THE AUTHOR.

POOR BEN:

A

STORY OF REAL LIFE,

BY

LUCRETIA H. NEWMAN COLEMAN.

Do'st thou love life, then do not squander time;
For that is the stuff life is made of:
Plough deep, while others sleep.

NASHVILLE, TENN.:
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1890.

I Dedicate This Work

WITH SINCERE LOVE FOR MY RACE,

To The

COLORED YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN

OF AMERICA,

WITH THE HOPE THAT IT MAY CONTRIBUTE

SOMETHING TO THAT CHRISTIAN

KNOWLEDGE, WHICH IS THE VERY BREATH

OF ALL TRUE NOBILITY.

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

MOST of our readers must be informed that the following chapters are truthfully founded upon incidents in the history of the birth, poverty and progressive life of one of the leading men of color in our nation, to-day. With respect to the delineation of his character, and description of his life, which forms not only the foundation, but the bulk of interest in this narrative, crude as the production may be, the author, however, she may have diminished "Poor Ben's" prominence, which he so truly merits, has not exaggerated it.

In placing him before the public in book form, she hopes to give him, not only some of the distinction and popularity he deserves; but also to generate an ambition in the hearts and minds of the lowly ones of her race, to go and do likewise: and trusts these facts simply told, may render ample justice to every one of her race, who has struggled to rise during the political spirit of the times in which these events occurred. "Poor Ben's" elevation is a noble triumph over the persecution of his branch of the race. There is needed no more potent argument, nor indisputable testimony, than that furnished in the lives of such men, to remove all prejudice and caste existing against the colored American.

Should these chapters succeed in conveying a true statement of the narrative attempted, the writer will rest satisfied with the result, however severely the merits of the work may be criticised, upon purely literary grounds.

If it evinces any political or denominational spirit, let me say in self-defense, that it was utterly impossible to disassociate the life of the man from the condition of his country and people, and the operations of the inhuman and merciless laws of slavery, which wrought so forcibly against the black man; or to dissever his life from that off-shoot of the Christian Church to which his progenitors belonged, and which he so worthily represents. If it had been otherwise, he might have been born in the lap of luxury, reared in the arms of affluence, and, with no opposing forces, would never have advanced above the mass, nor enshrined himself in the memory of the Church and State.

Hitherto, the history of the men of the colored family, who have risen from the shadowy depths of the past, into an enlightened and useful present, has been left unrecorded, except in diary form, or journal, and stored away as family relics. But the time has arrived when we must rescue from the Stygian gulf of oblivion the records of those who have passed on, and of those who still remain on the green baized stage of the present.

In writing this volume, the author has found many thorns as well as roses in her pathway; but amongst the pleasures the greatest was when she recognized peculiar merit in some trait or deed of her subject; and the wish would bubble up from the heart for the power to aid the development of such traits in the million of ignorant ones of color in this country.

To collect, and arrange, and furnish original matter enough only to fill the greater gaps, and adapt all to the end contemplated, has been the chief duty. The author has with a crude ploughshare broken new ground, turned up fresh strata, in a field where

future competition in the glory of classic culture will gather rich harvests from the field now being sown.

That the book may prove instructive, edifying and useful, under God's blessing, especially to that most numerous, important and rising class of people for whom it has been chiefly designed, is the earnest and prayerful desire of

THE AUTHOR.

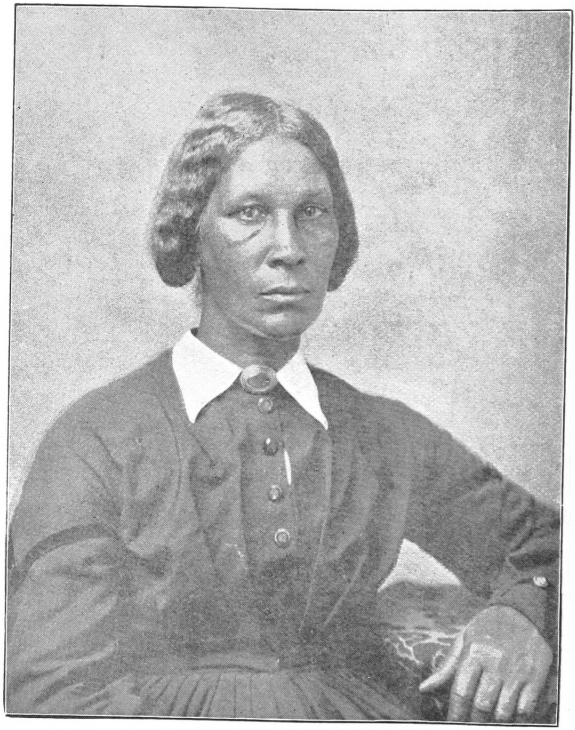
PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

In assuming the publication of this volume, the publishers have been chiefly guided by the design to stimulate and encourage the production of Afro-American literature. That the work is not above criticism is as apparent to us as it will be to every competent literary critic who may peruse it. As a beginning, however, in a certain line of literature, we have judged it to contain sufficient merit to warrant us in offering it to the public, and commending it to the favor of those who are interested in the production of a literature that will represent the ever increasing intelligence, as well as the hopes and aspirations of Afro-Americans. However fondly the hope may be cherished, that American society will eventually become truly cosmopolitan in its character, does not relieve the necessity of each factor that may enter therein from attaining the highest excellency of thought and character. The strength of the whole fabric will be in proportion to the strength of each element that enters into it. In the physical development of the country, the Afro-American has contributed his full share. Will he contribute to its intelligence in a proportionate degree? Will he win recognition and distinction in the production of its literature? While others are using the press to speak for him, will he use it to speak

for himself? Will he turn the kaleidoscope of honest effort so as to reveal the higher qualities of his being through the medium of literary productions, and thus pour just contempt upon the work of the caricaturists who paint him only as the subject of humor and ridicule? It is the aim of the publishers of this volume to encourage, so far as in them lies, every effort possessing reasonable merit that may be put forth by an Afro-American literator.

We feel a just pride in announcing that the entire mechanical work, except the binding, was done by Afro-Americans, with material owned by the same, in a building belonging to them; and we are fully conscious that it has numerous mechanical defects, which will be readily discerned by those who are competent to judge. Remember, however, that it is our first effort, and be assured that we intend to improve. The author of the work undoubtedly possesses the possibilities of developing a meritorious standard of authorship. Give her the stimulating influences of helpful association, such as she would enjoy were she a white person, and in a few years she would take high rank as an author. We have already been informed of her intention to prepare the manuscript of another book at no distant day.

CONTENTS.



POOR BEN'S MOTHER. (11)

POOR BEN.

Chapter I.

CHILDHOOD.

A DEEP, elongated valley, through whose centre flows the Dunlap Creek, as it hastens on between the hills, that tower on either side, and rushes to meet the noble waters of the Monongahela that apparently checks its onward progress, and completely swallows the little stream in its engulfing bosom—on this well-known river, whose waters, mingling with the Allegheny glide into one and form the Ohio, which sweeps on in its broad channel to meet the "Father of waters," has been launched nearly all the finest steamboats that ply the Mississippi and its tributaries. On each side of this little creek, stretch the neat cottages and villa lawns, irregularly situated on cleanly kept streets, which constitute the towns of Brownsville and Bridgeport, Pa. Of the "old iron bridge," which spans Dunlap creek, and unites the two villages, the following amusing story is told: In the building of the bridge, one of the stipulations of the contract was, that no clay should be placed between the walls of the abuttments, and if the builder violated his contract he should forfeit his pay. While the bridge was being built, a stage filled with statesmen, on their way to Washington, was capsized, throwing all the passengers

into the space below. After finding that no one was hurt, one of the congressmen, who knew the wording of the contract, turned to Henry Clay, who was among the number that had been thrown down the embankment, and said, "Clay! the contract is broken!" This brought forth a hearty laugh from the sage of Ashland. Thus the "old iron bridge," over which have passed our ablest statesmen and most eloquent orators, became historic. But the reader may say there is nothing very remarkable about this location. True, yet even in points seemingly insignficant, 'tis well at times, to be explicit; for often one's surroundings has much to do with one's self. And again, often that which has its origin in apparent trifles, swells in magnitude, until its source is lost sight of, or, when observed, becomes a matter of surprise, as the results are seen. An instructive lesson may be learned by the student of nature, when contemplating the rain, or spring as it forms the rill and the rivulet, which glides down the hillside, and runs day and night, by mill and cottage. It is this, that is useful, rather than the swollen river, or roaring cataract. The great Mississippi excites wonder, and we stand and gaze at its power, and stand in awe of the greatness of its Maker. One such stream is enough to be a repository for all the water of a continent; but there would be no such voluminous body of water, were it not for the thousands of silvery brooks and creeks, that help to make that great river. So with the human family; one little babe among us is a mere trifle, and with the lack of attention, care and prayer, may run at will and its powers never be trained to follow towards the great channel of elevation. Hence they are wasted. This is

only one! Ah, it is so in family, city, state and throughout the land. Intellect sinking into nothingness. Trifles! Who can value a drop of rain, or fix the price of an immortal soul? though it be found in a Negro hut, in the rice swamp of South Carolina. Carefully prepare the ingredients, weigh with precision the simplest and there is a certainty of perfection in its compound. Deal cautiously with trifles, and there is but little fear of the future issue. Lead the creek to the river, and its influence will always be felt, in quenching the thirst of the cattle, furnishing power to move the thousands of spindles and wheels in factories, and building a highway for trade and commerce, as it moves on to feed the mighty ocean.

Thus, reader, may you see, ere this story is finished, how "Poor Ben," whose existence began, like the little creek, in obscurity, has surmounted barrier after barrier, until he reached the Monongahela of activity; set the mill wheels of thought into action; passed on to the Ohio of noble purposes, there set barges of higher hopes afloat; rushed earnestly towards the Mississippi of usefulness, and opened the flood-gates of the gospel againt sin; and is now hastening down to the honored Mexico of old age; thence on, on, until the majestic ocean of eternity is gained.

This child's parents were of mixed blood. His father seven-eighths Negro, one-eighth Irish; his mother six-eighths Scotch, one-eighth Negro and one-eighth Indian. Now this problem, when solved, makes Bennie a compound of the following ingredients: Eight parts Negro, six parts Scotch, one part Indian, and one part Irish.

The characteristics of race variety exhibit themselves

in his latter years of developed manhood as follows. The Negro, in cheerfulness, eloquence, and hair; the Scotch in fire of intellect, patriotism, and prominent features of nose and mouth; the Indian, in his fidelity to both friend and foe and in color; the Irish, in magnanimity, wit and in "blarney."

Bennie's days of boyhood thus rapidly fled; not rocked by the hands of a hired nurse, in an automatic crib, of the present date; but kindly jostled, in a rude old fashioned cradle made of ordinary boards, by the foot of a loving mother, whose hands were swiftly plying the needle, and with brain active with thoughts of the future, and whose heart was hourly praying for the blessings she so much desired for her son.

He was a child of religious parents. His father who purchased the first lot on which to build an A. M. E. church in Brownsville, was steward and trustee for thirty years; class leader twenty-five years, and Sabbath-school superintendent fifteen years. In the midst of difficult times he stood forth in public and bravely and triumphantly defended the doctrine and discipline of his church. He gave praises to God that he was "bred up in this religion," and finally with singular sweetness, resigned his soul into the hands of his Redeemer, in 1867.

His mother was also a member of the same church, until her death, August 12, 1882. These are her parting words to her son: "My son, God gave us to each other; one by one He takes us home; but by and by

> 'We will walk through the streets of the city,
> With our friends that have gone before.
> We will sit on the banks of the river,
> We will meet to part no more.'

God has called you to preach; don't make a shipwreck, my baby! You have Jesus, the Bible and common sense to guide you."

It was March the 6th, 1838, and the searching winds were shaking the leafless branches, rattling the gates and shutters, and numbing the fingers and toes of the early risers in Brownsville, Pa. All without was keen, icy, chattering and chill; all within was quiet, still and warm; when in a little Bridgeport cottage, the first item was added to the register in the family bible under the column headed "Births." Thus Benjamin William, the oldest of eight children, made his appearence in this sphere of mysteries, wondering, as he lay cosily cuddled in his warm flannels, why he had been banished from the fairy land of angels, and sent to stay in this world of tempest and confusion.

Nevertheless little Bennie was here; he came to be the household pet; came to suffer the pangs of colic, and to be strangled with paregoric; came to be tossed, trotted, starved, gorged, carefully tended, or left to cry himself to sleep. This he, however, seldom did; for Bennie was a fat, good natured, rollicking baby, and never made wry faces, except when they stuck pins in him. Baby Bennie was a dull-witted, or rather, lazy baby, who wouldn't nor didn't talk until his brother Tommie, whose senior he was, by two years, taught him to talk.

In infancy, when Bennie was but six months old, these christian parents gave him to God and the church in holy baptism.

It is by such early consecration and religious training at home in the day and Sunday-school, that the children and youth of this day are to be made noble-

men and women. It is high time to imbue the children with the spirit of christian labor and love; to familiarize them with the discipline doctrine and rule of the church, and with the purposes of God in saving the world, and to interest them in the cause of missions. Home and church training is the only hope of the world. The way to procure a nation of sober, noble men and intelligent cultured women, is to nip all sorts of vice in the budding time of childhood.

Educate them in every department of morals, industry, science and art; then let their powers have full sway. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Chapter II.

THE COW BOY.

THE boy who is to be the principal figure in this story is but little removed from the common run of poor children. Of wonderful geniuses, or marvelous characters, the world has but few, and when you meet one in life's dense crowd, you, on close examination, will be woefully disappointed. Happy, indeed, is the being who ends life without having his ideals shattered. If such a person does live, his existence and the ideal are both questionable.

It is, therefore, unlikely that you will have the pleasure of reading in this work any record of amazing adventures or hair-breadth escapes. Here and there a surprise may occur, or an unexpected turn may be given to the incidents; but of these the writer cannot claim to be the inventor, for they are but an array of facts, and are the natural outcome of the "Cow boy's" life. There is no need to enter the land of romance. The checker-board of most common lives presents daily new and strange variations. New, because the actors are new; and each event, though old, forms a new combination in their being; and strange, because they spring from hithertofore neglected sources. The beggar turns the kaleidoscope and forms a design no king can produce. So each existence eked out is a

new book written by the recording angel, never to be produced by another life.

Like all healthful babies, Bennie grew rapidly, passed safely all the ills of infancy, and when eight years old was large enough to work and help father and mother. Drawing wages was a very pleasing thought to the little fellow. He didn't want to be called "baby" any longer, but preferred the appellation of man; but this he seldom heard, for his parents persisted in calling him "baby" as long as they lived.

A neighbor wanted a boy to drive his cow to and from pasture. Ben applied, and was employed at thirty-seven and a half cents a month, which compensation was to be received in milk and articles from the store of his employer. Just at the foot of the iron bridge stood this store, owned by J. T. Rogers, in 1846, and there it may be seen to-day, the property having neither changed owners, nor the store its name or outward appearance.

Every morning Bennie and his cow could be seen trudging slowly down the coal road, past the old Gregs' mill, and with zig-zag directness up the hill beyond—the cow nipping the fresh blades of grass, the dewy cowslips and the dandelions that had pushed their way up to blossoming along the roadside. The cow had no other motive in view than to supply the demands of her keen appetite, expecting the natural laws to fill her bag with rich milk, which was to be showered in a musical torrent into the five-gallon milk pail at night. Ben, who lagged sometimes in the rear, sometimes in advance of his cow, was keeping his eyes and brain busy with the natural objects around him. As a coal cart passed him, he would at a glance pict-

ure on the canvas of memory the old horse, the cart, the driver, his bent back, his whip, tattered clothes and strong clay pipe, and long after the wagon had gone around the turn of the road, he would talk aloud to himself: "Well, well, when I get to be a man I'll have a better nag than that! I'll have two good horses instead of such a one! Then I'll have a big cart, painted red, and keep it clean-looking, and I'll be clean, too. I'll have my hat on straight, my clothes all patched, a good store whip, and I'll sit up straight. I won't smoke, nor swear at my horses, like Tom Starr, but I'll just crack my whip, and 'way they'll go a flyin'!"

At this juncture down goes one of memory's drop-curtains, and shuts from sight the little cow-boy's vision of future greatness in the possession of fine live stock and red painted cart. The noise of that clattering old Gregs' Mill has absorbed his attention. He halts, strikes the usual attitude of boy-men, with thumbs burried in the arm-pits, his right foot firmly supporting him, his left toes rooting in the mud and his heel describing a quadrant in space, and his mouth puckered up into a whistle, but only emitting an asperate sound. There he stands.

"Vide" has stopped, too, and by lowing is trying to urge him to his task. But the cow boy is busy at work on a mill. Do you see him?—hear him!

When I go home to-night I'll take my jack-knife and whittle me out some little pine boards and to-morrow I'll make me some little mud bricks and get all the pins and tacks, and string, and spools and wire I can, and then I'll build me a little mill on the side of the ditch in front of the gate. It will be better than old Gregs' mill. Of course, it will not be better; but, then,

it will be nice and new. And then, when I get to be a man like Mr. Gregs, I'll have a better mill than his'n is now."

Thus ended this little careless, but not thoughtless little workman's second day dream, and he began hurrying along to regain lost time, chattering merrily, staring, first up into the dense foliage of the trees, then watching his shadow in the clear road ditch.

"Mama says God made everything, and made me, too, and is my Father. Now, if he made all these things, some that move and some that can't move, I wonder who made God?" His mind seemed bewildered for a moment, then, clear-headed, on he goes: "Well, God is made, that's sure, and all the trees, and cows, and dirt, and stones, and people, and—everything is made, 'cause I see 'em. If God's father helped him make so many nice things, and he is my Father, I just 'spect He'll help me make my mill to-morrow; won't you, God?"

He said this with child-like faith, turning his face toward the sky.

"Oh, my, the sun is so hot! I wonder if the sun and moon ain't God's eyes. He looks at me so hard it makes me hot. Guess I'd better hurry and get back home. Whew! I'm getting so warm!"

