

# SPEAKERS ENCOURAGE AND TELL OF ADVANCE: FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF ...

J Hockley Smiley

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DELEGATES OF THE N. A. A. C. P., GUESTS OF MISS JANE ADDAMS AT HULL HOUSE, TUESDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 30.



Photo by Peter P. Jones.

Mr. Rubinow, Dr. C. E. Bentley, Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, Mr. Hannan of the Bahai movement, top row against wall of house, reading from left to right. The tall and venerable gentleman most prominent is Bishop B. F. Lee. The many friends of Miss Jane Addams have no difficulty in recognizing her in this group. The most remarkable meeting since the scenes of conferences at the World's Fair. The Defender is the only paper in the world to publish this wonderful photograph where a bold strike was made to down race prejudice. Many wealthy white friends in group. Editor Abbott can be plainly seen in the group.



DR. C. E. BENTLEY.

To whom much of the success of the Fourth Annual Conference of the N. A. A. C. P. is due. As chairman of the committee on speakers and halls he has made himself famous.

## SPEAKERS ENCOURAGE AND TELL OF ADVANCE

Fourth Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday of This Week, the Most Significant and Important Gathering for Race Welfare Since the Days of the Abolition—Distinguished Men and Women, Representing Many Nationalities, Take Part—Noted Russian and Abdul Baha, the Persian Philosopher, Prominent on Program.

### GRANDSON OF WM. LLOYD GARRISON EXPLAINS OBJECT.

Opening Session in Magnificent Hebrew Temple—Rabbi Hirsch, Bishop B. F. Lee, Miss Jane Addams, Preside—Delegates From Washington, Boston, Kansas City, St. Paul and New York—Delegates Entertained at Hull House and Provident Hospital—Prof. W. E. Du Bois Demonstrates Varied Life of the Race with Stereopticon Views—Gov. Ganeen Unable to Be Present Sends Cheering Letter.

By J. Hockley Smiley.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People held their fourth annual conference here this week, beginning Sunday and ending Tuesday.

The first meeting was held in Sinai Temple, Grand boulevard and 46th street, and the other meetings at Handel hall.

Despite the very inclement weather more than a thousand persons turned out, and it is said that this meeting was the most significant and important gathering for race welfare held since the days of Sumner, Garrison and Phillips.

Miss Jane Addams presided. The first speaker was Oswald Garrison Villard of New York, grandson of William Lloyd Garrison, the abolitionist, president of the New York Evening Post Company and chairman of the executive committee of the advancement association.

Mr. Villard said in part:

This society exists in order to combat the spirit of persecution and prejudice which confronts the colored people of this land, and to assure to them every right, privilege and opportunity to which every citizen of the United States is entitled. It asks no favors, no privileges, no special advantages or benefits for these disadvantaged ones. It merely asks equality of opportunity, equality at the ballot box, equality in the courts of the land.

It was three years ago that the need for protest against the growth of prejudice and injustice became so great as to bring this organization into being. Three years ago marked the centennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, surely the most fitting of all times at which to found such an undertaking. From small beginnings it has grown rapidly. Its organ of public opinion, The Crisis, reaches more than 22,000 readers. Branches have been organized in Boston, Chicago, Baltimore, Washington and New York, and there is a host of applications for branches elsewhere on file at our office. Meetings have been held in great numbers. The association's centenary celebration of Sumner, Wendell Phillips and Harriet Beecher Stowe have done not a little to keep alive the spirit of the abolition times. The work of legal redress is going on

apace; there is being undertaken at the present time a careful investigation of one of the most terrible lynchings—one of more than a hundred which took place during the year 1911.

#### Judge Hook Gets the Hook.

Looking back on the thirteen months that have elapsed since the last annual conference of this association, it can not be said that the cause of the colored people has done anything else than advance rapidly, both from the political and the material point of view.

Politically we have reason to be grateful for the Root-Borah debate in the Senate on disfranchisement; for the fight for Negro suffrage in Oklahoma; for the winning of civil rights suits in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and elsewhere, and for another and overwhelming defeat for disfranchisement in Maryland. The blow at peonage in Alabama, struck by the Supreme Court in 1911, is a cause for widespread rejoicing.

On the material side is the remarkable increase of Negro wealth in land and homes that continues unabated year by year. In the census report that the Negro population has grown from 1,770,808 in 1810 to 9,828,294 in 1910, the Negro can take unbounded satisfaction, since with his increasing numbers comes increasing power and increased strength with which to fight his battles.

