

Growing,
Thank You!

THE MONITOR

Lifting
Lift, Too!

A National Weekly Newspaper Devoted to the Interests of Colored Americans

THE REV. JOHN ALBERT WILLIAMS, Editor

\$1.50 a Year. 5c a Copy

OMAHA, NEBRASKA, FEBRUARY 9, 1918

Vol. III. No. 32 (Whole No. 135)

To Better Farming Skill of Negroes

Blackshear Urges More Extension
Work for His Race.

EFFICIENCY SPELLS PROFIT

Declares Agriculture Offers Best
Means of Making Negroes Valuable
Citizens and That They Can Be
Helped.

BY E. L. BLACKSHEAR,
Special Agent of the Negro Division
of Texas Extension Work.

As special agent in the Negro division of the extension work the writer is increasingly impressed with the possibilities of this work as a means to the permanent improvement of his race of people along a substantial basis.

From their first contact through the slave trade with English colonization in Virginia, the experience of the Negro people has been an agricultural experience, and today more than three-fourths of them live on the farm, whether as hired day or monthly laborers or as farm owners.

One-fifth of the tenant farmers of Texas are Negroes.

The material, economic basis of the strength of the ante-bellum South lay in the effectiveness of Negro labor, and those here and there who assume that the black people are incapable of agricultural and industrial improvement have the record of slavery arrayed against them. The African slaves in their native wilds had no knowledge of any of the useful arts of the early American colonist, and if they had been incapable of improvement the economic Southern system, based on slave labor, would have been impossible of development.

But as a fact, the African slaves early learned the method of soil tillage then in vogue and later owners began to use slaves of exceptional ability as farm managers in a limited yet useful sense of the term.

African slave women, fresh from the dirt and filth of the equatorial jungle hut life, lived to see the women of their second and third generation become adept cooks and household workers, skilled seamstresses and nurses, both child nurses and sick nurses and good gardeners.

Masters of Household Arts Reflect
Credit.

The Southern slave woman became famous in literature as a genuine artist in the culinary transformation of foodstuffs in the kitchens of Southern mansions and, Midas-like, what she touched as a cook turned to the fine gold of palatableness.

But the burdens and distractions of freedom have made this gift somewhat a lost art and today the American colored population is the most poorly nourished in America. Their children suffer most from malnutrition and the death rate of the Negroes exceeds that of any other class of Americans. The methods of the extension work, however, are capable of giving much needed information and training to present day colored families about cooking and the other useful arts of the household on which human comfort and strength, life itself and working efficiency depend, as well as about home gardening, dairying and canning of fruits and vegetables. The large number of colored girls and women who enter domestic service for a livelihood would thus have a better working foundation, while others would find such information of priceless value in their own households.

The range of the practical industrial capacities of American black people seem to be strangely under-estimated or minimized in this day by some individuals. The slave owner in slavery understood this matter better, and in the South of slavery days, slaves or free blacks of the South did all kinds of mechanical labor, such as carpentry, blacksmithing, wheelwrighting, brick-laying, painting and plastering. This is recalled because more and more the mechanical element is entering into modern farm operation, and because the mechanical aptitude of colored people is well illustrated daily in Texas and the South.

Negroes Operate Gin Plants.

Gin plants have long been operated by Negroes, some, indeed, owning and operating their own plants in Texas and elsewhere.

The advent of the gas engine and the growing use of motor mechanisms for operating farm machinery of increasing complexity as well as for transportation uses emphasizes the fact that soon every laborer will need

to know something of machines and their repair and operation. Hence the natural intuitive capacity of many black men to master the practical operation of machinery adds to their potential value in farm labor in view of the fact that modern agriculture is involving more and more the use of machinery. American agriculture is rapidly losing its simple pioneer form. It is becoming a complex affair and it is inevitable that Negroes engaged in farming in whatever capacity will have to become adjusted to the changes in modern agriculture or else be eliminated from the business, to the detriment of American agriculture as a whole.

Efficiency of Negroes Means Profit
For All.

Many thousands of acres in Texas and the South are used as tenant farms worked by Negro tenants. The millions invested in these lands, together with their improvements, depend for returns on the efficiency of Negro farm laborers. Any appreciable improvements of the efficiency of tenant Negro farmers would be of value to them and to the white investor. The question of such improvement rests, of course, on the willingness of landlords to allow Negro extension workers to attempt such improvements among their tenants.

If on a single large tenant farm the way was open to test the value to the tenant and the owner of extension work methods valuable information would be gained.

If such improvements were brought about enabling Negro tenant farmers as well as Negro farm owners to accomplish more and realize themselves something of material benefit from in-

(Continued on Fourth Page.)