These childish dreams and fancies are but the workings of the intellect in embryo. In them we see a natural propensity in Ben to question; to seek out the unknown things about him; the ability to plan and build on future prospects, and to turn to account every material within his reach, and convert all into a higher purpose by his own endeavors. These traits and aspirations also show the incapability of man to see

that many of his efforts and schemes are vain and impossible. After his plans are well made they fail of accomplishment. They are as absurd to a higher being as the cow boy's idea of always having a clean coal cart, drawn by fat, sleek horses, clean clothes and erect spine, or an everlasting good temper and a fine store whip; and as uncertain as his ingenuity to construct a complete mill, and set its machinery in motion with his untaught hands and baby brain.

Simple reasoning in the child teaches the impracticability of trying to solve, in riper years, the unrevealed mysteries of the Creator, or to sound the unfathomable depths of the Great Beyond.

The first snow of 1848 had fallen over these two towns of Western Pennsylvania, on a cold Sabbath morning in October. The aristocratic ladies and their children heeded their inclinations and stayed in-doors, where they were certain of a warm atmosphere and dry feet. The easy livers and laboring classes gladly hailed the day, snowy though it was, so the streets and churches of Brownsville were not quite deserted. Heavy snow did not dampen the ardor of these humble worshippers. Mr. Nicholas Smith and Bennie were among those who hastened homeward through the crisp snow after morning service, where they had returned thanks for the blessing of church, health and home, without a dream of being deprived of anything they now possessed.

Uncle Nicholas was a brother of Bennie's mother, and a steamboat man; working all the week, and laying over at Brownsville on Sundays, as was the custom of all the river-men in that section. On this Sabbath evening just mentioned, Uncle Nicholas conclud-

ed not to go to church.

The day had worn on slowly; the snow had fallen heavily at intervals in great, soft, white flakes, which covered the ground and lay there, blotting out the paths and making the face of the surrounding country a pure white waste, over which it would be difficult to find one's way after dark.

"We will not go to church to-night," said Mr. T——, to his wife. "The snow is too deep for you, and it is growing colder."

Mr. Smith however thought differently. The weather must not keep him in. He had attended morning service, to-night he would worship at another shrine, that of the amiable Miss——. About ten o'clock he returned home, took a lighted candle and went up to his room; his earliest and only thoughts were given to the one he had just left, instead of the location of the light; so that in placing the candle on the stand, the curtain took fire, and in an instant the whole window frame was in ablaze. Igniting some bedding that was piled near, the fire rapidly spread from one piece of furniture to another, until the whole room was a bed of flame. Mr. Smith rushed frantically down the stairs, calling to his sister, "Louise, fire upstairs! Louise, fire upstairs!" The alarm was quickly given, and the citizens flocked to the scene. Bennie, who was asleep with his little brothers, in their trundle bed, sprang from it, caught his little baby sister in his arms, and with great presence of mind ran from the burning house to the school building across the way.

While the men were doing all they could to stay the destructive element, our little hero was trying to soothe the grief of the younger children, who did not realize

the necessity of being snatched so suddenly from their warm bed and brought out into the cold.

"Don't cry, Allie." "Mamma is coming, Tom." "Are you very cold?" "Perhaps papa will save our clothes and bring them over here to us." And with many other loving expressions he tried to console his little brothers and sister, while his parents were straining every nerve to save what they could from destruction.

Reader, imagine, if you can, the feelings of a poor man and wife, who have struggled hard for years to get and keep a little place called home, to see all the rewards of their toil reduced to ashes, and their little ones without shelter save the canopy of heaven. Placed in an extremity like this, without any source on the right or on the left from which to ask assistance, the being looks within at self, then above to its Maker, and finds hope beyond; and soon there are spread around the things so much needed and desired; for God never forsakes his own. Help often comes from unexpected sources, and through misfortunes and heavy losses are generally opened the best avenues to success and better days.

After the fire was subdued, and Mr. and Mrs. T—— had sadly given a last look at their once happy home, now a smouldering heap of cinders, they accepted the kind offer of a home with Mrs. A's brother Jerry. Here their needs were generously attended to, the citizens showing that spirit of generosity and benevolence that is so justly accredited to all the native citizens of "Penn's Woods." J. C. Auld rebuilt Bennie's house, and kindly allowed his parents as much time as they needed to pay for it.

The person who under all circumstances endeavors to help himself will always find a helping hand stretched to save him when his own attempts are futile. So with these faithful servants of God, whose faith in him was strong. When all seemed dark and hopeless He opened the way for them in their extreme need, and bestowed His aid when they were unable to rise without it.

Chapter III.
THE CHORE BOY.

BENNIE, the cow boy, after loosing his home, was fortunate enough to get a more lucrative situation, that of chore boy at the house of an Episcopal clergyman.

Only a chore boy, yet that was better than being a cow boy; for he was to get thrice thirty-seven and a half cents a month and his board. Benjamin felt that he was rising, not withstanding there was Aunt Margaret's every whim to gratify, and the numerous calls to run and answer, of that dignitary, Rector Cowan.

Work, is the mutual heritage of every child of the human race, and it is the great civilizer. Ben's parents were poor, and worked, and economized, so it run in the family for him to love to be busy at something, mere child though he was. Hence that prodigality so natural in man, did not predominate in this chore boy. He believed intuitively that he ought to work, earn and save.

Thus we see the creation of a tendency toward thrift, which is made manifest, in later years, by its rapid developement. Work became Ben's lot in early life, and to him, as to all others, it was God's richest blessing.

Many do not view labor in this light. Some think poverty, and its companion work, a curse. But it is a

law which, if conformed to, brings the only true happiness that Providence intended to be ours. It is impossible to enjoy anything in nature or art without labor. The idle girl or boy, the indolent man or woman, is the most perfect picture of unhappiness, one can portray.

By giving a description of Rev. Cowan's parsonage, you will readily see another incentive to industry that Bennie might have had, besides his love of employment, and it may explain the reason why he seldom allowed the sun to set on unfinished work.

The rectory was a medium sized house, a nest of comfort and convenience, without any of the stately grandeur of some ministerial residences of the present day. There was nothing about the building, its furniture or surroundings, to suggest a manor. The flower beds and grass plat in the front yard were kept in good order, and in fact, were laid out with an eye to the beautiful. The back yard was a wide, deep one, level, destitute of fruit trees and grass, except several aged apple trees that stood beyond the barn and coal house, and near to the line fence, while a few shrubs stood near the pathway of plank, that led to the outbuildings, and to the gate that opened into the lot beyond. This back yard extended to the church graveyard, which lay just in the rear of the entire parish property.

To the right of the parsonage rose the dingy walls of the Christ Church, with its staring window casements, and its gloomy tower. To the left lay a vacant lot, without fencing, having a muddy pond in the center, where all the neighboring ducks and geese swam. In front ran the dimly lighted street.

But most particularly impressive to Ben was the rear boundary of his new home, where the tall columns of white marble were gleaming in the starlight. As one could form so awfully sublime, or vastly grand an idea of the holy horror, that hangs over a grave-yard after dark, as Bennie did, on a cloudy night, when he had failed to bring in a sufficient quantity of coal and wood.

Bustling around in her tidy kitchen, Aunt Margaret would, while preparing things for an early breakfast, peep into the coal box; a look in that direction, or toward the water bucket, after sunset, always had a queer effect on our little nine-year old chore boy; for he was sure to hear Aunt Margaret's voice: "Here Bennie go and bring in a couple of scuttles of coal and an arm full of kindling."

Ever obedient he would start and go—but how far? Closing the back door he would halt, and shiver a little from the cold, but more from physical fear.

I would not have you think him a coward. On the contrary, he was really a brave boy; but then an unseen something, on a dark night, often causes much older persons to quake, and older heads to wonder, though their minds be concious that no danger is near, and there is nothing that can harm. There is a point, or time, when halting between timidity caused by physical fear, and the boldness engendered by mental courage and reason, some proclivity forces the physical part of man on to the safe accomplishment of his aim; though the body may continue its involuntary tremor.

So with Bennie, he would stand and tremble, and yet was quite certain that nothing would catch him;

for he had made many a safe trip to the coal house and pump, without light or company. He knew too well the determination of his aunt to have things done in her own way and time, so he must not return with an empty scuttle. Finally with a certain amount of will power, partly natural, partly caused by two exciting nerves—Aunt Margaret inside, and darkness outside —Bennie would muster up all his courage, and fill the coal box at no slow rate.

Little by little his fear of the tall white grave stones, the geese floating by starlight in the pond, and the dreary church, with its dark steeple and gaping windows, was overcome, and he learned that there were fewer ghosts in the graveyard, than in the chambers of imagination.

Every day this little soldier of the chore boy regiment, answered Aunt Margaret's roll call, ate his rations, fought his battles, though they may have been only imaginary ones, with the cemetery hob-gobblins, or cobble stone throws with which he put the geese to rout, and he made many such conquests, that perhaps are unworthy of laurels in the reader's estimation; yet they were nevertheless, battles and victories, or defeats comparatively equal to many which grown-up boys daily fight, win or lose. They strengthened him for the sterner conflicts, awaiting him in subsequent years.

POOR BEN'S BIRTHPLACE.

Chapter IV.

THE SCHOOL BOY.

THE summer months passed swiftly by, and Bennie stopped work. Not because he was tired of his situation, nor that he was sick; but simply because he had learned that school was to open. His parents had promised him that he might enter school and he was almost beside himself to see what A looked like, and to hear how U sounded, when made by his own vocal organs, and to try to beat his Uncle Ephram writing with a goose quil.

Reader, you and I have both had our first day in school. With what extreme delight do we recall the joyous anticipations we had on entering the school room for the first time.

If you have any curiosity to know how Bennie felt, all you have to do is to take a seat in your own imagination, whether outside, or in, it matters not, the fact is the same; and there, when quietly settled in the halls of memory, you can look around you, and at no cost, upon the scenes of early school days, painted by the hand of personal experience. Here you may accompany Ben, in his learning to skate, taking the girls to coast on Saturday, and capsizing them, then beating a hasty retreat to the steep hills where none but boys dare venture to descend. Here you see inglorious

upsets and hazardous collisions.

There is a striking similitude in the life of every school girl and boy; and yet enough in the differences of time, places, and persons, to individualize each one.

In our little student's face, there the enquiring look as to how he would be received by his school-mates; the anxious look as to what would be the first embarrassing task, and most prominent and unmistakable was that mischievous twinkle in Bennie's eyes as to the fun he was going to have in playing jokes on bashful girls and backward boys; or stealing marches on his unsuspecting teacher.

The little stone school house into which we are about to admit the new pupil, commanded quite a picturesque view. From the elevation on which it stood, could be seen the lovely valley, which formed the lower parts of Brownsville and Bridgeport. The many curves of Dunlap creek, wound in perfect spiral lines of loveliness, while its banks were diversified with graded meadows and orchard gardens, and dotted with comfortable looking houses.

The location and the surroundings you have glanced at, now let us look more particularly at the building.

It is a one story structure, with windows on each side, a double door in front, and has all those traits of clumsy neatness so rare in the school houses of small towns at that date.

At the entrance stood the teacher's desk, of white oak, unpainted and without varnish, and was elevated about two feet above the floor of the room. The children's desks were very unlike the desks used now. They were not arranged in rows to fold back; but were straight benches without book rests or ink wells.

In fact they lacked all the conveniences and comforts of the modern desks. The heaters were long iron box stoves, a few old dust covered, and smoked soiled maps adorned the walls, on the sides between the windows; and two short blackboards were nailed against the walls; one in the fore, the other in the background. Some faded blue cambric curtains kept out the intruding rays of sunlight.

We cannot help noticing; though we secretly and silently leave out all comment, the numerous jack knife hieroglyphics, which may be seen on every object within. Each has its history grave or gay. The hand that carved may be at this moment at work on a better, or may be a lifeless piece of clay. If it be a name think kindly of it. The owner may have sunk in dishonor, and may be sharing the convict's cell, or with fame and title, be enjoying the honors a noble life merits.

The teacher, Mr. Ephram Arnett, is an erect, square-built, man of two hundred pounds, with firm, massive, benevolent features, not however without a dash of will, decision and executive determination in them, which adds much to the interest, that such a man elicits from an observer. His eyes are black, deep set, kind and lively, his eye brows are heavy and projecting, and either stern or relenting as the occasion requires, but in their natural mood are very complacent.

There is a proud military bearing about his free, easy movements, that bespeaks the consciousness of having discharged his duty in the different fields of work, in which he has labored.

He is about thirty years of age, but his regular habits, cheerful and kind disposion, and robust constitu-

tion make him appear but twenty-five or less

In short you see that he is but a *beau ideal* of what one would call an old-fashioned school-master.

On this cold frosty morning in October, 1849, Bennie for the first time entered this school-room as a student.

The teacher just spoken of was a brother of Bennie's father. As he came in a desk was assigned him with Goin Fairfax for a seat-mate. Jerry Cane, and Dave Conyon sat behind him, Leslie Fairfax and Sam Robinson in front, Sidney Banks and Joe Robinson on the right. Just across the isle sat Harriett Poindexter, a girl whose aptness in penmanship charmed Ben, and whose graceful lines on slate or paper, acted like a whip to his unsteady nerves, and stiff awkward fingers. It was not long before such a spirit of competition was generated that he would never allow Harriett to make a nice looking letter, but what he would, by repeated practice on it, succeed in making it as well and rapidly as she, and no doubt would add an extra flourish as an improvement.

A very noticeable trait in Bennie's character was perseverance. He early learned to put into practice, the sentiment of the song he daily sang, and which is familiar to every ear:

"Over and over again,
The brook through the meadow flows,
And over and over and over again,
The tireless mill-wheel goes.
So the dews of the morning must fall,
And the sun and the summer rain,
Must do the work and perform it all,
Over and over again.

Over and over again,
No matter which way I turn,
I always find it in the great book of life,
Some lesson I have to learn.
I must take my turn at the mill,
While it grinds the golden grain,
Must do my task with a right good will,
Over and over again."

On Monday morning, this unpretending little fellow would reach over and lay his slate on Harriet's desk, and put his hand up to his mouth and whisper: "Harriet make me two good capitals." "All right Ben, these are hard ones, don't expect you'll know where to commence on them." But a few curves, straight lines and ovals were small enemies, when Ben's heavy hand, determined will, and sharp pencil were brought to bear upon them.

He didn't always follow prescribed rules, for making downward and upward strokes, or beginning a letter at the proper place. Nor did he notice the particular beauty of shaded and hair lines, until he had conquered the letter in skeleton.

Yet after repeated trials, Friday would find him triumphant, and then he would hand his slate over to Harriet with both sides covered with fine, fat looking capitals, and with a victorious toss of his head would ask; "Harriet, ain't they better than yourn?" This of course Harriet would never admit, not because she was envious, but she did not wish to feed his vanity.

Thus as the wintry days wore on, Bennie studied as hard in school and at home, as he played at recess, and on holidays, earnest alike in work and play.

Chapter V.

THE FIRST FIGHT.

THE game of fox and geese, and pull-away, through the freshly fallen snow, were this ever active boy's delight.

There was no more royal fun than a day spent on the hillside, or ice, coasting or skating.

Acting as commander of a crowd of girls and boys, Bennie would have them build, under his supervision, a snow fort, and after it was completed and a good supply of compact, crystal cannon balls were made, he would divide his force into two armies, offensive and defensive. Those who had done the least in the building, and the furnishing of the fort, would form the offending force, and were driven from the possession, thus would open a lively contest for the disputed territory. The whiz of the swiftly sent balls, the stolen advances made on the rear of the fort, the shouts of the victorious boys or girls, who with long poles, succeeded in bringing down a portion of the fort, and finally the headlong rush of the ones who had for so many minutes, held their ill-gotten arsenal, chased by the victors, can be better imagined than described.

By this and other methods of sport, Bennie cultivated his combative propensity and love of conquest.

He, not differing from the other boys, did not always

play fight, but some times would find cause to go at it in real earnest, and when a falling out would occur, a round of boxing, or tug at wrestling would ensue.

One day, after school had been dismissed, a number of boys went down to Lanning's saw-mill, to get bark from the logs. After playing for some time in the sawdust, a dispute arose between Ben and Johnnie Tate. "Say, John, I wouldn't take that off of Ben," exclaimed Nute Legg, and this was seconded by Hattie McVullen. "He'll take all that and more too, if he fools much more, and don't let me alone!" said Ben. "I'll lick him as quick as chain lightning." "You'd better try it," put in Phin Starr, "and you'll have me to lick too!" "All right, I'll whip you and all the rest if you don't go off and let me alone," said Ben, who began to think that things were assuming a very war-like aspect. "I ain't going off," said Johnnie Tate, coming up and rubbing his fist under Ben's nose. This was more than our little commander of the fort could stand, the latent ferment in him became active and bubbled over, falling heavily on Johnnie's head, in his face, anywhere, for he was pummeling promiscously every part of his opponents fair proportions.

"Let me go Ben, I take it all back. Oh, boys, my nose! Look how I'm bleeding!" But Ben thumped away until he was not only sure of victory, but was quite out of breath, and could fight no longer.

Johnnie's boasting friends stepped up and led him down to the water, and washed his bloody face and blackened eyes, at the same time whispering a new idea, or word of consolation in his ear, Ben didn't know which. However, no fear of a second attack ever entered his mind. So he filled his basket with strips

of bark and went safely home. Once safely housed, he told his mother of his adventure while at the mill. She listened quietly, then when he had finished, she tried to show him how wrong it was to quarrel and fight, though inwardly thinking that he'd do it again if he had to, he promised to keep away from bad boys and not fight any more. Ben was not fond of being scolded, so he listened quite patiently for awhile, but concluding that his mother was not going to stop and get supper, he said, "Mother hadn't I better bring in my wood now?" "Yes, Bennie, before it gets later, for I want you to go to the grocery for me before dark."

So Bennie hurriedly brought in his coal and kindling, took the basket, and after getting a list of the articles to be gotten, he counted and repeated them a number of times, and set out for Roger's grocery.