The efforts to draw the color line at Cornell university have failed; the appointment of a colored Assistant United States Attorney-General in Washington and the election of the first colored legislator in Pennsylvania are auspicious omen of the future, and but two of many that might be presented.

But most significant and striking of all the evidence has been the defeat for the Supreme court of the United States of Judge William C. Hook of Kansas.

#### Awakening to Power.

There can be no question that Judge Hook would be today upon the Supreme bench of the land after his intolerable "Jim Crow Car" decision but that the so-called "Black Cabinet" of Mr. Taft waited upon the President and notified him that if this wrong were done to colored Americans no colored man would speak in his behalf in the presidential campaign and that he could count upon the certain hostility of the intelligent colored people of the country. Besides this association, many other bodies interested in the welfare of the colored people and prominent white judges and leaders of public opinion protested to Mr. Taft—and Judge Hook is not upon the Supreme bench of the United States.

We hear much about the lack of solidarity among the colored people. It is an indictment, the truth of which we can not wholly deny if we would. The nine millions of colored citizens do not yet realize what a tremendous power will be theirs when they but stand together, utilize the political influence which remains to them and take advantage of that right to voice their discontent, to express their bitter feeling of wronged citizenship of which no legislation can deprive them. The Hook case is chiefly significant as showing a changed attitude; a new tone among the colored people, it is to be welcomed thrice over and written down as a notable political event in their history if it means, as we believe, an awakening to the power which is theirs.

#### Prof. Pickens Heard.

Prof. Wm. Pickens of Talladega, Ala., was the next speaker. Mr. Pickens met with a very cordial reception and said in part:

"The upward movement for the American Negro is an achievement of civilization, showing that the American heart is better than the American politics or theology. Now 10,000,000 Negroes own a large part of the nation's property.

"The American Negro, emulous of his Creator (for each began with nothing), is now paying taxes on \$60,000,000 worth of property and may be said to be worth more than a billion, for the American Negro, in matters of taxes, has absorbed some of the modesty of the whites. The class that didn't own a mule fifty years ago now has \$500,000,000 invested in farm lands. And any man will tell you that one dollar earned by sweat and sacrifice of a Negro is worth many dollars saved by a white."

Pres. Spingarn, president of the New York branch, also spoke.

The Ninbrian Glee club rendered several selections, and the following letter was read from Gov. Deneen:

STATE OF ILLINOIS.

Executive Department.

Springfield, April 26, 1912.

Mr. C. T. Hallinan,

Chicago, Ill.

My Dear Sir: I am in receipt of your letter of the 26th instant in reference to the coming conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. I regretted very much my inability to accept the invitation to be present and deliver an address on that occasion. It would have been a pleasure to have extended to you my congratulations upon the good work which has been done in recent years for the advancement of the colored race, not only in promoting their present material and moral well-being, but in encouraging them to seek higher and better opportunities in the future.

The progress which has been made within a period of a little more than forty years has been remarkable. Homes, schools, churches, industries and many kinds of social, educational, religious and civic societies have been organized through which the race has joined with the other citizens of our state and nation in contributing to the general welfare. Nevertheless, much remains to be done, and I am sure that a well organized association such as yours cannot fail to be of great service, not only to the race whose interests it is your special concern to promote and protect but to society at large whose aims and purposes are essentially the same as their own.

To foster high ideals of citizenship, its privileges and responsibilities, to train the hand and brain to meet the demands of industrial life, and to cultivate stability of character and purpose, I look upon as among the most important work in which societies such as yours could engage.

Assuring you of my deep interest in the work of your association, I am,

Very truly yours,

(Signed) C. S. DENEEN.

Monday.

At 12 o'clock many of the delegates were guests at a luncheon at Provident hospital. In the afternoon the second meeting was held at Handel hall. Prof. W. E. B. Du Bois and Judge Edward O. Brown of the Appellate court were the speakers.

Prof. Du Bois injected a new idea into the work of the association by a series of stereopticon views showing the life of a colored boy from babyhood to his final resting place in a southern cemetery, illustrating the in-

sults, the persecutions and the injustice with which the Negro is treated.

Judge Brown's topic was race discrimination. Among other things he said:

"It is a duty every American of the white race owes to himself as much as he does to the Negro to see to it that the color of a man's skin shall not subject him to insult, oppression and injustice in a country boasting of its democracy, its liberty and the political equality of its citizens," said the judge.

"The people of the United States, more than any other people of the earth, should recognize the obligation to prevent racial partisanship and prejudice from influencing our conduct to the Negro. Yet a dominant portion of our fellow citizens and neighbors today go beyond the people of any other country in the world in unjust discrimination against him.