TEXAS BOASTS TIN CAN KING

William R. Price Making a Princely
Fortune Out of Old Tin Cans and
Broken Bale Wire.

(Special to The Monitor by Staff Cor-
respondent.)

San Antonio, Tex., Feb. 3.—Texas boasts of a tin can king. When you say tin can it doesn't sound as if it amounted to much; but it is tin cans, and old ones at that, that this man buys and sells. He is W. R. Price, a resident of El Paso, Tex., but born in Lockhart 37 years ago. If you were to look him up in a city directory you would find him recorded as a buyer and broker specializing in wire and iron. I met him in San Antonio in a downtown office building. A friend of mine said, "Here is an interesting character, William Price. Meet him."

I questioned him and found that he had just shipped 180 carloads of old tin cans and broken bale wire, which he had gathered in the vicinity of San Antonio, especially around the army posts and cantonments. He has a standing contract for this amount of cans each month with the Copper Queen Consolidated Mining company of Arizona, who use these articles for gathering the copper from the waters of the streams in their mines.

Mr. Price is a hustler and finds the business very remunerative, and says he hasn't much fear of competition because he controls the contract.

A good stroke of business. Let some more of our race men follow suit.

PROMINENT REAL
ESTATE MAN DEAD

Cleveland, Ohio.—David C. Fisher, formerly of Cleveland, a pioneer of Lorain, the leading real estate man of that city, is dead. Mr. Fisher has been one of the most successful business men of Lorain for many years. He was a director of one of the leading white banks and owned the "Black River" subdivision. For many years he was treasurer of the County Republican committee and wielded a powerful influence in a county that had less than 500 colored voters. He occupied a beautiful home in the wealthy residential district and was a staunch race man. His real estate holdings are some of the best in the great steel town.

AWARDED MEDAL AND \$500
BY CARNEGIE COMMISSION

Dayton, Ohio.—The Carnegie commission has notified Christopher L. Williams (Colored) of this city that he has been awarded a bronze medal and \$500 for heroism displayed in the stopping of a runaway horse attached to a buggy, saving the life of a little girl thereby at the peril of his own life. Williams states the \$500 will be used in the purchase of a home for his aged mother.

Sears Sentences Smith to Life Imprisonment

Judge Overrules Motion for New Trial; Prisoner
Protests Innocence; Receives Sentence Calmly;
Thanks Public for Kindness; Will Appeal.

As forecasted in last week's Monitor, Judge W. G. Sears refused to grant a new trial in the case of Charles Smith, who was adjudged guilty by the jury on his second trial for the murder of Mrs. Claude L. Nethaway north of Florence Sunday afternoon, August 26, 1917.

The motion for a new trial, which was to have been argued Saturday morning, went over until Monday. Judge Sears contended that the accused had had a fair trial and that the jury had found a verdict in accordance with the evidence.

Smith, self-composed, was then brought up for sentence. In response to Judge Sears' question: "Have you anything to say, any reason to give why sentence should not be now pronounced upon you?" Smith replied in a firm strong voice: "Only this, your honor, that you are sentencing an innocent man. I have absolutely told the truth. If that should be your sentence I can go to the electric chair with a smile, because I am innocent and have told the truth. I never harmed anybody."

Judge Sears then sentenced him to life imprisonment in the penitentiary at Lincoln.

Smith asked that he be sent to Lincoln just as soon as possible where he might begin serving his sentence, get exercise, sunshine and fresh air. The sheriff took him to Lincoln early Monday afternoon.

When Smith learned that he was to leave Monday afternoon he asked Sherman Clayton, the jailer, to phone for the Rev. John Albert Williams and Morris Anderson, the adult probation officer, who had been interested in him. These two gentlemen went to the jail at 11:30, and in company with his two attorneys, A. L. Timlin and Amos P. Scruggs, had an interview of nearly an hour's duration with Smith. Smith, who seemed in a most cheerful frame of mind, said:

"Gentlemen, I sent for you and I am glad you have come, as I wanted to see you before I went away. First, I want to thank you and through you the people of Omaha, for your kindness to me and the assistance given me while I have been here charged with this awful crime. I thank you lawyers for what you have done for me. I want you all to believe that I am innocent. Confronted by life imprisonment, I swear before Almighty God that I did not kill that woman, and I believe that God will yet bring Mrs. Nethaway's murderer to justice and the public will know that I am innocent and have told the truth."

He impressed his hearers as telling the truth.

One man said on leaving: "Either he's telling the truth, or he's insane, and believes he saw what he describes."

