

The Voice

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Highlights of the 33rd Session Of the General Conference

BY RUBIE W. SHAKESPEARE

After much confusion caused by moving from First A.M.E. church, 8th and Nebraska, to Memorial hall, the opening service of the 33rd quadrennial session of the General conference of the A.M.E. church was held Wednesday, May 5, with Bishop W. A. Fountain, senior bishop, presiding.

It is customary for the first session of the General conference to be held in the host-church. This is the first time in years the church has proved entirely too small to accommodate the hundreds of persons attending.

Most significant was the manner in which the laymen and the suburban and rural ministers have moved into assert their strength and make themselves felt in this meeting.

Favoritism An Issue

The rising tide of sentiment against nepotism by the Episcopacy caused the first controversy that virtually stymied the conference in its second day's meeting at the Municipal Auditorium.

Laymen and ministers alike protested what they felt was an attempt on the part of the Bishops to control the all-important Episcopal committee by placing members of their families in key positions.

Protests against the Rev. D. V. Kyles, son-in-law of Bishop E. R. Wright; William Fountain, Jr., president of Morris Brown and son of Bishop William Fountain, Sr., and Nimrod Allen, executive secretary of the Columbus (Ohio) Urban League, and brother of Bishop A. J. Allen, being named members of the Episcopal committee turned into a wild demonstration when Dr. S. H. V. Gumbs of New York proposed that no relatives, either by blood or marriage, of the Episcopal Board be named to the Episcopal committee.

Dr. Fountain Withdraws

After more than six hours demonstration, William Fountain, Jr., voluntarily withdrew his name as a nominee. This followed with withdrawals by Nimrod Allen and the Rev. Mr. Kyles. Business then proceeded.

Hear Paul Robeson

The conference greeted warmly Paul Robeson, famous singer, lecturer, radio and star of the stage, when he stopped for a brief visit to the 33rd Quadrennial session.

Paul Robeson thrilled the delegates and friends as he sang old favorites, "Mount Zion," "Water Boy" and "Ole Man River." In the singing of "Old Man River," he changed the word "drunk" to "spunk" in the stanza, "Get a little drunk (spunk) and you'll land in jail," to the delight of his hearers.

The six new Bishops are Lawrence H. Hemmingway, Washington, D. C.; D. Ormonde Walker,

Buffalo, N. Y.; Joseph Gomez, Cleveland, Ohio; Isaiah H. Bonner, Mobile, Ala.; William R. Wilkes, Atlanta, Ga., and Carey A. Gibbs of Jacksonville.

Senior A.M.E. prelate, Bishop Reverdy C. Ransom of Wilberforce, Ohio, after sixty-three years of service as an ordained minister, was placed on inactive status at his own request and was appointed to serve as director of the newly established Department of History and Research on full Bishop's salary to compile the history of the A.M.E. Church.

Bishops Noah W. Williams of Missouri and the Fifth Episcopal District, and G. B. Young of Florida and the Tenth District, both over 75 years old, were retired on half salaries, upon recommendation of the Episcopal Committee.

Salaries of the Bishops were raised from \$4,200 to \$6,000 yearly with \$2,500 for Episcopal upkeep. The conference prohibited Bishops from making assessments, per capita taxes, special gifts and special collections or establishment of special funds not provided for in the budget set up by a central budget committee.

Following the mandate laid down last week by the delegates to the A.M.E. General conference, the Episcopal committee, in its report Monday night, assigned all bishops in the church to new territories for the next quadrennium.

The long-awaited report, read by the Rev. R. W. Nance of Columbia, S. C., secretary of the committee, assigned the bishops as follows:

First district (New York, Philadelphia) Bishop D. Ward Nichols.
Second (Virginia, Baltimore, North Carolina) Bishop L. H. Hemmingway.

Third (Ohio, Pittsburgh, West Virginia) Bishop A. J. Allen.

Fourth (Chicago, Michigan, Indiana) Bishop George W. Baber.

Fifth (Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, California) Bishop D. Ormonde Walker.

Sixth (Georgia) Bishop R. R. Wright, Jr.

Seventh (South Carolina) Bishop Frank Madison Reid.

Eighth (Mississippi, Louisiana) Bishop M. H. Davis.

Ninth (Alabama) Bishop S. L. Greene.

Tenth (Texas) Bishop H. Y. Tookes.

Eleventh (Florida) Bishop John A. Gregg.

Twelfth (Oklahoma, Arkansas) Bishop W. A. Fountain.

Thirteenth (Kentucky, Tennessee) Bishop John H. Clayborn.

Fourteenth (West Africa) Bishop Carey A. Gibbs.

Fifteenth (South Africa) Bishop Joseph A. Gomez.

Sixteenth (South America) Bishop Isaiah H. Bonner.

VFW Circulates Petition For G.I. Bonus

LINCOLN.—Thousands of Nebraska's veteran members of the 160 Veterans of Foreign Wars posts throughout the state, will begin the task of obtaining signatures of 27,000 voters for an initiative petition to place a World War II state bonus before electors in the November 2 election, announced W. G. McCreath, Seneca, Department VFW Commander in Lincoln.

"Already, many Nebraska VFW members are tackling the job of securing the required signatures to place the bonus issue before the people in November. Our organization is committed to work for adjusted service pay for World War II veterans, and we intend to carry on the fight to the finish," declared Commander McCreath.