"In the civil war we accepted everywhere the assistance of the Negroes, to whom we promised liberty and advancement. We used freedmen in the North as soldiers, freedmen in the South as scouts, fort builders, foragers and commissaries. We were successful and we took no end of glory to ourselves for the redemption and emancipation of a race.

"Now when a state or civic community has undertaken a duty like that there is no way for it in honor to retreat or withdraw. Every step we opened to these people made any political inequality, any social injustice, any ostracism, oppression or insult more bitter to them than it had been before.

"But the Negroes have come fairly up in all the things dependent on their own exertions; they have in one generation become planters, business men, professional men, teachers, bankers, artists, musicians and authors. They have reared theaters and established schools and colleges of their own; built churches and hospitals and orphan asylums."

#### Night Session.

At the night session of the conference Charles Edward Russell, magazine writer, declared that the United States is attempting to avoid the Negro question.

"Are we a nation of cowards?" asked Mr. Russell, "and are we making for universal chaos which may be accompanied by bloodshed?"

In addition to Mr. Russell, I. M. Rubinow of New York, H. T. Kealing, president of the Western university, Quindarrow, Kans., and Miss Julia Lathrop spoke. Bishop B. F. Lee presided.

Mrs. George Cone's jubilee club sang.

#### Tuesday.

The morning session was devoted to reading of reports by the delegates. Mr. Moorildstory of Boston presided.

In the afternoon the delegates were guests at a reception by Miss Jane Addams at Hull House. Mrs. Celia Parker Wooly was the principal speaker.

In the evening Rabbi Hirsch presided. Mr. John H. Walker, president of the United Mine Workers of Illinois; Mrs. Ida B. Wells Barnett, Dr. B. F. Riley of Birmingham, Ala., author of "The White Man's Burdens," and Mrs. Anna Jones of Kansas City were the speakers. Abdul Baha of Persia also spoke.

#### Notes of the Conference.

An important idea was the introduction of a resolution by Mr. Charles Edward Russell of New York. The resolution is as follows: "Resolved, That the Board of Directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is requested to undertake as soon as may be practicable proceedings that will bring before the United States Supreme Court the so-called 'grandfather clause,' by which millions of owners are disfranchised in the southern states."

Among the delegates were Mrs. Eva Monroe of Springfield, Ill.; Mrs. Clara Clifford of Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Montgomery of Milwaukee, and Miss Anna Jones of Kansas City.

Dr. N. F. Mossell, well known Philadelphia and Medical Director of the Douglass Memorial Hospital, was among the early arrivals. In company with Dr. George C. Hall, he enjoyed a number of festivities and participated in medical work to his heart's content.

The reception at Hull House Tuesday, was an enjoyable occasion. Not the least among the treasures of the conference will be the photo of that gathering.

#### ECHOES OF THE N. A. A. C.'S FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

##### By Mildred Miller.

No greater meeting has ever been held in the later history of this country. From the brilliant opening at Sinai temple Sunday evening through to the closing Tuesday night in Handel hall, every session was marked with an intense earnestness of purpose, and the addresses were of an unusually high order and teeming with information and human interest.

It may come slowly, but such meetings cannot but bring about finally "the uplift of colored people of this country by securing to them the full enjoyment of their rights as citizens, justice in all courts and equal opportunity everywhere."

Every young colored boy and girl in Chicago should have seen and heard Mr. William Pickens, of Talladega, Ala.; Mr. H. T. Kealing, of Quindamon, Kan., and Mr. W. E. B. DuBois, author, scholar and editor of "The Crisis."

The reception at Hull House was a very delightful and interesting affair. That wonderful teacher of peace and the brotherhood of man, Abdul Baha, of Persia, made his first appearance at the Hull House.

In both of his addresses at Hull House and Handel hall, Abdul Baha very eloquently showed the folly of discrimination on the account of the only point of difference between men, that of the color of the skin.

A garden of flowers, all of one color, would be monotonous and by no means beautiful.

The local committee deserves much credit, of course, for the arrangements for the comfort, etc., of the guests and attendants upon the N. A. A. C. conference, but yet when

one looked at the ushers for the evenings at Handel hall one could not but think of Abdul Baha's garden with the one color and variety of flower.

If we are hoping for a time when we shall not be measured by the color of our skin, had we not better begin by "cutting out" these nice little discriminations among ourselves?

The young ladies who acted as ushers were lovely and this word is no criticism upon them at all; but the scheme of having young girls for ushers might have been carried just a little farther, and instead of married and maiden ladies such high school girls as Misses Esther Webster, Helen Perry and Bertha Mosely might have been added with credit to the list.