-controlling thought, converting his hearers into the express image of his own soul. That night there were at least a thousand Garrisonians in Nantucket."

Such is the characteristically diffident relation of the great event by the chief actor of the evening, for it was his pathos and eloquence which had moved the hardest hearts that night, and inspired to unwonted effectiveness and impressiveness as an orator, the grand apostle of anti-slavery itself. It was not Mr. Garrison but the former slave, in truth, who melted the feelings of that Nantucket meeting in the furnace glow of his own wrongs and of those of his race.

That night marked an epoch in the life of Douglass and a landmark as well in the abolition movement. His skeleton key of knowledge had at length and unexpectedly unlocked for him the iron portals of destiny, through which his lofty mind with its shining genius for eloquence, passed like a prince to the mount where have gathered and mingled, in the white pantheon of all the ages, those elect and glorified spirits who are humanity's holy heroes and martyrs, her priests, her prophets, and her kings.

My time is spent, yet I cannot conclude this little sketch without appealing to the youth of the colored race, who hold its future in their



keeping and to all others of that race for that matter, to imitate this virtuous and inspiring example, and like him to do with their might at all times and in all places in which may fall their lot, whatsoever their hands shall find to do; to learn with Frederick Douglass to be, under all the cruel circumstances and conditions of their hard life in America, aspiring, self-respecting, and bravely true.

## Conferences in Southern Maryland

WM. V. TUNNELL, D. D.

Warden of King Hall, Washington

**A**MONG the agencies which have been devised and thoroughly tested for the improvement of the condition of the Negro, the general or local conference ranks as one of the most effective. Its usefulness and efficiency have been amply demonstrated by Hampton and Tuskegee, and while differing in method in different localities and even in different years or periods in the same locality, the principle of getting either the leaders of the colored race or the people themselves to meet together, to exchange notes, compare views, and express opinions has been demonstrably most helpful.

There are perhaps two extreme forms which these annual conferences have taken, necessitated largely by geographical considerations, the end in view, and the personnel of the conference; and these two forms find their best exponents in the two institutions mutually allied as mother and daughter; viz., Hampton and Tuskegee. In the former, it is dominantly a conference of leaders, thinkers, professional men and women, workers in the higher realm of endeavor, and its value and influence are mainly intellectual, academic. It seeks to break out new paths, to collect facts and statistics, and to interrogate and interpret them; to trace drifts and currents that affect the present and future of the race's life, and by scientific and philosophic methods to determine our status, our trend, our destiny. In the latter, that is at Tuskegee, situated as it is in the heart of an agricultural section, there has been an insistence upon the practical forms of labor, a gathering together of the farmers, the colored yeomanry of the South, those whose hands are calloused with actual manual toil, for the discussion of the practical problems of farming, stock raising, home and farm getting, mortgages, etc.

Intermediate between these wise and necessary extremes are the conferences of the various colleges, schools, churches, and even individuals, or, for example, those held at Atlanta University on the physiological, economic, mercantile, and other special aspects of the race question, and the innumerable practical applications of the ideas that obtain in well-nigh every Southern state and even in almost every county of those states.

Whoever originated the idea of the conference is a benefactor of the race. It was a happy inspiration, for it has been a most productive and beneficent factor in race regeneration and progress. The sociologist and economist and philanthropist cannot fail to recognize its value, and