The Nethaway murder mystery, for

which Smith has been sentenced, has excited great interest. On Sunday afternoon, August 26, 1917, Mrs. Nethaway, who, according to her husband's story, was to meet him near Briggs Crossing, over a mile from their home over the railroad right of way at 3 o'clock, when he intended to take her in his Overland car for an auto ride, failed to meet him. The day was so hot that Nethaway parked his car in the shade, and yet it was not too hot to have his wife walk a mile or more up a hot railroad right of way to meet him. She failed to meet him. Becoming alarmed, he began a search for her and finally found her body, with her hands tied and her throat cut.

Charles Smith, a colored tramp, was arrested at Blair and charged with the crime. He admitted his presence in the vicinity, but denied having committed the crime. No blood was found on Smith's clothing or person.

Some suspicious circumstances connected with the murder of Mrs. Nethaway upon which the public has freely commented, were the facts of Nethaway's nervousness and alarm when his wife failed to meet him at the appointed hour; his telling the crew of a locomotive and Herdman the operator that he believed a murder had been committed in the cut before his wife's body had been found; and his failure to communicate with or go to the house of Mrs. Nethaway's sister, Ada, Mrs. Lebar, after he had been told by Mrs. Badgerow that perhaps Nellie had gone on to her sister, Ada's, because Ada was sick.

At the coroner's inquest Mrs. Edwards, a neighbor, testified that he heard Nethaway curse his wife and often heard them quarreling. Nethaway said that Edwards heard him "cursing the gate," not his wife. And when he thought they were quarreling they were merely discussing politics.

Of course, none of this evidence was brought out at the trial of Smith.

The first trial resulted in a hung jury, nine voting for acquittal and three for conviction. The evidence showed that Mrs. Nethaway had not been outraged or robbed; therefore there must have been some other motive.

At the second trial it was believed that Smith's acquittal was certain until he went on the stand in his own defense and told the story of seeing men carry the body to the spot. The fact that he had maintained silence up to that time evidently discredited his testimony with the jury.

But as Attorney Timlin said: "There is a mystery about this case that the conviction of Charles Smith will not clear up."

Will the mystery be cleared up? The Monitor believes it will—some day, and perhaps soon.

Smith's attorneys intend to take the case up to the Supreme Court.

In the Shadow of the Alamo

Monitor Representative Visits His
Birthplace, a City of Historic Interest
and Military Activity.

San Antonio, Tex., Jan. 23.
To the Readers of The Monitor:

In the shadow of the Alamo, where the blood of Bowie, Crockett and Bonham was shed for the independence of Texas! All visitors to San Antonio visit the Alamo. I, of course, did the same.

An Historic Place.

Nothing remains of this old church and one time fortification but the chapel, built over 300 years ago by the Spanish monks in the Moorish style of architecture. The inside of the church forms a natural cross. It was here the Indians were taught to follow Christ and later the 175 defenders at this point were put to death by Santa Ana and his army. The plaza of the same name is overlooked by this famous building and has more of the military aspect at present, for it is filled at all times with soldiers.

Has Military Air.

San Antonio, being the headquarters of the South, on the north side has two

is provided with desks and tables for writing and reading. The office and music room are also large, roomy and comfortable. As proof of the men's appreciation for this institution, it holds the record of 3,100 attendants in one day.

Camp Great School.

I left the camp much impressed with this great school of military instruction, where the young men of our race are at last being properly educated. A canvass of the camp showed only 19 per cent illiteracy among the race men drafted. A good record.

The Aviation Camps.

My next visit was to the aviation camps, three in number—Kelly's field, Nos. 1 and 2, and Brooke's field, where the fliers were too numerous to count. Camp Stanley will be visited on my return to San Antonio in a few days. This is the officers' training camp.

The City of San Antonio.

The city of San Antonio, which I will now attempt to describe, is the metropolis of the state, having a population of 150,000 or more, the race laying claim to 30,000. San Antonio being a cosmopolitan city, and the per cent of prejudice being comparatively small, the race has made little advancement in business, yet there are a few places worth mentioning.

Business Enterprises.

The Palace pharmacy, under the direction of Mr. Rudolph Modester and his assistant, Dr. Lemmons, retains the old Southern style of open-handed hospitality and the visitor feels that he is welcome without being told.

E. W. Madison, an old time Austin boy, conducts a haberdashery and gentlemen's furnishing store, and his show windows would be the envy of Broadway.

The Charles Ballinger's interests—I say interests because they are so numerous—two buffets, two billiard halls and cafes, are well equipped and up-to-date and also superbly managed, especially the cafes, under the direction of Mr. John Franklin, where everybody eats, due to the excellence of the cuisine and service.

No Longer a Frontier Town.