This he reached safely and soon had the packages stored away in the basket under his right arm, and a tin bucket of molasses in his hand, with which he started on a brisk walk toward home, fearing darkness would overtake him

He had not gone far before it was a deep twilight, and he heard some voice near him say, "There he comes boys! There he is!" And in a moment a stone came whizzing through the dark, quickly followed by another, and another. Bennie not only looked about him but quickened his steps into a run, for he was about to be attacked by a dozen boys all screaming, git! git! git! Bennie thought discretion the most valiant thing to practice at this point, so clinging to his basket with one hand and his bucket with the other, he beat a hasty retreat. In his haste he ran against a short guarding post, it struck him in the breast suddenly check-

ing his speed, and sending his molases all over him, and the pavement, while the parcels flew in every direction from the basket. Ben gave but little thought to the scattered articles; self-preservation was the thought uppermost in his mind, so he picked himself up and away he flew towards home, verifying the old adage, "he that fights and runs away, lives to fight another day." He soon reached home and was met at the door by his mother who was growing very anxious about him.

Bennie rushed in at the door out of breath, and with such a frightened look that his mother cried: "Why Bennie! what is the matter with you? Where are the things I sent you for?" This she said all in one breath. "Those old boys chased me, and stoned me all the way home," gasped the poor boy, who now saw that he had lost the supposed victory he had made during the day by the inglorious defeat and retreat at night. But his mother consoled him, as best as she could, then went back with him to the place where he collided with the post, to gather up the scattered groceries, and mourn over the battered bucket.

Like all childish disputes, this one between Bennie and Johnnie Tate was amicably settled the next day, and they were firm friends. Tate reached the years of manhood, joined the army and was killed in battle. But Ben lived to relate with pleasure the story of the first battle in which John Tate was engaged; with sorrow the last, in which he fell; for it was with heart-felt sympathy that Ben followed the form of his schoolmate to his last resting place, and recalled many scenes and sports that the now lifeless form had once shared with him.

When Bennie was quite young his mother gave him a little dog, whose color was a dark yellow, unbroken save by a white spot in the breast and one on each foot, that had a perfect resemblance to socks. "Major Ringold," for this was his name, was the embodiment of dignity, courage and fidelity. He walked as proudly as though he owned both sidewalk and street, or was leading major of some famous army. Brave as a lion he was afraid of neither men, boys nor dogs Wherever Bennie went he was his constant companion. While the boys played he would guard their coats and hats; when they swam he attended them, and when tired he would return to the bank, and lie near their clothing and dry himself in the sun.

The boys, however, never liked to have Major with them when they went on hunting expeditions, for he was too fat to chase and catch rabbits, and would only scare them off so that the boys would have no better success than he.

He was useful, however, in driving up the cows; they knew him, and as soon as he would pop over the fence, they would start for the bars.

Major was faithful as well as brave. Often Bennie would come in contact with bad boys, on his way to and from the store, or in going to the home of his Aunt Henrietta Robinson. If Major was with him, he would walk close up to his side, and by his action say, "I am here to protect you." This would give Bennie great courage, he would look proudly at his little dog, as he strutted by his side, with head and tail erect. Ben would throw his shoulders back, and march on with his hands full of stones to protect both himself and dog- When a stone was thrown, Major

would stand and say by the expression of his face and attitude of his body, "Hit me, but touch Ben, if you dare."

Major Ringold, was kind and faithful to all the children. All the neighbors liked him, and would save and throw him a good bone. But like all things earthly he took sick, the family and neighbors did all they could to alleviate his sufferings, but human aid was vain, and Major Ringold died.

Here followed another scene, the crying of the children, father and mother looked very sad, while Ben and Tommie began to make preparations for the funeral. They went to the back of the lot, on the hill, dug a grave for him, returned, wrapped him in a coffee sack, and placed him on long poles. All the boys in the neighborhood were in attendance, some acting as pall-bearers. They carried Major to his last resting place, and with tears and sad countenances they covered him up in his little grave on the hill. This was the last of the animal, who was Ben's faithful teacher in lessons of fidelity, dignity and courage.

Not even a wooden slab marks the spot where Major Ringold lies. But at the foot of the old apple tree, he sleeps the sleep of all animals. And if animals have a resurrection and the true and faithful shall come up first, then when they arise, in the foremost ranks of faithful dogs, Major Ringold will appear.

Not wholly bereft, Ben had another pet—his blue hen. She layed a nest full of eggs, and Ben did not have long to wait, before there were ten chickens. One was a fine rooster and he named him "Nick," which he trained to stand on his shoulder and crow. He was a fighter and defender, and no other rooster, old or

young, could stay about the yard. He protected and scratched for the little ones, and in short was the cock of the yard.

There was something in that young chicken that made Bennie like him. Nick looked independent; he walked, fought, scratched for and protected the hens independently and bravely. This spirit of independence and peculiar dignity became firmly rooted in Bennie.

As he noticed Nick walking around hunting worms and bugs for the ckickens, and his care for the hens, it taught him a lesson of care for those who were dependent on him for food and clothing, and he resolved that he would be as independent and as industrious as Nick.

If one will but watch the instincts of animals, in the relations of each to each, one can find lessons of duty to others, that would, followed out, increase the happiness of the world. Were mankind each to follow the teachings of Christ, how blest would be the members of each family; how improved the condition of each citizen; and how far superior would be our Government.

If each being would but use the spirit of brotherly love, with family, neighbor, friend and citizen, and measure each half-bushel of dealing, as he would have it given him—heaped up and running over—the great yawning chasms now existing between members of families, between citizens, states and branches of the race would soon be spanned by iron bridges of real friendship, and the chain of humanity would be harmonious and complete. This spirit does not teach one to care for one's self only, and neglect others, nor to weep over one's own misfortune, and smile at the en-

emy's downfall, nor to take the larger portion and leave the lesser to those more deserving. It does not teach one to lie, to cheat, and to steal, but to love another as one's self. And this is an easy task, if the import of the verse be kept in mind: "For with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Chapter VI.

THE WAGON BOY.

FROM the cradle to the grave, life is a struggle. Some aspire to fame, others to wealth, a few aim to do God's will without hope of fame or wealth, while others content themselves with a life of indolence and pleasure. A few happy ones possess the faculty of combining these aims into a truly enjoyable state of existence; but in any case it is appointed for all to toil, whether by so doing they make themselves miserable or happy.

The cause of so many blank lives is due largely to a certain amount of foolish pride, or lack of ambition and will power to do earnestly whatever the hand finds to do. The average young man and young woman of to-day is too proud to do any kind of honest labor to gain a firm foothold in life. If they cannot at once be placed in good lucrative positions, they refuse humble ones, and so eke out an existence of want, living on support earned by others, rather than step by step, mount the ladder of fame.

In early youth 'tis well to know the sphere of usefulness one's natural inclinations fit one for. If these agree with the mental and physical organization of the person, then he must pursue the attainment of that

aim or desire, though his calling be humble. Thus his cultivated or acquired abilities in these lesser spheres, but strengthen and assist the whole being to reach a more exalted position in the region to which his natural talent and ambitious aspirations beckon him.

The sooner a child ascertains his fort, the sooner will he be prepared to mount the ladder, passing upward from one field of labor to another until he meets with success in the sphere toward which he aimed. Yet he must be careful that he does not try to soar too high. The noblest ambition is that which fights against sin and ignorance, poverty and shame; fights in darkness, for light; fights when down, to rise. This kind of ambition dies hard, or never dies at all. An ambitious spirit is one which must be carefully dealt with —like the powder magazine, so useful, yet so dangerous—it must be well guarded. This ardent thirst for honor and glorious achievement in any vocation; this intensity of soul that is unsatisfied with all it has done, and still has an unextinguished desire for doing more, is that dreaded spark which ignited and consumed the souls of earth's greatest men, and so terminates all ambitious greatness without goodness and godliness. Only that ambition is good which does good to the possessor and those who come in contact with him.

There is to be seen daily, on every hand, instances of the remnants of young men and once beautiful girls, who are now total wrecks, the pictures of old age and despair, who cannot live long upon earth though but one-third of their days are past—sad wrecks—and in their faces what can be read? "My life has proven a blank." "I die young in years but old in crime!"

"The monument I leave behind will read, 'Beware of the shoals and reefs that wrecked me.'" "How I might have blessed mankind!" Now turn the page, and on the other side are other instances. We see persons who have learned wisdom from experience, close observation, deep reflection, and the intense application of both their physical and mental powers. This class, no doubt, forms the most useful part of society.

There is an old adage—though homely, 'tis true: "Throw a man overboard, and if worth saving he will save himself." At all events, many who have had great success have attained it through force of adverse circumstances rather than by foresight and friendly assistance. In the nineteenth century life is short. The child has matured at sixteen, has reached his prime at thirty, is old—past three score and ten—at fifty, and dies. Childhood is the time to push ahead. Learn what you are best fitted for, and as soon as you have gotten on the right track and fully equipped turn on steam, push ahead, though you may only be on a gravel train, freight, caboose, or a smoking car; you can travel along just as others have done, over the same upward grade, and as fast as they, if you only keep up steam, and the track clear, and pursue your way until you arrive at the station you covet.

Fine engines, palace cars, and splendid appointments, are only the helps to success, which, without the motive power, that must be generated by the individual and governed by his indomitable will, will not earn dividends nor escape destruction.

Bennie had continued in school during the winter months, and always found employment during the remainder of the year. He not only studied and learned

the lessons assigned him at school and at home, but he was daily storing his mind with practical lessons of morality, industry and thrift. In everything by which he was surrounded, he found something worthy of observation, and he applied his mind closely to such things until they were fully understood or his curiosity satisfied. Often personal experience taught him useful lessons, and whether pleasant or bitter, they were never to be forgotten.

In the spring of 1850 Ben had grown to be a strong robust boy of twelve years of age, and quite able to do considerable work. He was at this time employed as a wagon-boy. His business was to "scotch" the wheels of the wagons, and assist in loading and unloading. His compensation was six dollars a month, and by this increase of labor and reward Ben reached the third round of his ladder. Being a lover of animals, he enjoyed being where he could drive or in any way attend to the horses. He spent many hours of royal fun with the men and horses, notwithstanding the fatiguing exercise such work demanded.

During the campaign of 1852, the subject of our sketch was an off-bearer of brick, and the wagons of the brick yard were engaged to carry the delegation of men from Brownsville to Uniontown. The first day they carried the Whigs, or the Scott and Graham men. The drive of twelve miles was a pleasant one, and its pleasure was greatly enhanced by the many jovial and witty narrations of political stories, told as only political men filled with the spirit of their party can tell them, and emphasized with bursts of laughter, shouts, clapping, stamping, and Indian-like cheers.

The day following, the Democrats, whose candidates

were Pierce and King, were driven over the same road to Uniontown, where speeches were to be made in the grove. Ben, having the day previous greatly enjoyed the hilarity and excitement of the Whig party, thought he would leave the wagon, repair to the grove, and hear the Democratic side of the question. Securely fastening his horses, he started to join the crowd that had gathered in the woods. Before he had gone far he heard voices ahead of him shouting, "There comes that ——— ———! there he comes!" followed by a shower of stones, all of which luckily missed him. Ben very quickly decided that a "to the rear, double quick, march!" movement was the best step for him to take; the thought and action came simultaneously, and as Ben ran he changed his tactics and politics at the same time. Turning his back on the Democratic party he ran hastily back to his wagon, and up to this time he has given the Democrats his back, his scorn and his opposition.

Young Ben's last work as wagon boy was loading and driving a coal cart to and from an extensive coal bank in the neighborhood of Brownsville. One morning he made a trip to the bank, and was in the act of filling his cart. Fortunately for him he was just depositing a lump of coal in the cart, when an immense "horse-back," or ceiling of slate, came down with a crash from the upper walls of the bank. Its weight was two tons or more. Small pieces of the slate jutting out from the edge of the "horse-back" grazed Ben's back, tore his clothing from him, and so thoroughly frightened him that he could never be induced to enter another coal bank. When his bruises were healed, his clothes mended and shocked nerves restored, he gave up cart driving and sought other employment.

Chapter VII.

STEAMBOAT AND HOTEL LIFE.

BEN doubtless thought as did Ulysses—he would look for other worlds of better work. He would sail. Though the streams might wash him down, yet it was equally as probable he might some day land on happy isles, and there in his wanderings he might share the fortunes of the good and great, and experience the comfort of peace and quiet after battling with the waves. We are encompassed with the mysteries, and blindly we daily rush into many dangers which are intended to be linked for good or ill to our destinies. And no spark of divine radiance shines out of frail humanity to warn us, nor illume the darkness of our future. It is only when life is at the midnight that the star of hope holds its torch so that the soul alone may see into the future. When it is day we need no star, and so rush headlong without peering ahead for danger.

Anxious to see more of the world than western Pennsylvania, Ben made up his mind to work on the Monongahela, Ohio and adjacent waters, giving little thought to the fortunes or misfortunes that future events might hold for him. Hard work had worn away the novelty of his home, and he longed to view some of the points of beauty lying along the banks of

these streams. Brownsville being situated at the head of river navigation, Ben readily found employment on one of the many steamers that plied the river leading to the Mississippi. The steamer "John B. Gordon" was a small one, or what is called a low-water boat, that made bi-weekly trips from Brownsville to Morgan town, Va. On this boat Ben set out in the position of "knife shiner." This riverman's phrase meant that he would be expected to clean knives, and tins, or attend to any odd jobs the pantryman or steward might find for him to do. The spirit of willingness, and cheerfulnees, so prominent in his early life, won for him friends, and made him the favorite with the captain and all who were employed on board. This justly earned and deserved friendship was more to him than his paltry wages. This humble station well filled made access to other and better work easy. After running for some time on this boat he accepted an offer on the "Atlantic," which ran between Pittsburg and Brownsville. Nothing that could be of interest to our readers occurred while Ben was aboard the "Atlantic." The dull monotony of every-day life was endured by the proprietor and employees, while each day all the passengers declared everything "delightful and charming."

Ben was finally transferred to the "Australia," a very large boat, and made several trips to St. Louis. In the meantime he had been working his way up. He was often found in the pilot house learning to manage things in that department, or down with the firemen or engineer, studying the wonderful mechanism of the engine; then up in the pantry, learning the mysteries of how and where the sweets were made and kept. Ever trusty, apt and business like, he was often en-

trusted with the *pro tem.* management of these several departments, and when left in charge of affairs never proved false to the trust placed in him.

In the year 1856, Ben became pantryman on the "Belle Golden." In this office he prepared all cold dishes for the tables, had full charge of the pastries, fruits, wines, preserves, weighed and sent out all the coffee, teas, flour, etc. needed in the culinary department. During this year the cholera raged, and Ben suffered an attack, but was fortunate in that as in other epochs, and survived while thousands perished.

During the downward trip to St. Louis, a slave and a mule were among the other cargo, the Negro receiving the same fare with the live-stock. They were hurried on board at Louisville, Ky. Before they had gone very far the poor slave was seized with a severe attack of cholera. Without a friend, even without a bed, he lay in intense agony. Ben, hearing his piteous groans, went to him, and finding him seriously ill, had the poor fellow placed in his bed, and did all he could to relieve his sufferings. Several of the working hands watched with Ben at the bedside of the poor man, who prayed for death not only as a relief from bodily pain but for freedom of body and soul from that reign of terror, slavery. His cries of racking pain, his pleading request and yearning prayer, "Oh, Lord, how much longer?" would have melted the hearts of those who held the price of his departing soul. Death came to his relief at four o'clock the following morning, and the carpenter of the boat, assisted by Bennie, made a coffin of rough boards and placed all that was mortal in it. Bennie then secured the services of a few deck-hands to act as pall-bearers, the boat was run ashore at

Slim Island, and there these kind hearts hid from view the form of the slave, whose lot of toil and anguish had never been brightened by kindness and brotherly love until this his dying hour. No one stood near with God's word to cheer him; none save the few hearts that bled in compassion were near to cast a farewell glance at the cold, stark, unyielding features; no eminent divine pronounced the burial rite. On deck, stood *wealthy christian slave owners*, jesting with heartless sneers, wearing the Maker's image as a screening mask, knowing too well that the dead slave was made in God's own likeness, too.

As the rough pine box was borne across the gang plank to the lonely island in the Ohio river, the spectators on the decks of the boat knew that it held only worthless dust, while deep in their hearts was a certain consciousness that a precious ransom had been paid for the soul, one that was greater than all human price. The slave's body was no longer in bondage; his spirit was as free as the white-winged messengers of God into whose glorious company it had taken flight. While the deck-hands scooped a shallow grave for one who had been doomed to be the *Christian's* slave for years, his free soul was winging its flight to a righteous heaven where no slave chains are forged.

The impression made upon Ben's mind will ever be so bright that his sensibilities will always be capable of giving form and color to the scene; it gave a keener edge to his compassion for his brethren in chains, and to his love of race, freedom and equality.

The "A. G. Mason" was the next boat on which Ben was employed. This steamer made regular trips from St. Louis, Mo. to St. Paul, Minn. Our young

boatman had a strong love of home, and when things did not run along with marble like smoothness he longed for a glimpse of dear old Brownsville and a word or two with mother. His cultivated vagrancy, however, did not allow him much time to linger amidst home scenes, but would carry him off to the tropics and try to make him feel at home with the palm and fig trees; or his mind, which he daily fed on books of travel, would cause the theater of his imagination to stretch away into the colder latitudes of the northern zones; and, in this way he had learned to like a change of climate and surroundings.

He was charmed with his first trip toward the source of the Mississippi. This great, dark, rapid river, that in its lower latitudes flowed, moaned and groaned like an unending sorrow, now seemed to warble a more cheerful song; its color was less dismal, and the sky it reflected was a clearer blue; the clouds moved with a more perfect freedom; and the leaves, the birds, the laborers at work in the fields—all seemed to move to and fro with that air of physical liberty which did not exist below. It was only this that made the contrast. Spring and liberty smiled as they laid a happy-seeming spell on all the out-door world. The river banks were lighted up with a new brightness; no feeling of imprisonment prevented deep inhalations of the wild-wood fragrance; no cotton-picking slaves brought tears of pity from the heart to the eyes; no inhuman faces of the overseers were seen to arouse the accursed passion of hatred. The only thought that carried sorrow to the heart and brought a sigh in return, was caused by the unrelenting purpose of old Father Time to hide the secret of the future freedom of the black man in

his slow, mighty, but regular pulsing heart. No wonder the less picturesque scenery of the northern banks of the Mississippi had a far greater attraction for Ben, than the luxurant verdure, dense foliage, great variety of tone poems as warbled forth by gay-plumed birds, of the tropics, and exquisit odors of flowers, gorgeously dyed, growing in wildness, or in cultivated gardens. The former presents a picture of freedom, virtue and happiness; the latter, slavery, vice and misery.

