

# Negro Rural School Problem.

## CONDITION—REMEDY

### *Let Us Reason Together.*

The problem of the education of the colored youth in the rural districts of North Carolina, is more or less, at the present time, a serious one, owing to the difficulties and handicaps surrounding and confronting the situation, such as poorly equipped school houses, inadequate teaching facilities, short school terms, low general average attendance, inefficiency of most of the teachers, and lack of funds to properly carry on the work.

In addition to the above mentioned serious aspect of the case, we would call your attention to the following facts and figures, bearing upon Negro education in our state, which we find in the "Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina for the Scholastic years, 1911-12, 1913-14."

The colored rural school population in 1913-14 was 198,737; the enrollment 157,684; 41,053 less than the school population. The average attendance was 90,185, one-half of the school population and just a little over one-half of the general enrollment.

The average length of the school term was about four months, that of the whites nearly six months. The number of school houses 2,263; the average value of a colored school house, \$247.38.

The total number of school houses for whites 7,619; the average value of each \$851.55. Of course, there should be taken into consideration the fact that the white school population was at the same period 429,399.

The number of colored school teachers was 2,654, while the whites numbered 8,344. The total amount of money paid the colored teachers was \$340,319.42, while the white teachers received \$1,963,098.10. The average paid each colored teacher, \$128.42, the white receiving \$235.27.

Furthermore, the white child received per capita for his or her education \$4.57, while the colored got only \$1.71.

To infer that it costs less to educate a colored child than it does a white one is paying too great a compliment to the intellect of the former, which we are unwilling to acknowledge. But to the unsuspecting and uninformed, looking at the respective figures in the case, such a conclusion might be drawn therefrom.

It is a serious fact that the facilities for Negro education, that is in the rural districts, are pitifully inadequate. Although the Negroes constitute about 33 per cent of the population, less than 15 per cent of the money collected and spent for rural education is expended on them.

Now, the above are some data for your serious attention and consideration. What are you going to do about it? Nothing is to be gained by whining and complaining, and saying that if we had in addition to our usual appropriation, all the moneys that went into the general school fund as a result of Negro criminality, which unfortunately furnishes, at least, three-fourths of such fund in the state, and, also, that which goes into the school fund from the taxation of corporations, such as railroads, banks, building and loan associations and others, to which we indirectly contribute by the thousands of dollars, we would have, perhaps, available twice as much for school purposes as we do actually have now.

For do not Negroes ride on the railroads in the state by the tens of thousands annually, and have they not over hundreds of thousands in the white and colored banks, in the building and loan associations in the state, and in other corporations controlled by white and colored men respectively, upon which taxes are assessed according to their earnings; but when it comes to dividing up the taxes pro rata, according as each race has contributed its quota to the profits of these various business enterprises, we get little or nothing from these sources?

All of this is doubtless true, but we must remember that the other man collects the taxes, keeps the books, and divides and appropriates the school funds as, in his opinion, he deems proper and equitable. So there you are. In the meantime, let us be patient, but not contented. Rather, let us be up and doing.

We cannot easily evade this all important and vital question by saying: "I am not particularly interested," nor "Am I my brother's keeper?" Our white fellow citizens are aroused on this subject of rural education at the present as never before, and they are putting into operation every means and every agency they can command to bring about an improved, enlightened, social and physical rural community.

While in a few isolated quarters in the state, some of our people, realizing the gravity of the situation, have succeeded in improving the school condition in their own districts; on the other hand, we fear, the great majority of our people are too indifferent and too negligent regarding those matters affecting their intellectual, moral and social welfare. There are, doubtless many causes for this apathy and state of mind on the part of the masses. But the chief reason, we believe, is due to the fact that there is not sufficient agitation on this subject and not enough persistent and insistent reminding of our people of their duty and obligation in the premises.

There are already agencies in the state, such as the Jeanes' Fund supervisors and employes of the Public Instruction, and may be others, who are doing the best they can to arouse our people to do their duty. But these agencies are more or less handicapped.

To come down to "brass tacks," so to speak, what we want and need is to put a man in the field ourselves, who, while acting in co-operation with the other forces for the improvement of the rural school communities, will feel absolutely free and untrammelled in his judgment and in his activities along this line, as the conditions and his duty in each case may reveal itself to him from time to time.

"The gods help those who first help themselves." For this work we need and must have money to push it. This movement, it is true, is an experiment, but we are encouraged to believe it will be successful. If we can obtain a few hundred faithful, interested race-loving men and women behind it.

What think ye of the proposition? Are you ready and willing to help, and how much?

Our weakness has been that we spend too much time and money in preparation for dying and expensive funerals, and too little preparation for living, which is equally as important. We give ten dollars for church building for every one given for school house improvement. In the past quarter of a century, we have remodeled each church on an average of three times, while our children remain in the same dingy, half-seated school house, in which we attended school ourselves. The biggest thing we can do, and this seems to me to be our mission, is to empty our lives and character into our children, thereby making them better and wiser citizens than we are, or had an opportunity to be.

Racial evolution or involution is absolutely inevitable and constant, and the child is the exponent of progress or index of physical, moral or intellectual degeneracy. If we are to ascend the ladder of civiliza-



tion we must follow the lead of our white neighbors, whose watchword is and has been SELF-HELP.

There is much which we can and must do for ourselves, and we call upon every teacher, preacher, farmer and business man to arouse themselves, and "Let us reason to-gether."

## *Our Plan*

In Winston, N. C., June 16, in connection with the State Teacher's Association, you are invited to the organization of a State and Rural School Association.

## *Object*

Improvement of rural schools.

## *Wants*

100 men who will give \$10.00 per year for expenses.

100 women who will give \$5.00 per year for expenses.

## *Our Aim*

Employ an efficient state organizer on full time who shall organize in every county a Board of Education, who shall work under the present legal boards and county superintendents, and who shall organize township boards in each township, who shall hold school rallies, encourage school attendance, raise by private subscription or local taxation, money for improving school buildings, lengthening school terms and improving the teaching corps by augmenting present salaries of teachers.

This appeal is personal to YOU and URGENT. We are in dead earnest. Something must be done. We send this appeal to you, because we know you to be a man of influence and successful in your field of labor.

Let us have your pledge within 7 days or check dated June 1, 1915. Act to-day. Tomorrow won't do.

Address all communications to

A. M. MOORE, M.D.,

April 30th, 1915

Durham, N. C.

# POST CARD

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DR. A. M. MOORE,

DURHAM, N. C.

*I have read your appeal and believe something can  
and should be done. Accept (Check Pledge) for \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Will meet you in Winston June 16, 1915.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Name of friend you think could be interested to help

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL THIS CARD TO DR. A. M. MOORE, DURHAM, N. C., TO-DAY