The proposed bill will become law if it appears on the ballot, and is approved by a voting majority. Adjusted pay limits are \$250 to veterans with domestic service, and \$350 for GI's with foreign service. Pay is based on \$15.00 per month foreign service, and \$10 per month domestic service.

R. A. Lowe, Department VFW Adjutant, stated that with 130,000 World War II veterans in Nebraska, the cost to tax-payers over a five year period would necessitate a three and a half mill levy annually. The bill sets forth this levy on properties to finance the program on a five year pay-as-you-go plan, from 1949 to 1953. Veterans would receive their pay at the end of that period.

A Veterans' Compensation Fund, to be created under administration of the existing Department of Veterans' Affairs, would be set up to pay the bonus.

Although the law requires that the signed petitions must be in the hands of the Secretary of State no later than July 1, the Veterans of Foreign Wars officials estimated that "We should have more than the required signers within 30 days."

"No paid circulators will be employed," they said.

Church Notes

Mt. Zion Baptist Church

By Doris Powell

The 3rd Sunday in June, Mt. Zion Choir will go to Omaha to sing at Pilgrim Baptist Church. Sunday afternoon, May 16th, the choir sang at Newman Methodist Church. At that service, Mrs. Estelle Davis gave a talk and Elois and Vonna Finley sang "We Are Our Heavenly Father's Children." Iona Adams accompanied them.

Quinn Chapel

The congregation remained after services last Sunday to discuss plans for a rally to culminate in the next 60 days. Additional funds are needed by the church to repair plumbing, repair cracks in the walls, to do badly needed redecoration and to repair the furnace. The Finance committee has set the goal at \$1,500 for the work needing immediate attention. The congregation has been organized into ten groups that will raise \$150 each through their personal contributions and other means. Following the meet, an old-fashioned basket dinner was uncovered in the church basement with everything from tender squabs to mustard greens on the board.

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Out of Old Nebraska

By James C. Olson

Superintendent, State Historical Society

A type of book for which there always seems to be a demand is the traveler's guide book. Americans have an incurable interest in running around the country, and are always on the lookout for recommendations as to places to eat, places to sleep and sights to see.

This interest in guide books is by no means new to the American reading and traveling public. The pioneers who came west in wagons or who rode the rails in search of new homes were armed with traveler's guides. Because they described conditions as they existed then, these early guide books are important sources for the history of Nebraska and the west.

Among the many interesting early guide books in the library of the State Historical Society is "Wolfe's Nebraska Railway Guide, Gazetteer and Directory." The editor warned his readers, "a few errors will undoubtedly be found by the careful reader, but it must be expected that, in such a busy and progressive state as Nebraska, it is difficult to keep up with the progress of even four months, while such a work is being prepared and printed."

The guide contained a list of all cities, towns and stations in Nebraska, together with railroads, land companies and county officers. There was a general description of the advantages of settling in the state and the best points of each community were set forth in considerable detail. Like his modern counterparts, the compiler of Wolfe's Guide recommended hotels and restaurants as well as places to settle and purchase land.

In Nebraska City for example, he said, "the traveler will find the 'Barnum House,' kept by A. I. Lindsay, one of the best in the state, being centrally located to business, with large and well furnished rooms, and the table supplied with the delicacies of the season."

In Sidney, at the other end of the state, this early guide recommended the eating house of H. L. Ellsworth, declaring that it was one "at which all trains stopped for meals."

The book also is interesting for the time tables it contains. The crack train on the Union Pacific took from 6 o'clock in the morning until 5:30 in the afternoon to make the run from Omaha to Grand Island. Today streamliners cover the same route in two hours and six minutes.

This early guide must have been invaluable to prospective settlers in Nebraska just as it is invaluable to those of us who today would learn about early Nebraska.

Sunday School Lesson

Subject: Daniel Stands By His Convictions (Temperance).
Scripture Text: Daniel 1.

Daniel resolved to stand by his convictions. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, directed one of his officers to take Jewish youths of noble families who were especially fair and bright, and have them enter what has been called "The Princes' College of Babylon." For three years they were to receive education for the civil service and were taught the language and learning of the Chaldeans. They were to be nourished with a portion of the food and wine served to the king himself. Among the youths selected were Daniel and three companions.

Daniel firmly resolved in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's dainties nor with the king's wine.

The food furnished might have been offered in sacrifice to idols, or it might not have been prepared according to Jewish laws, or might even be the flesh of animals held by the Jews to be unclean. In the second book of the Maccabees, we are told that on the king's birthday Jews were "constrained by bitter constraint to eat of the sacrifices," and that one of the scribes, Eleazer by name, chose to be tortured to death instead, leaving his death a memorial of noble courage—an example to the whole nation. In the same book we are told of seven famous brothers and their mother who preferred death to eating swine's flesh.

In the words of Dr. Robert E. Speer, "When they stood in front of the king, clean, straight, strong, unsullied, undaunted, unafraid, youths who had principles and who had shown that they were willing to live and to die for them, he said at once, 'These are the men for whom I have been waiting.'"

When Abraham Lincoln was nine years old he promised his mother that he would never drink intoxicating liquor. Later on, after he had hauled many rails, a wager was made upon Lincoln's physical strength, as to whether he could lift a whiskey barrel and drink from the bung hole. Lincoln forthwith raised the heavy barrel upon his knees and took a mouthful of liquor. "There," said a bystander, "now Lincoln's taken a drink." As he expelled the whiskey, Lincoln quietly said: "I didn't agree to swallow the stuff." —Journal of Religious Education.



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