During the first run to St. Paul, after Ben had set to work on the "Mason," he saw a great many Indians on the right or Wisconsin bank. As they neared the landing these Chippewas came down to the dock to observe and see if there was a chance of getting "fire-water." Ben, not having seen any Indians before, was greatly interested, and began talking with them. One Indian suddenly asked: "You got whiskey? Gimme whiskey!" The gutteral tone used by the savage somewhat startled Ben; but he said, "I have no whiskey." "You lie! you lie! you lie!"—The very woods seemed to echo it, and it so suddenly frightened Ben that he hastily returned to the deck with his curiosity about Chippewa Indians satisfied.

The following fall, the steamboat "W. M. Morrison," making regular trips between St. Louis and New Orleans, wanted a storekeeper, and Ben, whose name and integrity had become well known in steamboat circles, was employed. Mr. Wm. Davis was at that time head steward and Mr. Wm. Goff head pantryman. In those days steamboats were considered the most popular and pleasant means of travel. It was also customary for boats to engage in racing, and the finest and most exciting scenes to be witnessed on the Mississippi is a steam-

boat race. It is one, however, which timid, nervous persons enjoy most when seen from the land, and bold, reckless ones when on board the participating boats.

It was Ben's privilege to become deeply interested in a race that took place between the "W. H. Harrison" and the "Virginia." They ran along, side by side for seven or eight hours; so close were they that the deck boys could and did step over on the neighboring boat. An inch gained by either vessel was greeted with shouts and cheers from every officer, passenger and deck-hand on the leading boat—even the ladies clapped their hands and waved their handkerchiefs. Finally the Morrisson steamed ahead, and in a few hours had so distanced the Virginia that she was pronounced the winner.

Ben continued following steamboating as long as navigation was open, finishing each year in waiting at hotels.

Chapter VIII.

A GREAT MISFORTUNE.

No human being ever had a bright, healthful and successful morning of life, with an unbroken line of hopes whose fruition came in turn, to cheer, bless and urge him on to greater desires, but ere the noontide or evening of life was reached, did find his body writhing and his heart ready to break beneath the weight of some sorrow or misfortune. No cloudless morn has ever dawned but what has shown some speck of shadowy cloud to some mortal beneath its canopy.

In all divine architecture there is nothing so entirely admirable, no monument so grand and imposing as a brave wretched man or woman—one who has had clouds of sorrow and misfortune spread wide, heaped high and lowered deep into the soul, and yet has triumphed over all and learnd to wear these miseries as sacred fillets upon his brow. 'Tis better so; could we but fathom the griefs of others, ours would be so shallow.

Socrates was wise in his comment on unhappiness when he said: "If all the misfortunes of mankind were cast into a public stock, in order to be equally distributed among the whole species, those who now think themselves the most unhappy would prefer the

share they are already possessed of before that which would fall to them by such a division." Before calamities visit us, we give but little thought to accidents that daily befall others. The power of observation, care and sympathy are left uncultivated.

Ben, like all unexperienced humanity, saw no terrow in an orange rind; a small stone held no dreaded history for him, a sack of oats never caused his blood to chill with fear, nor a playful slap or boyish kick taken seriously to heart. No sooner were such trifles seen or enacted than forgotten. Yet one's future destiny is often changed by the seeming interference of a few atóms of matter. So, with the same fearless spirit, the young boatman continued running on the great stream as far as it was navigable.

Late in the fall of 1856, the "Lake City" started up river with a heavy cargo. Having gone as far as Fountain City the ice-floes became so heavy she was forced to return to LaCrosse, and there store her freight. The crew, as well as the officers, dreaded being caught in the ice at that season of the year, so all turned out to assist in unloading and storing. In the haste and excitement of getting the heavy freight ashore and safely housed, Ben, who was in the warehouse, in coming down from the pile of oat sacks slipped and hurt his left ankle. The bruise was a very slight one, and so he continued his work, only applying simple remedies in the hope that it would soon heal. The thought of giving up his position as storekeeper for what he termed a mere scratch never entered his mind, and he returned with the boat to St. Louis. Here he and his friend and school-mate, G. W. Mossette, were constant companions. One day they had been leisurely stroll-

ing through the city; when they were about to separate, Mossett playfully began tapping Ben, as though about to open a round of boxing. "Hold up, there, Wash, I must get back to the boat," said Ben, at the same time giving Washington a slap. "Good bye, Wash." Good bye, old boy," said Wash, kicking at Ben as he spoke. With this playful, boyish parting each turned at once to go his way. But Washington Mossett's foot, so carelessly thrown out to trip Ben, struck the already sore ankle, bruising it badly. Ben called a good physician, had the wound dressed, and faithfully followed the instruction given him; yet it steadily grew worse and eventually turned into *osteo sarcoma*, or bone cancer. This rapidly spread and grew in size, until the ankle measured eighteen inches in circumference.

Notwithstanding his intense suffering as the disease daily worked its way to the extremity of the foot, and upward toward the knee, Ben did not give up his task. When the Lake City lay up, he went on the "Telegraph," and from her to the "Dunbar." In September, 1856, he found it impossible to follow the river any longer, and went ashore and began work in the Perry Hotel, at Pittsburg. Though his leg was very sore and extremely painful, he worked his way up from knife-shiner to head waiter.

The truth was slowly dawning upon Ben's mind that there was but one hope of his life, and even that ray of hope shone dimly through the clouds of doubt and despair. He saw the necessity of earning and saving all he possibly could, in order to secure the best surgical skill for the trying ordeal. Reader, you cannot enter into full sympathy with the feelings of

suffering Ben, whose mental anguish almost equaled his physical. You cannot fully appreciate the dread, hope, fear, and grief, which, mingled with bodily pain, cause an acute agony almost unbearable, unless you have undergone torture of the same character.

During the winter of 1857–8 he was obliged to abandon work and go home. Here he was warmly greeted by a loving mother and devoted relatives and friends, and all that constant attention and careful nursing and medical aid could do to make Ben comfortable, was done. Time wore tediously away until early spring, when the tumor had reached such an advanced stage that Poor Ben had but the choice of death, whose only alternative was amputation. Though hope is called a delusion, Ben did not allow despair to step in and warp his judgment, so he thrust one hand of hope forward, pushed, with a desperate effort, despair into the back ground, holding her there; then with the full assurance that his helper was omnipotent, hope grasped with her other hand the shadowy wing of death that is ever spread over the human body, and thus with his soul filled with a perfect trust in God, and hope quickening his energy, he said, "Send for the doctors, I am ready for the operation." To know the real value of life, or have a perfect idea of self, one must have stood at least once at the gate of death, been forced to the door-sill of suicide, or driven to the brink of insanity.

March, 1858, was the time set for the amputation, and the physicians chosen were Dr. G. W. McCook of Pittsburg, Drs. M. O. Jones and W. S. Duncan of Brownsville, all of whom were men of large and successful practice in medicine and surgery. Dr. Duncan,

who attended him after the operation, was a young graduate from the Philadelphia Medical College, and one who had a full and rich experience of hospital practice. He practiced the most skilled and modern methods of treatment and having had charge of similar cases he worked with a perfect knowledge in dressing the wound and nursing Poor Ben back to health.

Ben was one of those boys who had become a general favorite with every one in his native town and wherever he was known. All the prominent white citizens as well as his colored friends, came with flowers, delicacies, and warm and sympathizing hearts, to ask after and assist in watching over Poor Ben. In every house the conversation was about him. Daily, some one would say: "Poor Ben! I wonder how he is to-day? I must run and see him." Another good heart would breathe aloud "Poor Ben!" while her hands were busy cutting the few opening buds from the petted plants, or arranging dainty bits of "nice things" to tempt the appetite of poor helpless Ben. Humanity is never so depraved and debased by wealth or poverty, education or ignorance, pride or humility, high rank or low station, but what the inherent nobleness of common nature will betray itself in the pure sympathy it displays and responds to in the society by which it is surrounded.

The sympathy that gave to a young being whose skin was dark, whose circumstances were adverse, an appellation that will cling with a sweet, sad meaning to him through life, and live after he is dead, is that passion in nature whose ear is so fine and keen that it hears the heart pulsations of all "Poor Bens" whether they proceed from beneath a glove-fitting suit of black,

brown, yellow, red or white skin; whether the vesture which modified their voice be adverse or prosperous; whether the outward cloak be one of Democratic opinion or Republican, Protestant or Catholic sentiment. It is simply yet grandly what the Irish wit has termed it—"a fellow-feeling for a fellow in the same way as he feels for himself; that is, in a way to reach him."

It was in this manner that the sympathy of the entire community was given to Poor Ben, who for twenty-eight long weary days and nights had to lie in one position. "Poor Ben!" being at times the only rest or comfort that could be rendered. He accepted it as it was given—lovingly—and it often soothed, while with a prayer half uttered he would fall into a quiet sleep. He knew the watchers could not relieve him, and did not grow restless or impatient under his close confinement, but bore all that was laid upon him with a strength of quiet endurance that was as significant of courage and christian fortitude as the most daring feats and martyr-like suffering.

After the crisis had passed Poor Ben began mending, slowly at first, then more rapidly; and in these convalescent days he had time for study and reflection. Each day brought to mind the pleasing remembrance of the many benefits and friendly offices he had received. No regrets for neglected opportunities rose to lash his conscience, for Poor Ben had always been kind to the poor and suffering wherever he met them. Now he saw the verification of that beautiful passage, "As ye sow, so shall ye reap," and after blessing others he found himself doubly blest. In this heavy visitation of Providence in the loss of his leg, he did not find like Pharoah, a punishment, but like David,

a pardon. The affliction, though an evil in itself, was for Poor Ben's good.

Time, who makes an end of all things, wrote final on the number of weeks that had been prescribed for Poor Ben, and he was allowed to say "I am quite well I thank you," instead of the two months' expression of "I am getting a little better." With the aid of crutches he was able to take a short walk each morning, and each evening gave signs of speedy restoration of perfect health.

Poor Ben at last went down town for the first time in many months. He was warmly greeted by every one, and his friends proved by a language plainer than words their sorrow for his loss, their joy at his recovery, in giving him, on the first day he went down street, over one hundred dollars with which to purchase an artificial leg. The feelings of gratitude that such noble deeds of love created, have not died, but daily have grown in Poor Ben's heart, so that an attempt to kindle a fire with snow would prove more successful than an endeavor to crush the gratitude out of his life. Only the grateful soul knows what it is; and he cannot define it. He can only say "I am grateful but cannot express it." The ablest rhetorician feels the great deficiency in the power of words to express the meaning of gratitude. And yet, Poor Ben felt all that the word contains. Its meaning was clear to him—he was grateful to his Saviour, grateful to his family and friends.

Chapter IX.

IN SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

The Sunday-School Institute of the Ohio Annual Conference was originated by Rev. W. H. Coleman, then the pastor of Felicity Sation; July 2nd, 1875. He prepared an interesting program, and the next place of meeting was New Richmond, Ohio, the following November. Poor Ben was an earnest worker in the cause of Sunday-schools at this time, and figured conspicuously on the schedule as lecturer, conductor of black board and miscellaneous exercises. He was a member of the Board of Instructors; and was called upon to lecture during the session which convened at Troy, O., Oct., 31, 1877.

He chose for his theme of discourse "Aim at the Aim," of which the following is a synopsis:

MR. PRESIDENT, AND MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTE,—We have assembled here tonight to consider a very important subject, one that has the eternal interest of the souls of men.

The right way to heaven; heaven and how to get there; why we should strive to enter into the rest prepared for the people of God. The importance of right directions when we are on a journey on a strange way, is apparent to all; how did we get away from home? how far are we away from home, and how to get back, are now interesting the world of mankind.

We find in the question two ideas; the theological and ecclesiastical. The one born in Eden, the other in the house of Abra-

ham. They embrace the history of man. 1st, man, as he was before the fall; 2d, man, as he is in the depths of human depravity; 3d, man, as he may be by the grace of God.

We find this more fully discussed under the scientific views. Theology—discourse about God. Christology—discourse about Christ. Anthropology—discourse about Man. Solterology—discourse about Salvation.

They were disciples under three dispensations—Patriarchal, Mosaical, Gospel. 1st. The general idea, Genesis, men found their way back to God as individuals.—The manner and effect of the fall. 2d. Ecclesiastical idea; Genesis 8: 9. The organized effort to bring men back to God and up to heaven—the sign board erected by the command of God.

The thought that man is always from God is universal. How to get back is the question, and wherever you find man he is asking, which way to God. The answering of this question is the work of the Church and Sunday-school.

Who are the recognized religious educators? They are: 1st, parents; 2d, Sunday-school teachers; 3d, day-school teachers; 4th, professors in institutes of higher learning; 5th, ministers of the Gospel; 6th, the Holy Ghost. These are the principal educators, and their business is to train men, women and children for usefulness in this life, and to enjoy the presence of God forever. They aim to begin this training and education when the children are young. The philosophy of which is that the mind is susceptible to impression, which will be durable, and they will be more efficient in giving rightness to the character of the individual. The head must be educated to think, the heart must be taught to love God and humanity, the hands must be trained to work of benevolence and mercy, the will must be disciplined by precept, and the conscience must be influenced by living examples of piety and virtue.

Duty of parents to their children: 1st, to maintain their children and provide food, raiment, shelter, and education; 2d, to govern them—a miniature state, where the authority must not be neglected—govern by love, not fear; 3d, physical education—the development of the physical man must not be neglected; 4th, moral education—religious belief, honor, usefulness, morality and eternity, reverence for God and man; the principles of right and

wrong must be clearly set forth; 5th, intellectual education—to observe objectively and subjectively, to think on mind and matter, to read good books, to converse on history, biography, philosophy, science and religion, to listen while others talk—preaching, lecturing, teaching.

Duty of children: Obedience to parents, teacher and God, docility, reverence, filial affection, gratitude.

The ladder to destruction: Disobedience to parents, breaking the Sabbath, lying, stealing, murder. The watch house, pentientiary, gallows, and hell are stations on the way to destruction.

What they must be taught: 1st, right views of the nature and attributes of God; 2d, right views as to the humanity and divinity of the Lord Jesus; 3d, right views as to the office and work of the Holy Ghost; 4, right views as to the religion of Christ, and its doctrines. Sin, nature and effect, repentence, justification, loyal and evangelical; sanctification, what it is and what it is not; glorification, who shall enjoy it, and the doctrines of reward and punishment. The wages of sin and light of God.

The aim of the Sunday-school of to-day differs from what it was when it was first organized. Mr. Raikes aim was to bring the boys from the commons on the Lord's day, and give them a knowledge of the letters—secular education. To have them commit some portion of the word of God—committing verses. To have them commit and answer the questions in the catechism, learn the ten commandments, the Lord's prayer and the apostles' creed. To make them smart in the answering of questions in the history of the race; and bible history.

What is the object or the aim of the Sunday-school of to-day? 1st, to convert the children to the Lord Jesus Christ; 2d, to indoctrinate them.

This has been too much neglected, but ought to receive more attention from preachers and teachers. They must learn the doctrine and give them something to believe. Let the sin of unbelief be with them and their God, and not with us. What is good for the parents is good for the children. If Methodism is good for me, it is good for my boys and girls. They must have it from me. If they want to throw it away, they must do that; but they must know that the soul which sins must die, but whoever believes on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved.

The third aim of the Sunday-school is to train the children in

the work of benevolence. They must be taught to give support to the organized efforts of christain usefulness and church advancements. Now, my advice to the teachers and officers of the Sunday-school Institute is to aim at the aim, in the moral, intellectual development of the race. The work is higher now than in former years. Then we only aimed to remove the cloud of ignorance, and break the chain of vicious association; now the first aim is heaven and immortal glory.

What are the essential qualifications of teachers in the work of training the young mind how to think, the heart how and when to feel, the hand to do efficient work for the elevation of the race, and salvation of man?

1st. The qualification is moral. A good moral character, and experimental knowledge of the religion of Christ.

2d. Intellectual qualification. A knowledge of men and things; a good stock of common sense.

3d. Social qualification. Courteous, kind, social, sweet, not of vinegar, winning, affectionate.

4th. Punctual in attendance, prompt to duty, never shirking.

5th. A love for the moral and intellectual training of the children.

6th. A love for Christ and His cause.

7th. A love for books and papers.

8th. Faith in God as a prayer hearing and a prayer answering God.

9th. Those who can adapt themselves to the condition of all. They must know that love is mightier than force. They must always have a smile for the brightest and dullest member of the class.

The object of this Institute is to assist in preparing ourselves for more efficient working of the problem, leading men back to God. We know that we must not only point but lead the way. We must see that the children find their way to God by scientific and revealed ways. Which way to God? We say, come with us and we will find Him, and show you the way He has prepared.

An Arabian was crossing the desert with a skeptical Englishman. The musselman would, at a designated time of the day, kneel down and pray. The Englishman wanted to know of the devotee "how he knew there was a God, as he had never seen Him." The servant smiled. "How can I tell that a man passed by my tent last night in the darkness, instead of a camel?" "By his tracks, of

course." "Well, then, look at the sun setting now; that's not the track of a man, is it? I know my God by his tracks."

Poor Ben's audience was a large one; composed of white and colored workers in the Sunday-school cause.

He gave the parting words to the audience, speaking of the duties of the hour, he said there was hope for the race if it would take this advice:

First. Get religion; that will give you communion with God.

Second. Get knowledge or education; that will enable you to control the forces of nature.

Third. Get money, houses and land; that will give you power with men.

Fourth. Get integrity; this gives you power over yourselves. It will enable you to keep your religion, to use your education properly, and give you money for good objects.

Now, brethren and sisters, get your heads full of knowledge, your hearts full of love for God and man, and your pockets full of money, and if this does not save you, there is nothing that will—we are lost.

Chapter X.

THE SCHOOL TEACHER.