San Antonio has ceased to be a frontier town, with narrow streets and still narrower sidewalks, hemmed in by low-squatted Spanish type adobe buildings; but instead has in its business section wide, paved streets, lined by modern buildings, business offices and hotels, along the banks of the beautiful little river which winds its way through the center of the city. The traveler when he stops at one of the concrete arched bridges and gazes at the walls lining the stream on each side, and the grassy slopes extending down to the water's edge, thinks of Paris and the far-away Seine, and then ceases to wonder that they call this the land of sunshine and pleasure, for everybody and everything seems to wear a smile. Even the water of this pretty little stream seems to smile back at you as you gaze into its depths.

Of course you must not expect me to say anything but something good of this old town, for you know it is the place of my birth.

Some Excitement.

I left here Wednesday morning, eastbound for Houston again on the S. A. & A. P.; stopped at Floresville, Kennedy, Runge, Yorktown, Cuero and Yoakum. Nothing exciting happened until I arrived at Yoakum, where, in the middle of the night, the opera house, where I didn't speak, was burned to the ground along with several other places of business. Some one suggested that maybe it was a bonfire in honor of the representative of that great newspaper, The Monitor, during my visit there; but the business I received didn't measure up to the suggestion. At Yoakum are situated the shops of the S. A. & A. P., which employs about 300 men of the race. There are also a few men in business, but the amount of money which the race earns is spent to the greatest extent among the white merchants, a sad condition.

I left this point Saturday evening to spend Sunday in Houston, from which place I leave Monday on the H. & T. C. for points north and west.

Until next week I am corresponding to you, FRED C. WILLIAMS,
Traveling Representative of The
Monitor.

BUY
ANOTHER
WAR SAVINGS
STAMP

Southerner Sounds Note of Warning

America Cannot Make the World Safe
for Democracy if Our Foundation is
Rotten with Injustice to Black Men.

New Orleans, La., Feb. 1.—"Better Education for Negroes is the South's Great Opportunity." Such was the theme of the Rev. Robert Patton, D.D., speaking to the mass meeting on Friday night in Trinity Episcopal church.

"Speaking as a Southerner and the son of one of the largest slave holders of his day, and speaking, too, as one who years ago believed, in his ignorance, that education could not do good for the Negro, I now declare unto you that it is no longer a question of whether the Negro will be educated—the war will educate him; don't forget that—the question is, whether the Negro will get the right kind of education. Education is the training that enables one to value, to appraise things; and bad training, bad example, is at the root of all evil developments of the race," said Dr. Patton.

"The South is no longer just the South," the speaker declared. "It is not what our conception of the South forty years ago was; not what it was ten years ago; nor yet five, nor yet what it was on August 1, 1914. Our relationship with the world has changed. We are no longer a group of states; we are an integral, throbbing part of humanity.

"Democracy is the code by which one man is enabled to live in relationship with other men as he should live. America seized its opportunity nearly a century and a half ago when it refused to pay a quarter of a cent tax on a pound of tea, not because it was a burden that anybody would feel, but because it would have established a subservient principle. And so today America is fit to give the world freedom because it has thought so long in terms of freedom.

"But we cannot make the world safe for democracy until we make democracy safe for the world, and Americans cannot do this if democracy is rotten at the foundation in America and the black man is at the foundation.

"This war has shown us for the first time that the black man is our brother and our partner, without whom we could not hope for victory. Already there are some 113,000 Negroes in our cantonments and camps; and if the black men of the cottonfields all went out on strike tomorrow and stopped the supply of the staple needed for all clothing and ammunition, the eagles of Germany would be triumphant."

Dr. Patton went on to tell how, in what had at one time been the worst section of Virginia, Christian education and humanizing influences had emptied the jails, formerly crammed with Negroes. Wherever these influences have come, said Dr. Patton, the same result has invariably followed and he mentioned a number of instances.

"The South must give Negroes the real freedom, the freedom of education, which is an infinitely greater thing than the mere emancipation of the '60s, which in many cases plunged the unhappy people into blacker slavery than ever, the slavery of oppression. The South is at the great crossroads; it must now answer whether it will live in complete relation with the rest of humanity."

EX-PRESIDENT TAFT
SPEAKS AT CAMP MEADE

Camp Meade, Maryland.—Colored soldiers of the Ninety-second Division assembled at the Y. M. C. A. auditorium, January 29, to greet William H. Taft, ex-president and now head of Red Cross work with title of major general. The men were in a jolly mood and greeted Mr. Taft with songs and cheered his patriotic utterances to the echo.

COMMISSIONED AS CHAPLAIN

Newport News, Va., Jan. 16.—Lieutenant Arrington S. Helm has been made chaplain of the 372nd Infantry, stationed here. He was educated in the public schools of Washington and Howard university, graduating from both the collegiate and divinity schools of the latter institution.

CHICAGO ESTIMATES 50,000
NEW CITIZENS FROM SOUTH

Chicago, Jan. 29.—It is conservatively estimated that the colored population of this city has been increased 50,000 by the recent exodus from the Southland.