

THE MISSIONARY REVIEW *of the* WORLD

VOL.
XLV.

SEPTEMBER, 1922

NUMBER
NINE

THE NEED OF MESOPOTAMIA

THE land in which lay the "cradle of the human race," the land from which Abraham came, the land of Nineveh and Babylon, is still almost untouched by Christian missions. It is a country of scattered population, and of little progress but is rich in possibilities both physical and spiritual. The commercial agents are active there in their exploitation of oil wells and date groves but the missionaries of Christ have not yet taken possession of the field. There is some possibility that the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches of America, that now have missions in the neighboring lands of Syria, Persia and Arabia, may unite to establish work in Mesopotamia. Robert E. Speer, who recently returned from a visit to this neglected land writes:

"Mosul is the frontier city between Arab, Turk, and Kurd, and one-seventh of its population is made up of the non-Moslem elements, Chaldeans, Syro-Catholics, Jacobites, Nestorians, Sabeans, and Jews. At present also strange tides of political movement interlace, assisting and resisting one another, the new Arab government of Irak seeking to establish itself, the British government seeking to withdraw but finding it difficult to transfer authority and responsibility, the Turkish traditions lingering persistently and the possibility of new Turkish influence feared by some and by others much desired, French purposes not altogether clear, and new life astir in the breasts of many who have learned of liberty what their fathers never knew.

"As we talked with group after group representing many of these elements of life so mingled and varied, we seemed to hear a voice speaking to the missionary conscience of the home Church as clearly as that voice spoke to Jonah hundreds of years ago, 'Arise and go to Nineveh, that great city.' We talked with the British officials, with the father and mother of the present Nestorian patriarch, with representatives of the evangelical Assyrian Church, with the leaders of the Protestant community in Mosul, with the younger men of the

surprised to find that 466 garments had been made, not in one size or pattern, but varying from a baby's dress to a garment containing fifteen yards of cloth. Many a mother stopped at the close of the evening to thank the teacher of sewing for the aid she had received herself, or for the instruction given her children, and for the help which she had received in clothing the members of her family. Eighteen girls sat on the platform wearing dresses they had made with their own hands. Thirteen girls stood and told how they were able to progress from the basting stitch to the completed dress.

For nineteen years the workers have labored to teach colored people the practical application of the principles of Christian living. The institution was organized primarily to teach religion and religion has always been the motive which has prompted us to engage in the other activities. We have watched with great interest the crystallization of many characters as it was marked by their joining the church. While the official membership has always been small, the church is an influential body in the community.

SUMMER CONFERENCES FOR COLORED WOMEN

BY MRS. W. C. WINSBOROUGH

"Lord, I want to be a Christian
In my heart, in my heart.
Lord, I want to be a Christian
In my heart!"

This beautiful negro "spiritual" floating across the broad campus of Stillman Institute from a group of Negro women holding a twilight "Vespers" perhaps voiced the real underlying motive of the white leaders and of the colored delegates attending the first Conference ever held for Colored Women, the desire to interpret practical Christianity in terms of service to our neighbors, wherever and whom-ever they be.

In almost every community of the South, there are at least a few colored women who are trying, with tremendous handicaps, to better the life of

the Negro community in which they live. They are striving for better homes and better schools amid surroundings that might well discourage the most optimistic, and their lack of information regarding modern welfare work frequently leads to failure. They are usually busy mothers or wage earners, hence the "Summer Normal School" is not for them. No "Extension Department" reaches their humble homes.

In 1916, the women of the Southern Presbyterian Church determined to try to help this class of colored women and, as an experiment, established a Colored Woman's Conference at Stillman Institute, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, planned on somewhat the same lines as the Missionary Summer Conferences held by our own church women.

The delegates, which numbered about eighty that first year, came from fifty-nine towns in eleven states. They were women of leadership in their local community and most of them were sent to the Conference by the women of the white Presbyterian Church in their home town.

The Conference continued for one week, all delegates boarding in the dormitory and attending all classes. The Faculty was made up of both white and colored leaders.

The Bible Studies were the foundation of the course, plain, simple and dealing with practical Christian living.

A series of Community studies, led by an experienced worker, included "The Home and the School," "The Home and the Church," "The Home and the Community," "Recreation," etc. A study of the biographies of Negroes who have done worth while things was given to encourage the right kind of race pride. A sewing class occupied two hours of the afternoon led by a trained and experienced teacher.

A Playground Demonstration on the beautiful campus served to delight the children of the town and also to teach the delegates the place of organized play in children's lives.

The evening meetings were usually lectures on such subjects as "Better Schools" by State Commissioner of Rural Schools—Africa, by returned Missionary—Household Pests (stereopticon) by Extension Department of Auburn University—Food Conservation by State Demonstrator of Economics, etc.

The delegates were so eager to hear everything, they could scarcely be induced to observe the necessary daily rest period. The closing session resolved itself into an experience meeting, answering the question "What has this Conference meant to me?" and everyone who heard the answers realized the Conference had been worth while.

In answer to many requests, two other Conferences were established last September. At Gammon Seminary, Atlanta, Ga., sixty delegates registered from near-by States and spent a week in conference and study.

Christiansburg, Va., offered the Negro Industrial School for a Conference, and fifty delegates, some of them teachers, probation officers, nurses and State Education workers, were enthusiastic in their gratitude for the opportunity for study.

During the seven years since the first Conference was established, encouraging reports have been received telling of constructive community work begun by the delegates on their return from the Conferences. Many sewing classes have been organized. One delegate, the Superintendent of the Colored Schools of her town, has instituted a graded course of sewing in the Colored Schools. Some have secured cooperation from their white neighbors in establishing Day Nurseries and Playgrounds for colored children. An annual "clean up" day benefits sanitary conditions in several communities, while enlarged and repaired school houses and better church buildings have resulted from the efforts of other delegates.

The expression of one delegate during the closing meeting is significant: "The greatest thing I have learned

at this Conference is that some Christian white women *really do* care about us colored women, and want to help us."

A BOYS' PIG CLUB DAY

BY MRS. BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, TUSKEGEE, ALABAMA

What interests do the Negro boys in your community have? Pig Clubs, Corn Clubs, Cotton Clubs, Potato Clubs, all have possibilities. Mrs. Booker T. Washington, widow of the famous founder of Tuskegee, suggests some of them.

Yesterday was Boy's Day at The Tuskegee Institute. Three hundred boys from all parts of Macon County came. It reminded me of the early days of The Negro Farmers Conference when long before daylight, looking out of your windows, you saw buggies, wagons, and other vehicles, except automobiles, drawn by horses, mules and often by the great ox, the burden bearer of the farmer. These were days when the great masses came up for their one day schooling and when the soul of the man of opportunity burned with zeal to reach out and pull up his less fortunate brother and sister.

These boys came in like manner—mules, horses, buggies, were seen coming in early from every direction. The boys were well dressed farmers' sons, all the way from ten to eighteen years of age. They were earnest boys, boys who are in school at least five months of the year; boys who should be in school at least seven months of the year.

These boys are young American Negroes, unlike their fathers who in days gone by made up The Negro Farmers Conference. They are being trained not one day in the year but every day. They are being taught how best to direct their energies so as to be of the greatest service to themselves, their families, and to their Country. No one could be amongst this group of well-mannered, well-dressed, forward looking boys without realizing that they were in the midst of the future Negro citizens and home makers, and without knowing that God is in it all and that He