JOHNSON says: "More is learned in a public, than in a private school from emulation; there is the collision of mind with mind, or the radiation of many minds pointing to one center."

Poor Ben, during the thirty years of his life, had enjoyed but few of the privileges and advantages of public school or academy. Yet he had become a thorough and devoted student in that most spacious of school rooms—the world. He daily learned, recited and practised the most useful lessons of duty and love, at the same time making books of the common and higher English branches his constant companions; so that in this way he became a good scholar. He possessed a desire of superiority, attended with the effort to attain excellency in scholarship, as well as in qualities of head and heart. His natural ardor was greatly increased by the praise worthy examples of others, with whom he came in contact, and whose chances for a liberal education were made certain by means of wealth and influence. While reading the Mc.Guffey series, he was at the same time learning to read the series of faces opened before him each day. While solving arithmetical, algebraic and geometric problems, he was, in the meantime, finding the process by

which the peddler, in a few years, could support a family, build a mammoth store, own a valuable bank-book and a fine home; he was finding the cube of a hundred dollar bill; extracting the square root of a small salary and placing it in a saving bank; finding the value of the unknown quantity of—I see *no way plus*, but have *the will equals what?*

Harvey's Grammar and Clark's Analysis taught him the art of speaking and writing the English language with correctness and propriety; to take to pieces difficult statements, name and properly locate each separate part of a thought. From the Grammar of Life he learned the full meaning of the verb *work;* he clearly understood that it was active, transitive, and though present tense, indicative mood with him, it might be found in different moods and tenses. He enjoyed the full sense of the action, being or state of *rest-sleep, eat,* etc.; gave much attention to the best way of disposing of such nouns, as—money, life; he mastered the entire conjugation of the verb *love* in all its modes and tenses. He made practical his logic, rhetoric, history and theology. He early recognized the fact that human science was the twin sister of natural and revealed religion, and, when once having admitted the origin of the one, could not deny that the other emanated from the same source. The farther he became removed from ignorance and prejudice, the plainer could he see the sciences and religion blending their rays into a beautiful bow of light, binding earth to heaven and man to his Creator.

They who thus most rapidly, efficiently learn, can best apply, and most readily impart their knowledge to others.

By means of these adverse circumstances, attendant upon Poor Ben's schooling, he was doubly trained to teach and lead those under his care, into a broad atmosphere of thought.

He received his first certificate as teacher, December 19th, 1863, from Hon. J. V. Gibbons, Fayette County Superintendent, in Pennsylvania. Poor Ben opened his school in January and continued teaching both summer and winter, in the red brick school house situated at the edge of the town of Brownsville; then at Bridgeport, for as soon as one school closed he would open the other. He was the first and only colored teacher belonging to the Fayette County Institute. In the fall of 1864, he received a call from Dr. Henry Highland Garnett, to go to Washington D. C., to teach in the African Civilization Society School, of which Rev. Rufus L Perry, was the general Superintendent.

Poor Ben arrived at the nation's capital on the 24th. of December and went to the residence of Mrs. Nugent on 8th St., where he boarded during his stay. The following day being the Sabbath, and Christmas, he attended church, and listened to an able sermon on the subject, "Triumphs of the Cross" by—Williams, a colored catholic priest. The next day he entered upon the duties of a city school teacher; he as principal, Misses Mary A. Garnet and Mary E. Fisher as assistants. Two hundred and thirty pupils were enrolled and it monopolized the entire attention of the teachers to feed these hungry minds, who were dependent upon them for mental sustenance. Poor Ben found his work to be not only important, but it also required him to exercise charity and patience. He saw his

duty and knew that to forsake or neglect it, in any way, would be to break a thread in the loom of his life work; so, though often hard, and unpleasant, he did all that lay in his power to elevate his race.

After the close of a ten months session, he returned to Brownsville, and was given the charge of his former school, which he taught until 1867. He then removed to Walnut Hills, Ohio, and was made principal of the school there, holding the position until 1870. During this time, he received a call to teach in the city school of Toledo. In 1871 he accepted the offer and taught in the Grammar department for some months. At the close of this session, the schools of the city of Toledo were consolidated, and Poor Ben was the last colored man who filled the office of colored teacher in that city, and he left the profession at this date, having had under his care over eight hundred pupils. Many of them are now teaching, preaching, or holding useful and responsible positions; doing grand and lasting work for their race and heavenly Master. It is impossible to fathom the deep satisfaction and pleasure that fills the soul of the teacher, who has taught the young intellect to think and work for itself; to dig in wisdom's mine for tact, talent and ready perception of analogies; and to put into practical use, in after life, all his natural and acquired abilities which must be led forth by that richest possession —common sense.

The office of a teacher is a calling of the highest degree, and possesses the noblest virtues of earth. Nothing grander can be conceived than the ability and aptness to educate the children of others; to impart that knowledge, which has been culled from the prolific

gardens of science and art, nature and nature's God; to assiduously feed young minds, as we would have ours fed.

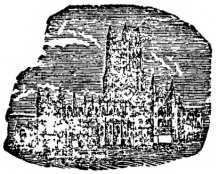
Poor Ben was a good and successful instructor, because he suggested plans, and devised means of study rather than dogmatized; he taught his pupils to teach themselves, and inspired them with such a love of knowledge, that they became eager and grasping. In this field he manifested his calling, and was ever storing his mind, that he might keep pace with the times and improved methods of imparting wisdom in its best forms to the ideas springing up about him. He was indeed an amiable, yet thorough disciplinarian. After leaving the school-room, Poor Ben's profession clung to him, and he still taught and is still teaching from pulpit and platform, in his home circle and around the fireside of others wherever he is thrown. His conversations, so instructive are they that when listened to a lesson of usefulness is learned. It may be he has adopted the philanthropic sentiments of Elliott, the Apostle of the Indians, of whom it is said that on the day of his death, in his eightieth year, he was found teaching an Indian child, at his bed-side. "Why not rest from your labors now?" asked a friend, "Because," replied the venerable man, "I have prayed God to render me useful in my sphere, and He has heard my prayer: for now, that I can no longer preach, He leaves me strength enough to teach this poor child the alphabet."

Poor Ben had done what he could toward imparting the alpha of the English language to over eight hundred of his race; and with this foundation, many received an incentive to push forward toward the *Omega*

of earthly knowledge, to which all earth's wisest men have aspired, but never reached.

As an educator, in the earliest days of American freedom, ignorance, superstition and prejudice, Poor Ben made his mark.

"He taught some to ably teach the rest;
And they who truly learned; and fastest,
Have most learned; and now do lead the best.



Chapter XI.

AT THE CAPITAL.

WASHINGTON CITY! Poor Ben found himself, on stepping from the train, in this so called centre of civilization. This miniature world. Here within its environments he would find specimens of every form of being, every gift that poverty, luxury and power could bestow, to complete its cabinet of wondrous curiosities. In its gorgeous stores, its filthy shops, its splendid palaces, its neat cottages its unkempt huts, its universities, its charity schools, its churches, its theatres, its courts, its prisons, its parks, its baths, its forum, its White House,—its atmosphere—in the energy, yet corrupt wickedness; in the refinement and culture, yet vice; in the poverty and wealth, humility and pride of its great variety of citizens, Poor Ben beheld an entire system of created things; a universe! This was Washington! and in the cycling of months, he learned that it was either a vast toyshop, or workshop, or market, or menagerie, and at times it was all these combined. Each time the gods saw fit to turn the kaleidoscope, he saw it in some one of the ever varying phases of civil or barbaric existence. As all this conglomerate mass of miseries and joys were jammed into one corner of the District of Columbia, so were the conceptions of them crowded into Poor Ben's mind. Here were portrayed scenes common to all readers, and fami-

liar to the eye of all who travel, even though to places of lesser note. And although the sights at Washington may amuse and amaze those who visit it, they finally conclude "there is nothing new under the sun." As Poor Ben walked the wide and densely thronged avenues, his eyes became dazed with the surrounding scenes. Then in a dreamy state, he would paint on the canvas of his mind, recent historical events. He would float down the broad Potomac toward the Chesapeake, and there watch the vessels of war, and picture them in the brilliant naval exploits of the rebellion, whose war clouds still filled the air. Again he would shift the scene and see the glassy bay's surface covered with ships of commerce and boats of pleasure for those who command the almighty dollar. As Poor Ben watched all without, and reviewed all the facts he had laid away in his mental storehouse, he wondered why heaven had given to his race every blessing but one. It had bestowed health, strength of mind, genius, illustrious descent, hearts of fire, minds of eloquence, wills of iron, and yet had denied the family to which he belonged, the heritage of freedom and equality. But these visionary wonderings only tended to benumb a rising ambition; and he felt that immediate action was the only means by which to attain to that one blessing, of which his race had been deprived. He determined to labor on; and wherever duty called he obeyed, looking forward to the time, when these many classes of people, like various streams, would some day find their way into the one grand gulf of unity and equality; when they would so mingle that it would require a miraculous process of analysis to distinguish one atom from another.

The spirit of patriotism, already a prominent feature in the character of Poor Ben, was fed by the exciting scenes that transpired during his life at Washington.

He had read carefully the history of strifes of other lands, and contrasted it with the present; and by such retrospection and contrast, had gained wisdom to cast the horoscope of the future. It is needless to plod along the course of events from the creation, or even from the deluge, to the present date, to watch the rise and fall of nations, so familiar to all readers. As science gains most truth by the study of the past, as found recorded in the fossils of earth, so the student of social and political progress, must gather knowledge from the history of other nations in order to understand and benefit the cause of his own country. Political development, progress and decline are governed by fixed and immutable laws; and Poor Ben living as he did, in the very center of national tumult, watched every event and considered every topic pertaining to the country's weal or woe.

He was present when the Thirteenth Amendment was brought before the House, and listened to the stirring debate, when G. H. Pendleton, the Democratic leader, was answered most effectively by many prominent members of the Republican side, among whom were Boutwell and our lamented Garfield, whose deeds live after them. And, on the memorable day when the amendment passed, January 31, 1865, it was impossible to preserve order. The announcement caused the Republicans to jump from their seats with screams and cheers of victory in which Poor Ben heartily joined. Ingersoll, of Illinois, arose as soon as order was restored, and said, "In honor of this sublime and immortal

event, I move that this House do now adjourn," which was carried, and soon the news spread with the rapidity of wild fire throughout the country; and slavery was indeed dead.

When Lincoln refused to allow Grant "conference with Lee unless for the capitulation of his army or for some purely military matter," and when the day following this, Lee surrendered to Grant, Poor Ben, his fellow teachers and students, all threw books and rules to the winds, and made the school-room walls of old Bethel Hall ring with that grand old song, "John Brown's Body Lies Mouldering in the Grave."

It is said that every joy has its corresponding sorrow.

Six days after the general rejoicing, came the report of the assassin's pistol, and the nation was draped in mourning, for its liberator. He, who was the Moses of the black American, had been allowed to ascend the mountain, view the promised land of freedom, and then was no more. He, who had been true to his nation's trust, had gone higher.

Poor Ben marched with the funeral procession from the house where Lincoln died, to the White House, and witnessed the general mourning for the lamented dead.

He witnessed the grand review of the armies of the Republic at the close of the Rebellion; and when the treaty of peace was signed, Poor Ben left the great hub for a more quiet life in his native town, having been present at the second inauguration of Abraham Lincoln and many other of the most important events in the history of this great republic.

During Poor Ben's stay at Washington, he met many eminent men at the residence of Hon. Henry Highland

Garnet, whose home was the central point of attraction for all the prominent colored men of the day and leading abolitionists. He was a prominent member of the Equal Rights League, an organization that was the outgrowth of the National Convention, which met in Syracuse, New York, in 1864. It consisted of state, county and town leagues; formed for the purpose of advancing the political, moral and educational status of the colored people.

This term *league* was first used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to designate a political alliance or coalition. The most famous of these leagues were those of Cambray, Schmalkald, and Nurnberg, so familiar to historical readers. This word had a peculiar importance in the history of France, as applied to the opposition, organized by the Duke of Guise, to the granting of the free exercise of religious, and political rights to the Huguenots. This was called the "Holy League;" formed for the maintenance of the Roman Catholic religion in its predominance. But the object of the Duke was to exclude the protestant princes from succession by blood, to the throne, and for which a civil war ensued during the reign of Henry III., in 1046.

These equal right leagues were of a widely different nature. The former meant discord; the latter concord; the former, political and religious slavery; the latter, freedom and protection in politics, religion and home.

One of the best in the United States, was the League of the State of Pennsylvania, which was divided into three districts, Eastern, Western, and Middle; and contained twenty-two counties each.

Poor Ben was appointed solicitor for the Western District by the Executive Board. One of the most active and efficient leagues of this district was that called "Faith, Hope and Charity." Here Poor Ben learned to debate. He, like every other young man, had thoughts and feelings to express. To aid in moulding into some available shape, and clothe in fitting language his thoughts, so they might be instructive and interesting, Poor Ben had but little opportunity. Yet he hourly saw the imperative demand for improvement in order to make a sure road to civil and political preferment. His natural love of oratory, and his lamentable deficiency in it, but made him the more eager to become a good speaker. Thus, he encouraged a practice of impromtu speaking, and by attention to, and association with men of fine oratorical powers, he learned the qualities of voice, rate, delivery, gesture, style, force, modulation, key, variations, articulation and passions; and soon, by constant practice, became a public speaker of no mean degree. These organizations often called for long and earnest, logical speeches; and prominent among its best debaters, Poor Ben was found.

Out of the Faith, Hope and Charity League was organized the Citizen's Joint Stock Company, which entered into a mercantile business and did well. Poor Ben was the originator of this stock company. He wrote its charter, and it passed the Legislature of 1866, without amendments or changes of any kind.

The National Equal Rights League met at Washington, D. C. in 1867, John M. Langston was its president, and Poor Ben, its secretary. There were present at this session one hundred and eighteen delegates, representing eighteen states of the Union.

CHAPTER XII.

LOVE, COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

"The good wife ever is the keystone strong,
That binds the arches of the social state;
It is her quiet counsels that create
That solid virtue and endurance long,
That give the victory to those who wait.
Unto the husband and the son belong
The harvest of her works; she maketh straight
Each crooked path, and arms him for the strife;
And with the sickle of religion true,
Cuts down the tares that choke the better life,
Without her, who, unscathed can struggle through,
Toil-soiling labors? Her affections dew
Keeps green the promise of our higher fate,
And is that love which must be wisdom too."

The important theme of love and courtship was a matter that grew with Ben's growth and strengthened with his strength. In his early boy-hood days he was a general favorite with the girls, who to him were always kind and by whom he was made a pet.

Among the many whom Poor Ben had a special reason to remember lovingly, were Ellen Lucas, Harriet Poindexter, Hattie King and her sister Mary; Margeret Freeman, Eliza Banks, Jane Kiger and many others that he was warmly attached to; but the one who claimed all his attention, and whose very name made his heart beat with joy, was Mary Louise Gordon. She was the niece of a lady whom Poor Ben's uncle, Nicholas Smith, had married. He went to vis-

it his uncle, and there, was introduced to Miss Gordon, who made her home with her aunt, Mrs. Smith.

Said Ben, once, when asked about his boyish love, "It was one of those rare cases of love at first sight. From the first day I plainly saw that she loved me and she plainly saw my love for her. The strange sensation that came over me, I can never forget. I felt as though I was hung in mid-air by my suspenders, struggling to get free, but finding I had not the power to do so, I became content and happy in my aerial state; so I hung and still am hanging after the lapse of twenty-six years. I have found that there is life in hanging, and I have hung so long that I hope to hang as long as the Lord will allow."

The affection existing between Louise and Ben daily grew stronger, and Ben visited his uncle's house very frequently; and when absent from Louise, they kept up a regular correspondence. One week, Ben failed to get his letter, and divers unhappy thoughts filled his mind. After three days of patient waiting, he got very angry, and wrote the dear girl a decisive letter breaking off all ties even the kindly friend-ship that might still exist. He received no answer to this startling missive. Then six of the longest and most weary months of Poor Ben's life vanished on leaden wings.

Finding existence, under such a state of affairs, a most dreary penance, he went to Uniontown and became reconciled without any very clear explanation on either side. After all the clouds were driven away, and happiness reigned in both hearts, Louise said, "Ben, I have been suffering from a felon on my right hand, and could not write to you; nor dare I get any

one to write, for fear it would become known, that we are lovers."

Of course Ben's great loving heart had long since pardoned her silence; but now his forgiveness and sympathy found utterance in such sentences as only true lovers can frame.

Soon after this Poor Ben concluded that according to biblical teachings, it was not good for man to be alone. He felt the force of the great historic fact which shows for six thousand years, that in the exercise of unlimited control of all affairs, man becomes a despot. The annals of kings confirm the truth of this; and the records of domestic life, proclaim it with tongues of thunder. There must be some restraining influence, brought to bear on that most wonderful animal man, or the turbulent waves of his vicious propensities will swell higher and higher, until they sweep over the land-marks of reason, love and honor. The frail bark, thus overwhelmed, sinks into depths of endless despair.

Poor Ben knew the comforting, magnetic influence of a mother's and sister's affections; and could easily surmise the more potent, refining power of a wife's untiring love. It was with such manly sentimemts that he at once decided to have a wife —to take to his life long keeping, the Louise of his heart. The question was soon settled between the two lovers; but Ben thought of the dreaded duty of asking mother for daughter. This was the most unpleasant part of his court-ship. Accordingly, he went in the morning to see Louise's mother; he conversed on every topic of the day; he started at least fifty times, but his courage failed, and his tongue could not utter a word on the

subject, that lay upper most on his mind. The day was nearly spent, still no question had been asked, no answer given. He had promised to tell the news of his success or defeat when he next called on Miss Louise, and he would not dissapoint her. So he ventured, and all at once found he had asked the momentous question, though what he said or how he said it can never be recorded. His embarrassment, and the old lady's surprise, were both too great for either to recall the exact words. Nevertheless the idea had been conveyed, and he had received neither a refusal nor consent. Both were young; and the ever judicious mother could not see how Poor Ben could support a wife; for his recent misfortune was the great barrier, that cut him off from lucrative positions.

Louise's mother left the matter to be settled by the young folks; and when they met again they settled it most satisfactorily to themselves. The question how could he support a wife?—had indeed been a mountain-like obstacle to Poor Ben; but now in their joy it melted away into misty nothingness. Over the rapture of the present, the hopes of the future glowed, like the heavens above, the gardens of spring. They went sailing in their trustful bark of thoughts, far down the stream of time; they laid out their chart of destiny; they allowed the light of their present to suffuse their future day. To their youthful hearts it seemed as if care, change and death were never to come. They perhaps loved each other more because of their condition in life, and thus over every project, love reigned supreme. In the life of toil and want before them, love led them to imagine one of ease and plenty.

To the casual observer, who takes interest in lovers

found only in the highest walks of life, these two may seem insipid and common-place. But love acts the same with intelligent souls, whether of high or low estate. There is an ethereal, bird-like existence connected with every lover's history. Yet often the delights and secret joys of soul, that hold spell-bound the lover's hearts, contrast most strangely with the vicissitudes of after-life.

The dazzling sunlight of courtship may afterward be tempered by clouds of sorrow; yet no cloud can destroy that great sun-like orb—the god of love. It is this that lights the true lover's pathway through earth, pierces the blackness of the tomb, and makes eternity a city of light.

The engagement, that lasted a number of years, was becoming very irksome, and Poor Ben, thought of his strong love for and weak means of supporting a wife. However he decided to consult Mary Louise; and if she was willing to share his poverty, they would no longer wait for the pleasing smile of fortune.

"I wonder, Louise, if I can take care of you, said Ben, in a very despondent tone one day.

There was such a wealth of love in Louise's young heart, that she felt no fear of poverty. She knew he would be her guardian angel, and would do and bear anything for her sake. So she made him this most noble answer: "Well, Ben, when you cannot take care of me, I shall take care of you." Such love is a religion in itself; it either wholly saves or destroys those whom it effects. Its ennobling influence was their salvation as the reader will see here after.

Having fully determined the course they were to pursue, they moved on toward the verge of matri-

mony, without swerving, and with a saturnine sternness that ever performs what it intends.

A few months rolled by, and Poor Ben and Mary Louise were quietly married by the Rev. George Brown, President of Madison College, at Uniontown, Pennsylvania, May 25th, 1858. No cards were issued nor cakes cut, parlors crowded with guests with wedding souvernirs, until twenty years of care, toil and sorrow had proven their vows of love.

If the reader will allow a short diversion, the writer will give a pleasing recollection of the minister who officiated at the marriage of our subject.

The Rev. George Brown is doubtless a familiar name to the fathers and mothers who may read this sketch of him. A pioneer preacher of Pennsylvania. He was born in an Indian fort, in Washington County, not more than forty miles from Pittsburg, on the 29th of January, 1792. When a lad of six or seven years of age, he swam the Ohio, at the tail of an ox that was going across. He held on with one hand and paddled with the other, something like a boy with a sled, who steals a ride behind a sleigh. It was quite a dangerous experiment, for the river was at its June flood and was very deep. But young George was going to his mother, and safely reached the shore.

He had also a thrilling adventure in a wolf den, among the hills of Eastern Ohio, when he was about twelve years old. While a comrade stood at the mouth of the den, with a loaded gun to attend to the old wolf if she came, George Brown went down into the dark cavern, feet fore-most, to a good distance, and brought out the young wolves, one or two at a time, until he had taken them all. The boys sold the wolf scalps at

Steubenville, Ohio, for some pocket silver, and the record of the transaction is on the old books at the Court House, in Stenbenville, to this day.

George Brown, in later life, became a great camp-meeting preacher. He traveled over large circuits and occupied important positions and offices in the church. He was a lover of his race and believed in human rights and liberty. He was once pastor of the First Methodist Protestant Church of Pittsburg, was Editor of the now *Methodist Recorder*. He compiled a hymn book for the church, was President of the General Conventions and Conferences, and of Madison College. Dr. Brown was everywhere beloved for his genial ways and eminent worth.

Though a very tender-hearted man, yet his courage to do right, and his willingness to suffer for the truth's sake, were as great as his tenderness.

He died in good peace, at Springfield, Ohio, October 25th, 1871; and a beautiful monument in Fern Cliff Cemetery, marks his last resting place.

His two sons, both ministers, died before their father, his wife a lovable old lady, Mrs. Eliza Brown, survived him about six years; and a daughter, the only remaining member of the family, now resides in Mississippi.

Readers, I have introduced you to the man, who launched Poor Ben's boat on that conjugal sea, whose latitudinal and longitudinal lines no navigator has yet ever traced. But once launched and anchor weighed, the craft floated on with its inmates for twenty long years; and in peering for land they often found a treasure, or monster, a pearl, or tempest their reward.

Twenty years a backward glance shows a chain of

labor, care, of battle and retreat, of victory and defeat. But there have been many joys, that shine out like so many stars; all through this chain of years they shine—diamonds in value.

Twenty Peals! Hear the bell of the St. Paul A. M. E. Church, at Urbana, Ohio. 'Tis a joyful wedding peal; and each chime caused the hearts of Poor Ben and Mary Louise to thrill with a stronger emotion, a true love than they did twenty years ago! Twenty years ago, their history began; they had nought to record. Of money they had little, of friends they had few, of cake and rich gifts they had none Now peace and prosperity beamed upon them from every direction; friends were gathered to bestow costly presents; tables well appointed and filled to repletion, awaited the approach of bride and groom.

The announcment that the 25th of May, had arrived was the signal for the friends of Poor Ben to inaugurate a celebration. At an early hour the people began to assemble, though the exercises did not begin until nine o'clock.

When the prominent guests arrived they were shown into Poor Ben's study, where were gathered his wife and children, Rev. Spahr, Mayor Deuel, Ex-Mayor, Brand, Mr. Gribble, of the *News* and others. The good people of Urbana were hurrying to and fro in haste, getting ready for the exercises.

At nine they entered the Auditorium. The pulpit was so arranged as to admit the organ and singers, while the speakers sat at the left, occupying the enclosure used by the choir.

Prof. Chavers presided at the organ, admirably executing the Wedding March at the opening.

Major Deuel, who acted as chairman, on taking his seat said, that this occasion carried his thoughts back to years before that church was built; when it was almost a crime for colored people to worship God as they now did; that then the colored people were liable to be interrupted by drunken and ill-disposed people; and that the white men who took part in colored people's meetings were politically and socially dead. He referred to the state in which tbey were twenty years ago, and contrasted it with the present, congratulating them upon their progress. He then warmly congratulated Poor Ben and his amiable wife.

Music was then rendered by the church choir; after which prayer was offered by Rev. A. N. Spahr, followed by a quartette "Praise ye the Lord." Sung by Misses Bessie Adams, Mattie Bowles, and Messrs. E. J. Boyd, Thos. Andrews.

Rev. J. A. P. Mc.Gaw, was next introduced, and spoke for a few minutes, earnestly directing his remarks to Poor Ben, and the condition of the colored people twenty years ago, and now as they were assembled. He related a Scotch incident in which the lady once remarked, that she and her husband had lived twenty years together, without a cross word; but her husband finished it by saying, it was *very monotonous.*

Rev. Mc.Gaw concluded by saying that he believed the lives of Poor Ben and wife had not been monotonous, and still had been pleasantly and happily spent. On taking his seat, he extended most sincere congratulations, to the bride and groom of twenty years.

Following these remarks, came a trio—"Come Holy Spirit," and a soprano solo, "Dare I Tell," by Miss Maggie Tudor. Her excellent rendition showed culture and elicted hearty applause.

The Chairman then introduced Prof. A. C. Deuel, who said that since Rev. Mc.Gaw, had addressed Poor Ben, he would address the audience. He claimed the right to talk to them, as he had directed many of them in the progress of their education. He rejoiced with them in this celebration. He said that the coming of Poor Ben among them, marked an epoch in the history of church and people; that by his teachings and practical examples, they were made better men and women; that he was a man of ability and unspotted character, enjoying the highest esteem of not only the colored people but of all classes and color; that he was one of those men, who achieved greatness and had greatness thrust upon them. The speaker referred to the action of the Sunday-School Convention at Atlanta, and said Poor Ben's action was praise-worthy, and an honor to that gentleman. Prof. Deuel's remarks were eloquent and pleasant to his listeners. He closed with, "Live for God and the race."

A Duet—"No hope beyond" was then sung, and ex-Mayor Brand being present, was called upon, and responded in a neat little speech, going back to the time of slavery, the struggle through the war, their enfranchisement, on up to the present time.

Mr. Samuel Hitt, said he was no speaker, but that he had brought his wife along (the house applauded.) who would say something. He then congratulated the happy couple wishing them many years in which to enjoy similar occasions.

Mrs. Hitt, congratulated herself that she was present. She referred to the Scotch story that had just been related, and said her life had not been monotonous, and she thought there would be a gentle breeze

when she returned home (referring to Mr. Hitt bringing her along to do the speaking.) She then extended her warmest wishes to the husband and wife, and to the people in having so good a pastor.

A. C. Deuel, said it might be going outside the program, but he should like to hear a word from Poor Ben. In response Poor Ben made a few timely and well chosen remarks. Of course his thoughts carried him back twenty years. He gave a short sketch of his marriage, spoke freely when he referred to his wife; that if there was any credit due him, three-fourths of it must be given to Louise; for what he was, was largely due to her; that while he struggled to get an education, she toiled at the wash tub, and kept the wolf from the door; and that he was happy to receive such warm congratulations, as had just been bestowed upon them. He spoke of his love for his wife, and that he loved her now better than he ever did; that he had done all he could to build himself up, so he could help build up his people. He contrasted the present and the past, and as a clincher of the wonderful change in things, politically and socially, said that to-morrow he would read a full account of his china wedding, in the "Daily Union Democrat," and send the glad news to his mother in Pennsylvania. Twenty years ago, said he, "this could, nor would not have been done for any member of my race!

With sincere thanks to all, he took his seat. Then immediately began the heartiest of hand shaking, and congratulatory comments from the large assemblage of guests present; while others waiting an opportunity, had clustered around the tables that were loaded with gifts of china sets, bricabrac, and more substantial ar-

ticles of dress goods, linen, groceries, etc. A line of march was formed later in the evening for the lecture room, where an elegant collation of dainties was served. Here every one seemed particularly happy, and we are of the opinion that every one was happy.

Here is to be noticed how these two natures preserved through twenty long years of toil and hardship, the poetry of love's first passionate illusion. It is this alone, which makes wedlock the seal that confines true affection and prevents it from being a mocking ceremonial, that constitutes the grave of wedded bliss.

We will swiftly and silently pass over a lapse of five years, leaving the record of their failures and successes to be mentioned in other chapters. Without allowing curiosity to lead you to ask what the intervening events were, let us suddenly transport you, Poor Ben and his family from Urbana, to his now spacious residence at Wilberforce, Ohio. Do. I hear old Mother Eve within you ask, "How did he get there?" "The top is not reached by a single bound. He climbed the ladder round by round." Nevertheless, it is Thursday evening, and a merry party of relatives and friends have gathered at the Tawawa Chimney Corner—the home of Poor Ben, to celebrate the twenty-fifth return of their marriage date.

On the verandas, surrounding the house, in halls, dining rooms and parlors could be heard the joyous notes of mirth and laughter. Friends from far and near were there assembled, and the happy bride and groom, though their hair was tinted with silver, fit counterpart, seemed to lift the veil, and look back two and one half decades; when they launched their boat upon the sea of life, with all its hopes; with all its

fears. Around them are gathered their family of six children, who bless their happy home, and season life with peace and joy.

At 9 o'clock the organ sounded the wedding march, and Drs. Johnson and Gaines headed the marriage party, while the family followed into the front parlor, where Bishop Campbell, D.D., LL.D., lead in fervent prayer, after which Bishop Brown performed the ceremony; speaking of his personal knowledge of the family the benefit of holy and happy wedlock, and then pronounced his blessing upon the happy couple. This was followed by congratulations from over one hundred guests.

To place a rough estimate upon the value of the presents received, it would be nearly five hundred dollars.

Among the regrets sent were the following: Comptroller Wm. Lawrence, Hon. J. W. Keifer, Hons. W. G. Deshler and F. L. Sessons, Dr. B. T. Tanner and Prof. Delaney.

We shall give only a short list of the distinguished guests present: Father David Smith in his one hundreth year, Bishops Brown, Tanner, Campbell, Dickerson, Wayman and Shorter; Drs. Johnson and Gaines of Georgia; C. S. Smith, M. D. of Bloomington, Ill.; Johnson and Fitzhugh of Baltimore, Md.; Turner of Washington, D. C.; Beckett of Wilmington, Del.; Profs. Shorter, Hackley, Delaney, Maxwell and wife of Willberforce.

Supper was served at ten o'clock, and the tables fairly groand beneath the weight of all the luxuries of the season. All enjoyed the occasion, amid the shower of wishes that Poor Ben and his amiable wife might see

many more years of useful life; and as the shadows of life grow longer, that their noble life might increase in blessings and honor to their race.

In that large and elegantly appointed home, there were, at least, two happy hearts that swelled with gratitude to the Giver of all good, for home, friends and family. Their little kingdom was twenty-five years old. What a blessed institution the family is, had never presented itself forcibly to them as it did on that anniversary night.

"Every institution of earth has its origin in the family. The State is an aggregation of families; the Church is a large Christain family. Family government was the original model of State authority.

it is a noticeable fact that the head of most families deny themselves, exert themselves and form habits that are of great importance to themselves and to society. They are thus impelled by the fervent desire that their wives and children may not want for the comforts of life; nor be deprived of any endowment of mind culture that money can obtain.

Love is said to be the very life blood of true happiness, what love really is we know not, yet it is such a pleasing mixture of every thing, and nothing, a physio-phsychological mass, that it is found entering into the highest, deepest and purest joys of earth. At its first approach 'tis a mere passion. Then it cultivates the society of sentiment and fancy, and when it reaches the heart, it governs the whole being. It stimulates, purifies, refines and subdues the vilest propensities, lifting the soul nearer its Maker. Real love will reform the drunkard, the gambler, and will prove a fatal antagonist of all natural barbarities. While on the

other hand, love will degrade; it will bring man down from the highest walks of moral and social distinction to a companionship with felons, dumb brutes, or worse, a suicidal death.

In the present time there is little love like that of E. Allen Poe; none like that of the Irish lover, whose pleadings inspired Moore to write, "Come Rest in this Bosom." We find more of Will Carleton's Betsey and Caleb's, who do not make up again, scattered over the world like dead leaves of autumn. Autumnal wrecks from out of whose debris, there never springs a true blossom for the perpetual spring of love. Bickerings and separations; like consumption, run in the family for many generations.

This signifies strongly that the essential design of courtship is to grant opportunity. Knowing each other, a congenial courtship, succeeding a mutual love, ever makes a happy marriage.

Many to day are aiming to marry for policy, money, convenience, beauty, ability, social standing, and every other motive but love. It is a rare treat now, to hear a girl say, I married for love. She who marries money without the love of the man, will soon find herself moneyless and manless. She who marries the love of the man without the money, will ever know that she is both manned and moneyed.

In the instance of the love, courtship and the marriage of the couple which now absorbs our attention, the little blind, winged god was at the head of their kingdom twenty-five years ago, and after the elapse of this period, his long reign had made a little despot of him, and he had crowned and enthroned himself as supreme monarch of the kindom of Poor Ben and

Louise, and all their subjects. Here he intends to prevent all dissensions, keep back invading enemies, and preserve them in their marriage state, in a healthful, invigorating condition, so that with prudence, foresight and intuition he may still be their ruler for a longer term of years.

A soul union produces a marriage like that of Poor Ben's, and insures both happiness and prosperity.

Chapter XIII.

THE Y. M. C. A.

DOUBTLESS many of our readers would like to know something more of the Young Men's Christian Association. That such an organization exists, this all know. But what is it? What does it do with and for young men? Is it a new church? How old is it? Who was its founder? Is it Catholic or Protestant?

Some good motive led to the establishment of church boards of missions. When churches were weak, each denomination could not support a home nor a foreign missionary. The field of labor was a great one, and the means of supporting laborers, small. This called for a combined fund from all churches, and all worked in harmony for the common good. Precisely the same causes led to the establishment of societies for the publication and distribution of tracts and of the bible, and for work among the freedmen, seamen and other classes of people.

Thirty-five years ago, it seemed to many thoughtful observers, in our large cities, that an organization was needed whose special work should be to labor for and among the young men. This class was becoming as distinctive as that of seamen or foreigners.

Some of these men go into large cities with fixed re-

ligious principles; others have had religious training and go to respect the Sabbath and the church; others go without fixed principles of any kind, and these fall willing victims to vice and folly.

In Cincinnati, Ohio, on the 14th of October, 1848, seven young men, who in the records call themselves, "The Male Teachers of the Central Union Sabbath-School," organized the "Young Men's Society of Religious Inquiry." The original members were all connected with one church, but the society was formed upon union principles, as is shown by the fact, that at the next meeting three additional members were elected, who were from different churches and denominations.

In April, 1849, rooms were rented in the Franklin Building, on the southwest corner of Longworth and Vine streets, in which was established a library and reading room.

The society had a gradual and substantial growth until it became an acknowledged power for good in the community. This growth was attained through persevering struggles and determination to succeed. Often the meetings were very small, and sometimes the society was without a place of meeting. In one instance at least, the members gathered on the sidewalk in front of the church in which they hoped to find shelter.

Among the most active workers of those early days, were Samuel Lowry, Jr., S. J. Broadwell and John H. Cheever.

These rooms rented in the Franklin Building, served them for more than a score of years; and the only progress was that they crossed the street, and in 1870, occupied two floors instead of one.

In February of 1853, they became connected with sister associations which had sprung up throughout the country, and then added to their names the words "Young Men's Christian Union." This was a verbal change only, and did not signify any alteration of spirit or plan, but it was intended to assimilate its phraseology to the terms more generally in use.

Its usefulness continued until after the formation of the "United States Christian Commission," by the National Convention of the "Y. M. C. A," when many of its active members becoming interested in the work of the Commission, the meetings and efforts of the Association were suspended for a few years.

In 1865, almost entirely through the exertions of Mr. W. J. Breed, the organization was revived. At that time he was elected president, and through his personal indefatigable attention to the details of the work, and his large liberality in pecuniary assistance, the institution grew rapidly in favor with the people, and entered upon a career of marked success.

In the autumn of 1867, a state association was organized, which held its fourth annual session in Cincinnati. In a discussion, as to the best means of securing buildings, the enthusiam became so great that a practical solution of the problem was given in the form of a contribution of more than ten thousand dollars as a nucleus for the building fund of the Cincinnati Association.

The above facts are culled from a short history of the origin of the "Y. M. C. A." by one of its ex-presidents, H. Thane Miller.

This organization has its constitution and by-laws. Its object is to improve the spiritual, mental, moral, soci-

al and physical condition of young men, by the support and maintenance of lectures, libraries, reading-rooms, social and religious meetings, and other such means as may conduce the accomplishment of those objects, not contrary to the teaching of the bible.

The various departments or the services of the Y. M. C. A. are as follows: Committees on Hospital, Jail, U. S. Barracks, Strangers' Home, City Workhouse; by whom Monday prayer meetings, Sabbath evening services, bible classes etc. are held. At the rooms, free lectures, concerts, laymens' institutes, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and new years' dinners are given. There are also committees on Lyceum, Music, Employment, Reception, Prayer meetings, Open Air Services, Bible Class, Lectures, City and County Jails, and on Station Houses.

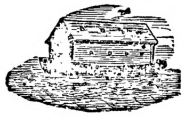
Poor Ben became an active member of the Y. M. C. A. while residing in Toledo, Ohio, in 1870. He was sent, a year later, as a delegate to the International Association, which convened in Washington, D. C., June, 1871. Before the session closed, the entire body visited the White House, and were received by Pres. Grant, and, before leaving the reception room, made its walls ring with that favorite hymn, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

The delegates also visited the tomb of Washington, at Mt. Vernon. This was the first time Poor Ben had viewed the sacred resting place of the ashes of our country's father.

His theme of discourse at this convention was "The stand the Y. M. C. A. takes in relation to the colored young men." His argument was ably put and well received.

He was again sent as a delegate to the State Convention of Ohio, in 1872.

In 1880 Poor Ben was appointed one of the speakers at the State Convention of the Y. M. C. A., which was held at Zanesville, Ohio, and delivered the address in response to the address of welcome. During this session he was deputized to bear the fraternal greetings to the London, England, Association of the Y. M. C. A. When the Y. M. C. A. met at St. Paris, Ohio, Poor Ben was appointed to deliver the annual address. This was the first instance in which a man of color had ever filled this position on the program in the history of the Association. He also conducted the meeting of the Y. M. C. A. which met at the railroad depot of Columbus, Ohio.



Chapter XIV.

IN BUSINESS.

BUSINESS is defined as a calling or profession. It generally relates in some way to trade; yet is just as appropriate a term to use in designating any regular occupation.

Wherever mankind exists and is capable of carrying on trade of various kinds and engaging in commerce, there may be found a high state of civilization. The exchange of products between nations is one of earth's greatest benefits, inasmuch as it banishes national feeling of bitterness, does away with local prejudices, makes each branch of the human family feel its dependency upon the other branches, and creates ties of interest and good will.

Our mechanical, mercantile, and agricultural interests are studied with as much earnestness by the European and Asiatic, as we study theirs. Why? Because we are each dependent on the other.

Truth and justice are the foundation of all legitimate trade and commerce, and such business showers wealth on every race variety that constitute a nation.

When the day dawns, in which the black man shall belong to the throng of bankers, merchants, druggists, grocers, doctors, lawyers, hotel proprietors, tradesmen of various kinds, and be patronized by all, without

evincing any spirit of national antipathy —it will be a glorious one for our nation.

At present we are denied the opportunity of entering into many callings or trades; but there is a brighter outlook for the young men of to-day than twenty five years ago, when Poor Ben was young.

He nevertheless formed business habits when quite young. He did all the marketing and shopping for his mother and thus learned to drive a good bargain

It also fell to his lot, to do all the steward's trading for the various boats, on which he was employed. This business tact cultivated in boyhood, had a tendency to fit him for the monetary positions of after life.

At that date good and rapid penmen of color were rare, and great were the demands made upon the few to transact business, draw up notes, bills and other documents, in correct legal form. Poor Ben found plenty of gratis work to do in this direction, to say nothing of the numerous letters from the boys in blue, to be read and answered, for the dear ones at home. All this made him quite familiar with written matter so essential to the vocabulary of every business man. He possessed nearly all those traits needed to make an active and successful tradesman; but his future was to be a different calling. He had not, in 1864, entered into his life work.

At the above date, he entered the office of James M. Abrams, a dentist, as an apprentice, and completed the course; and for some time worked at mechanical and practical dentistry He could not only pull down but could build up that which had become dilapidated He made a tooth and located it in his teacher's—Dr.

Abram's mouth. Hence, as a tooth carpenter Poor Ben was a success.

While studying in the profession, he carefully examined the disease of the antrum. He found a case reported by a French physician. Poor Ben, had an uncle who lived in the country, and was suffering from a similar affection. After sending for his uncle and examining it closely, Poor Ben thought he would try his skill on what the other dentists had given up without understanding or even giving relief.

He first extracted a tooth, bored a hole into the base of the antrum, which gave immediate relief; and took from the cavity a gill or more of prurient matter. This was the first cessation of pain the patient had felt for months. Placing a silver tube into the opening he carefully washed the cavity with arnica tincture, and the patient returned home a well and happy man, and has never felt a pain from the same cause, up to the present date—1889.

Shortly after this Poor Ben received his title of Dr. for the first time. He did not practise long, it not being lucrative enough to support him.

Doubtless it would be well here to speak of a business enterprise started some years ago, of which Poor Ben was the originator, assisted by Ludlow Apjones, of Ohio.

Africa extends from thirty-five degrees south to thirty-nine degrees north, five thousand miles; and from Cape Verde to Cape Guardafui, in distance some three thousand miles from east to west. While there are table-lands and vast lake regions, and water-soaked plains, and other peculiar formations in given localities, we may say, in general, it is diversi-

fied as are other continents. Mountains rear their rugged heads, and conceal in their vast breasts metals and minerals, which God had fore-ordained from the beginning of the world for the use of man. Rivers form natural high ways, and refresh the adjacent countries with their moisture. Extensive forests cover whole countries, protect them from the heat of the sun, and are ready to be used for buildings, ship-timber, dye-woods, and the thousand applications of the civilization which will require their use.

In all Africa, grains and fruits of all kinds furnish perpetual crops, and cotton and other cloth-producing trees and plants are perennial.

In the infancy of the human race, Africa boasted of being the most civilized of those times, and the justness of its claims is attested by monuments which are extant in our day, and will still look down on unnumbered centuries to come. The queen of Sheba, in Solomon's time, came from the South as the representative of many subjects, princes and princesses, who would rank as equals in beauty and wisdom, with modern sovereigns. In Africa, however, as in Europe, there came the dark ages, and for centuries progress was stayed, devastation held sway, and the darkness of ignorance settled like a pall over that glorious continent. So it is that God punishes those who depart from his law, and are disobedient to his commands; for bad government is as much the result of a violation of God's moral law, as throwing one's self from a cliff is a violation of a law of nature; the fatality of both is sure. The slave system has been the curse of Africa. It is only to-day that the continent is beginning to shake off the incubus.

The power of steam is beginning to be felt in the most benighted regions. The rapid communication with the centers of thought and refinement, which steam and electricity make possible, and which commerce enforces will, in the course of a few generations bring the most barbarous of people up to the level of the most progressive, or else they will melt away as the frosts of morning before the rising sun. While tribes of other races will disappear before advancing civilization, it is unlikely that the Negro as a race, will do so, although such a fate has been predicted for him more than once. Facts are constantly refuting such a possibility. The question for them to solve is how to take advantage of their opportunities, so as to compete with other people in intellectual progress, and how to reap commercial rewards, and to save their own continent from the spoiler, who even now is taking possession of their best and fairest lands, and using the inhabitants thereof as hewers of wood and drawers of water. On the railroads of Africa they should be conductors instead of track hands. On the steamers they should be captains instead of coal heavers. And from their pulpits, Africans should preach, as in former times the pure word of God, and lead their people up to Christian civilization, instead of hearing it only from foreign lips. In a word, we would say, "As God gave Africa to the Negro, so by His help they should keep it."

At present, the half-caste Arabs of Zanzibar, the Mahomedans of Egypt, the French, the Italians, he Portuguese, English, and Dutch are partitioning Africa among themselves, and quarelling over it, as so many dogs over a carcass in their midst.

This they are better enabled to do by knowledge of the art of war, and the modern inventions and capital at their command. The Africans themselves, the Negroes in America, the friends of liberty and equality everywhere should cry out to stop this shameful phase of human cruelty and avarice. Africa should belong to the Africans, and foreigners should benefit from it only by fair exchange. The Republic of Liberia, founded by emancipated people of America, offers the only bright spot on the dark picture. It should be protected and encouraged by the home government and its influence greatly extended. In addition, the United States is bound to afford protection to Americans, Negro or others, who may engage in trade and the development of the country, in the most distant regions.

Americans are entitled to protection and redress by the government in any part of the world. It is for that we pay taxes, and we can claim it. There is not an official civil, military, or naval—that does not draw his pay in part from every tax payer.

That the trade of Africa is valuable, it is only necessary to call attention to the fact that white firms in Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston have made fortunes in that trade, while it is yet undeveloped; and that English steamers pass along the west coast, as far as Capetown, every week.

No traveler, who has written of Africa, has failed to draw enchanting pictures of the scenery, and the traits of nobility of the inhabitants. The accounts of Bruce of the land and people north of the Equator, on the Benue river, is only equaled by Cameron in his recent extravagant praise of the regions of the Manganjas in the south.

It is a notorious fact that the decendants of the African race in America are debarred from promotion in business, and are forced, by the spirit of caste, to labor in menial employment, without any present expectation of bettering their condition. Their pay is kept at a low figure, thus preventing the respect which is usually paid to men of wealth.

Surely, out of so great a nation, such as the colored people of the United States really are, there should be some who should have the benefit of the highest education, and of the best business facilities. Of all the citizens of different races, of which this country is composed, it is wrong that they alone should be oppressed.

The effect of the establishment of a great company, organized in the interest of the colored people, would not only give them opportunities, in the employments offered by the company, such as commanders of ships, and agents and traders at the posts; but it would be like a light house, to guide them in the way of national greatness, by organization and industry.

The influence of the company in Africa would open the way for vast numbers of teachers and preachers among the natives, and the increase and direction of trade, would furnish employment by which men could earn wealth, and return to elevate their families and increase the resources of our own country. Africa presents the aspect of super-abundant resources undeveloped. "The fields are ripe for the harvest, but the laborers are few." The first steamship crossed the Atlantic in 1835, and other continents have gained the impetus created by the rapidity of transit. Africa is now in the path of this wave of progression. It will

not be many years before Cairo, and Capetown and Monrovia, and Gondar, will be united by railway and telegraph. The interest which it has proposed to have Americans take in the future development of those regions is not unreasonable. The capital $5,000,000, is not large in consideration of the possibilities of the future, and yet it is thought that it will be sufficient to open the way fairly for innumerable enterprises, and to return good results to its stock holders.

The act of incorporation of the African Company was as follows:

I. Know all men by these presents that Ludlow Apjones, W. B. Arnett, Solomon Blackburn, Andrew J. DeHart, A. A. Brasher, Lewis Schwab, Joseph S. Shaw, Gustar Stifer, Frank V. Cousins, J. B. Stansberry, and George Parker have associated themselves together, and, by this instrument. do hereby become incorporated, in accordance with the laws of the state of Kentucky and the constition and laws of the United States, as the African Company.

II. The object of the African Company is to engage in trade and commercial transactions in Africa, and operations connected therewith.

III. The capital stock of the company shall be five millions of dollars ($5.000,000), divided into fifty thousand shares (50,000) shares of one hundred dollars ($100) each, payable in successive monthly instalments of ten dollars ($10.)

IV. The principal office of the company shall be in Covington, Ky., where the council meeting of the stock holders shall be held on the second Monday in January of each year, for the election of eleven directors, who shall direct all the business of the company du-

ring the year for which they shall be elected; and they shall have power to fill vacancies in their number, caused by death, resignation, or otherwise. The Board of Directors may have other offices for the transaction of the business of the company, in Africa or elsewhere. They shall be subject to such rules as they may adopt, approved by the stockholders. From their number, they shall elect, immediately after their own election, a president, a vice-president, a secretary, and also a treasurer, who shall give bonds for the security of the funds which may come into his possession, in such sum as may be set by the Board of Directors.

Any director may be impeached and dismissed by a majority of the votes of the stockholders at a meeting called for that purpose. Stockholders may vote by proxy.

The stockholders may adopt such rules and by-laws for their guidance as from time to time they may deem proper. The officers chosen by the Board of Directors shall be *ex-officio* officers of the company.

V. The incorporators shall, after incorporation, elect a board of directors to serve until a special meeting of the stockholders is called for the purpose of electing a board of directors, who, in turn, shall serve until the first regular annual meeting of the company.

VI. Members of the company may at any time withdraw by sale and transfer of their stock, or by its surrender to the company, either without consideration or at its market value, if the company choose to purchase.

VII. The private property of the stockholders shall not be subject to the debts of the company.

VIII. The indebtedness of the company shall never

exceed two-thirds of the amount of the capital stock of the company,

IX. The shares of the stock shall be transferable only on the books of the company by the holders in person or by attorney. The holders of shares of stock shall be entitled to a land warrant for one hundred acres of land, from the property purchased by the company, for each share held; the said warrants to be transferable by endorsement and record on the books of the company kept for that purpose.

X. The duration of the company shall be until the first day of January, 1901., A. D., with the privilege of renewal for twenty-five years, according to law, and again and again, for like periods, in the direction of the company unless sooner dissolved by a majority of the votes of the stockholders.

In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands and seals, on the day and date accompanying our names severally, April 5, 1876,

Ludlow Adjones,	(SEAL)
W. B. Arnett	(SEAL)
Solomon Blackburn,	(SEAL)
Andrew J. DeHart,	(SEAL)
A. A. Brasher,	(SEAL)
Lewis Schwab,	(SEAD)
Joseph S. Shaw,	(SEAL)
Gustar Stifer,	(SEAL)
Frank J. Cousins,	(SEAL)
J. B. Stansberry,	(SEAL)
George Parker,	(SEAL)

State of Kentucky, Kenton County,

A certified copy of the act of incorporation of the African Company, lodged in this office for record. In

testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand as clerk of the Kenton County Court, and affixed the seal of the said court, at my office, in Covington, Kentucky, (SEAL) this April 26, 1876.

J. L. BRISTON, Clerk."

The inception of the company appeared in the following circular letter:

"SIR:—

The project of a company of Americans to take commercial interest in Africa has been mooted. There are many reasons why Americans should be first, instead of last, in taking advantage of the opportunities offered by such a vast continent, embracing as it does one quarter of the habitable globe. The disposition of the American people has made them renowned as navigators and explorers. They are always ready to seek in distant places for resources not found in their own land. Neither frigid nor torrid zone has stayed them in their search for wealth. The development of our own country in times past was only equaled by our commercial enterprise, and foresight abroad.

But the incubus of the debt created during the war against the slave holders, and the loss of trading ships, has thrown this country far behind in the race for national aggrandisement, outside of the United States.

Every enterprise there which seems to open new fields to any class of Americans, should be encouraged.

The continent of Africa is rich in all the productions of nature, necessary for the use of man; grains, fruits and vegetables; animals, and materials for making cloth, the precious stones and useful metals. It has water communication internal and lateral; and it

holds a population which could be developed to take rank with the cultured people of any part of the globe.

Other nations, have long before this, acquired territory in Africa of immense extent, and year by year, are extending their sway further toward the interior. There are already one million whites in South Africa, and the gold and gold fields are attracting crowds of immigrants. Europeans are domesticated on all the shores of Africa, and explorers crossing even the equatorial regions are apparently as long-lived as if they had remained at home.

The culture of cotton, rice, and sugar-cane, and the mining and forging of metals, would enable our colored people to become as rich in that continent, as the self-made men among us.

Intelligence, wealth and enterprise will soon command respect for a people, whether they be black or white. There is now a chance for our colored men to gain the respect and admiration, not only of the whites of this country, but of all other nations. They have only to say that slavery shall cease to exist, and it will perish from the face of the earth. They are strong enough to accomplish it, backed as they would be by the whole country. The whites of this country are anxious to make money, and the colored race here can take them into their pay to gain their ends, just as the Japanese have done in hiring foreigners to perfect systems of improvement, to drill their troops, and furnish them with ships, locomotives and machinery. The united service of the two races in money making enterprise, would do more than any thing else to dissipate prejudice on both sides.

Should this company be pushed to success without

their aid, it will be little to the credit of the colored men of America.

It is not to their credit that slavery still exists in Cuba, and Africa. The English are freeing Africa, not Americans of either color. While they are thus carrying civilization and religion to the southern part of Africa, at is no less true that they are erecting a state which, in time, will equal the mother country in population, wealth and resources. They are repeating their program of India, Australia, and Canada.

Many of both races white and colored, in this country, are it this time out of employment, and the avenues to promotion, in business are filled to such an extent that an abundance of the best material is only waiting for opportunity to engage in anything which promises them employment. This state of affairs is likely to continue.

Among colored people in this country the few professions open to them are over-crowded, and even the most intelligent among them are compelled to engage occupations little suited to their tastes or abilities.

The colored people of this country have developed the very highest qualifications of civilized life. They are intelligent, brave, religious in thought, domestic in habit and easily organized. Opportunity only is wanting for them to become a distinguished people. They are twice as numerous as the thirteen colonies, at the time of the Revolution, twice as numerous as the Egyptians, and are capable of accomplishing as great results as either, if their attention is directed to the continent of Africa.

Why should Americans neglect fair prospects, such as are there offered, and especially our colored citizens,

fitted by nature and education to carry civilization and christianity over so vast a field? The missionary should go where commerce makes the way easy, and missions thus prepared to be self-sustaining.

Your own knowledge will give you facts for consideration in connection with this matter. The proposition is to organize a company, under the laws of Kentucky and the constitution and laws of the United States, to trade in Africa; to secure trading-posts and concessions, to open new avenues of trade, and to use the means of the company, so formed, to establis steam lines, or to build railroads, or to foster the civilization of profitable products, and to act in such a manner in Africa as to make the company rich and strong, and to carry out the desires of the American people in that direction, and to enhance the value of the stock of the African company in every way possible. The proposed amount of capital is set at five millions of dollars, in shares of one hundred dollars, each share to entitle the holder to a land warrant for a hundred acres of land; the holders of shares to have the preference in the employment and nomination to offices under the company.

The scheme is by no means a project of colonization, but simply a business arrangement, by which money can be made, by some energetic and capable colored people, without detriment to their compatroits, and with benefit to the natives of Africa. We would be glad to hear from you, in regard to its feasibility and desirability at your convenience.

Respectfully,

Ludlow Apjones.

To this circular letter, numerous favorable responses were received, recommending the organization of the company as suggested. Citizens of Cincinnati and Covington becoming incorporators.

Chapter XV.

POLITICAL CAREER.

THE biography of a great or good man is rarely, if ever, well executed. To portrait a life fully and truthfully, the portrait must be drawn by one who has lived through the same scenes political, social and religious, and who has been closely associated with the subject he attempts to set forth. Yet, those who have spent a life time with another do not know how to write about him. His faults will all be either hiden by his good qualities, or made the dominant feature. A clearly written biography is, however, equivalent to a sermon; for it teaches the many important lessons that the masses need; it is a guide, a help, and an incentive to the reader; it teaches noble living, and thinking; it helps to energetic action; it is needed for individual good, and the good of the world.

In the political world, sometimes a single anecdote connected with a man becomes famous, and opens up his character; and the politician being anatomically formed, often a single speech, or sentiment or ceed, enables the writer to construct a political skeleton, which the subject himself must complete, beautify and immortalize with muscles, sinew, nerve, blood, flesh and soul of his eloquence, doctrine, vigor, nas-

sive intellect, irresistible force of magnetism, and grand noble achievements.

No language will better delineate the sentiments of the subject of this work, than that given by Webster, when he expressed John Adams' love for independence. Born in an age of slavery, and barbarism, living in a time when the cries for liberty and justice were continuous and heart-rending; when heroic endurance, high examples of noble daring and deeds of valor, were enacted, such as were never exhibited before in the history of the world, Poor Ben could not be otherwise than patriotic. His natural heroism became materialized. His love of right and race ambition, his grit, his natural and acquired abilities. taken together with those necessary ingredients found in all men, that is, some of the angel, some of the beast, some of the God, and some of the devil,—all these were thrust into his heart, brain and backbone, and formed the physical substance of the political orator, Ben.

All these elements were closely combined in him, and the "spirit of the age" with its many changes of code and statutes, have acted like skilled sculptors on marble; so that to-day, if celebrity and notoriety be his, they are due not more to the man himself, than to the horrors of slavery, rebellion, injustice, prejudice and caste that have pervaded the atmosphere in which he has lived.

The voice of the press has spoken loudly of his telling influence, and of his instructive, logical and stirring eloquence. The following are extracts from some of the leading papers of his state:

During the campaign of 1872, August 24, "TOLEDO BLADE" says,

"At the close of Governor Noyes' address, the band struck up a national air, and notwithstanding the skill with which they discoursed the music, the audience shouted as with one voice for Poor Ben, who came forward and furnished a fitting sequel to the eloquent speech of the Governor. His speech was replete with wit, logic and stirring appeal. He gave an illustration of the feeling manifested everywhere by the colored people in the interest of the party which gave them their freedom, and all the franchises of citizenship. When he finished, loud calls were made for J. Madison Bell, the orator and poet, who came forward and made a spirited and quickening appeal. Poor Ben was again called out, and for twenty minutes kept the hall in a continuous shout of laughter and applause. Thus closed the first full day in Toledo, and we are justly proud of this good beginning."

"TOLEDO DEMOCRAT," of July 27, 1872., in speaking of the congressional covention says:

"Poor Ben, the colored delegate, read in a clear, sonorious voice, enunciating and pronouncing each word distinctly, the following report of the committee on resolutions:

Rosolved: That the platform of principles adopted by the National Republican Convention, which was held in the City of Philadelphia, June 5, 1872, is fully and unequivocally endorsed and adopted by the Republicans of the Sixth Congressional district of Ohio.

Resolved: That the success of the principles of the National Republican party, and the incorporation of these in the very frame work of government, is essential to the peace and prosperity of the great Nation.

Resolved: That we heartily endorse the wise, just,

humane, and economical administration of Pres. U. S. Grant.

Resolved: That we will use all honorable means to secure the election of General U. S. Grant, and the Hon. Henry Wilson to the presidency and vice-presidency of the United States.

Resolved: That we do most earnestly appeal to the honor and patriotism of the voters of the Sixth Congressional district to support the ticket nominated by the State Republican Convention, which met in Columbus, March, last.

Resolved: That we use all honorable means to defeat the so-called Liberal Republican and semi Democratic and Lost Cause candidate for presidency of the United States, Horace Greely; and we warn all honest men not to be deceived by any cry of civil service reform, nepotism, tyrany, or centralization, for it is only the despair of disappointed politicians, hungry Democrats, and men whom the people elected to attend to their own business."

"KENTON REPUBLICAN," of Sept. 19, 1972, say:

"The procession of those on foot, on horseback and in wagons, was a large one. Some of our citizens assert that Poor Ben made the most thoroughly logical and comprehensive speech made here during the campaign.

One of the points made by Poor Ben, in his address at the fair grounds, on Thursday against the Democrats was this: 'Ask us the colored voters of the United States, to vote the Democratic party back into power, that party that lived and flourished on the unpaid labor of four millions of people, that party that had no regard for the sacred ties of marriage, that for pal-

try gold separated husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sisters; that party that sold in the market the virtue of women to the highest bidder. That party asks us for our votes, before we are done hunting our kindred scattered by them over this broad land! We will never give them our votes! No, never!

In the TOLEDO COMMERCIAL, of September 1872, was given the appointments made by the Central Republican Committee of speakers. Prominent among the names of the following noted men and able orators, was the name of Poor Ben, Col. J. R. Swigart, Gen. J. A. Hall of Maine, Gen. John Beatly, Gen. James A. Garfield, our lamented president; Hon. J. A. Bingham, Hon. Wm. Kraus, Hon. J. W. Torney; Hon. B. F. Wade and others.

During the campaign of the State of Ohio 1874, the question of civil rights was discussed in mass meeting at White's Hall. This being the first purely colored political meeting in the history of Toledo was one of more than ordinary interest. The audience was large and manifested an unflagging interest.

The speakers of the evening were J. M. Bell, J. H. Lewis, W. R. Revels and Poor Ben. The following is a report and an editorial as taken from the "TOLEDO DAILY COMMERCIAL:"

"The——, Poor Ben of Cincinnati was introduced, who spoke substantially as follows:

'Ladies and gentelmen, and by the grace of the Republican party, and fellow-citizens, I feel a diffidence in coming before you to try to say something that may enlighten you in regard to the present issue; for the great boon of freedom, it seems to me, gives a man not only life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but al-

so devolves upon him certain duties which cannot be neglected." He called attention to the vast extent, wonderful resources, and great interest involved of this country, and said in considering these, it became a voter's solemn duty to consider before exercising a right by which the fortunes of such important measures were decided. "There are two parties asking every one to support them next Tuesday; the Republican party on the one side, and the Democratic party on the other. Each had a right to ask for votes, and the speaker had a right, individually, to express the claims of his party.

What had the Democratic party done for the citizens of Lucas county which should induce them to vote for it? What had it done for the white race? Some people claim that we should not inquire into the past history of a party in discussing its claims for public favor. Let us look at the matter in the light of a business transaction. Suppose two men should apply to a merchant for a position as his cashier, one of whom refuses to give reference, and the other of whom gave them. Which would be employed? Just so now. We want to know the record of the Democratic party in the past, in order that we may know whether to trust it in the future.

During the long period of the war the Republican party was the friend of the colored man. It demands justice for all, and equality before the law. The Democratic, on the other hand, had possession of the government for nearly a hundred years, during which time it denied the black man the right of existing, kept him ragged and ignorant, and in bondage; it was also opposed to the free action of the white man. One

of its cardinal principles was that the normal condition of every foot of land, throughout the country, was that of slavery. In other words, that every gun in the army, every plank in the ships of the navy, was dedicated to the propagation of slavery.' [A voice.] 'What do you mean by normal condition?' The speaker became euthusiastic. 'I mean that first condition in history of every man and of every one of God's creatures in which they longed for liberty. [Cheers.] When it was in power, the Democratic party opposed free speach, and a free press in favor of freedom. The party was like the Irishman, it didn't want justice, but it wanted mercy. It desired that the mantle of charity be thrown over its past career."

Poor Ben then turned to his colored hearers and in a peculiarly earnest, but eccentric way, portrayed to them their suffering while in slavery, and told them if they wanted to put the party in power which caused their sufferings, to vote next Tuesday for the Democratic party. The speaker admitted that there were scalawags in fhe Republican party, men who entered in hope of power and place, and for personal gain, and the moment they were hauled out of power, that moment they repudiated the party. He reviewed Ashley's course in a scathing manner; saying that 'after he had been turned out of Congress, out of an office in the west, he came baek here. He went down to the Cincinnati Liberal Convention, and claimed that, like Paul, while on the way, the spirit of the Lord entered his soul. He was converted, and like the Methodist, grew in grace. He stood like Peter of old before the Democratic party warming himself. But when the showers of tears fall at the election, he didn't know

where he would go. When the speaker saw Mr. Ashley in the congress of the United States championing the thirteenth amendment, he thought him to be the noblest Roman of them all; but he had fallen. He went back on his entire record, and shouted with the loudest Democratic brawler for a white man's government. This was but natural, and the only thing to be expected of that kind of men."

One of those Liberal speakers with whom Mr. Ashley is now associated, had said that the movement was for peace; was to bring back into the halls of Congress, and place in power those gigantic rebel brains that headed the rebellion. The speaker agreed with him that it was what a Democratic victory meant, nothing more than a return to power of the southern rebels. He appealed to his audience to say whether they wanted such men in power. It was rebel brains behind guns that created such havoc on many a bloody battle field. It was rebel brains that originated the hellish cruelties of Andersonville; it was rebel brains that caused the sufferings at Libby Prison; it was rebel brains that left the whole country, from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, strewn with the bones of the best young men in the land; it was rebel brains that directed the arms, that wielded the lash, which scouraged the backs of the colored race, for so many weary years; and if his hearers wantcd any more of rebel brains, they could go and vote the Democratic ticket next Tuesday.

Poor Ben then took up the question of civil rights and discussed it at length, showing the fallicies of the Democratic assertions in a striking and original manner, and illustrating his points by amusing and tell-

ing anecdotes. 'The great Democratic bugaboo was 'nigger equality.' What of it, if there was? The colored children demanded an education in common with those of our white fellow citizens. Let the white and the black boy have equal opportunities, and the one that is superior in intellect, be he white or black, take the first rank. This is the policy of the Republican party; that of the Democratic party is to hold back the black boy and urge forward his white competitor. The speakers of the party asserted that if there were common schools, soon their daughters would be married to 'big black buck niggers, and that there would be social equality.'

There had been none of that social trouble in Toledo when the Negro and the white had attended the same school. But thanks to the Democratic policy, they were provided with enough of the white color without going out of their own race to marry; they had the octoroon, and they could boast that the best Democratic blood of the land flowed in their veins, too. As to the question of hotels, the colored man asked simply for the privilege of buying a meal of vituals when traveling, the same as any other man, and he did not propose to be shoved with his wife and daughters into smoking and baggage cares, or into the gallery of the theaters. The question of the finances of the government under the Democratic and Republican rule was taken up, and the superiority of the Republican monetary system clearly set forth. The Democrats grumble a great deal about national banks, although they had not offered any thing superior to them. As for himself, he preferred a currency as sound as ours was during the panic to one like that in vogue

in Democratic days, when, should you go five hundred miles from the place of issue of a bank note, it would be nearly worthless.

Poor Ben closed with an earnest appeal to his colored brethren not to forget the price of blood at which their liberty had been bought, and to vote for the party which had so nobly and steadfastly stood by them in the hours of need, uttering a prayer that in the results of the election, God would vouch safe to every man and all the nations, life liberty and the pursuit of happiness. He was rewarded with a hearty round. applause.

The following editorial appeared in the "TOLEDO DAILY," of 1874:

White's hall, last night, furnished testimony to the fitness of the colored race for citizens, which must have challenged the attention of every considerate man present. Without undertaking to make comparisons, which under the most favorable circumstances, are apt to be odious, it is safe to say that the hall, had it a tongue, could tell of political assemblages of lighter hue, which, in neither speakers nor audience would excell in character or intelligence, the one referred to. It would no doubt be revolting to Democratic sensibilities, for us to compare the speech of Poor Ben, on this occasion, with that of the Chief Magistrate of the State of Ohio on Tuesday night, but the truth could only be stated, by saying, that in the elements of a calm, dispassionate and logical presentation of public issues, the colored speaker had the advantage of his white excellency. The speech of the former was free from the bitterness of spirit, violence of language, and recklessness of statement, which marked the harangue of the latter. Assuming that it was the intellect and the

judgement of his hearers, rather than their passions that were to be reached. Poor Ben addressed himself to these, and with an effect which none failed to observe; while Gov. Allen, from first to last, assumed that his auditors were incapable of appreciating facts or argument, and could be reached only through the medium common to the ignorant and the vicious.

What we have thus said of Poor Ben's remarks, applies also to those of the other speakers. Each of them seemed to be imbued with a sense of the importance of the occasion, especially in its bearing upon their race. Accepting the facts, that colored citizens are on trial before the jury of the world, they sought so to present to that class, their duties and obligations, as to impress them with the gravity of their responsibility. In this, they succeeded to a great degree Each speaker labored to show not only what should be the aim of the colored people, but how they may best attain such end. Believing the party which gave liberty and the ballot to the colored race to be the most reliable friends of that race, they did not hesitate to say so, and to urge upon them their duty of standing by those, who alone stood by them. Unable to see how the colored men's rights are to be safe in the hands of the party which from first to last has denied them all rights, these speakers warned their race against the fatal mistake of trusting to such dependence.

Who will say that in this they have not rights? The base statement of the relations of the two political parties to the colored people is an urgent protest against the latter's favoring Democratic ascension.

There is one view of this subject, which the colored people at the North should not lose sight of. They, by

virtue of Republican predominance here, are yet free to act, and especially to vote, according to their own judgement and desire; a privilege not allowed to their fellows in many of the southern states, where the Democratic party predominates. The facts given else where in regard to the recent election in Georgia, show how the colored race fares where the Democratic party is in power. In all the county of Richmond, with a total colored registration of three thousand voters, but one hundred Republicans votes were cast, while the white leagues polled within one hundred and fifty of their full vote, in the severe contest of 1868. No terrorism, such as that which silenced the voices of 2900 colored freemen in Richmond, has yet appeared to prevent the colored citizens of Ohio from appearing at the polls; but once let the power in Ohio be placed in the hands of the party that holds power in Georgia, and where would be the difference in the two cases? It will be borne in mind, that in all the North, not a single Democratic Convention has denounced the white league conspiracy against personal rights and public liberty.

The Democracy of the North now stands by that disloyal and atrocious organization, as they did by the same rebels when in arms for the overthrow of the Union. How then can any colored man make up his mind to vote for a Democratic candidate, whether northern or southern? No colored man in Georgia, Louisiana, or any other southern state, is safe in voting any other than the Democratic ticket, and consequently the mass of that race refuses to vote at all. Shall the colored people of the North voluntarily vote to endorse and give effect to what so sorely oppresses and threatens their friends in the South? To vote for Frank

H. Hurd or the Democratic ticket, generally is to do this very thing."

In every campaign, and wherever the State Committee assigned Poor Ben to address the Republican party, he would go inspired with a knowledge of the deep and general interest felt in the issue of the campaign. Genuine and hearty enthusiasm always pervaded the hosts who greeted him. When he saw and heard such noble veterans as Gov. Noyes, and general Swayne, both crippled in battle for the right, when he stood on the same platform with these men who knew what the Union cost, who forever bear with them the marks of rebel malignity, and the memory of brave blood that purchased the nation's existence, he needed no other incentive to duty. These events had sufficient power to force words from the heart, and send them to the hearts of his hearers. His speeches were replete with wit, logic and stirring appeal, abounding in illustrations of the feeling manifested everywhere by the colored race, in the interest of the party which gave them their freedom, and all the franchises of citizenship.

Unfortunately, for a success in point of members at the Republican meeting held September 26, 1870, at the Toledo opera house, the rain storm, which began at six o'clock, continued with unabated intensity all the evening. But notwithstanding this, the house was well filled by an audience that listend with the utmost attention, and appreciation, to the eloquent addresses of the two orators of the evening, Gov. Stewart L. Woodford and Poor Ben of Ohio.

The meeting was called to order promptly by J. K. Hamilton, Chairman of the Republican Committee, who briefly introduced Gov. Woodford. The Govern-

or made a lengthy and eloquent statement between labor and honest money. He argued strongly that in case the greenback was substituted for the national bank currency, it would abolish a portion of the taxes of the government, and be a movement directly in the interest of the banker. He closed with a fine peroration, and was greated with great applause.

Though it continued to rain as though the heavens were open, Gov. Woodford and Poor Ben had a very large audience, and those who were present were well rewarded. Gov. Woodford more than justified the superb reputation he had already won, while Poor Ben made an admirable speech.

Poor Ben is unquestionably one of the most eloquent political colored orators that this country has ever produced. His campaign in the State of Ohio was a brilliant one, as every one expected it would be. He, at that time, was a growing man and had a brilliant future before him in the coming campaigns of his state and country. At the close of the Governor's most able effort, Poor Ben brought forth most forcibly the merits of the good old Republican party. For wit, touching pathos and real common sense, he could not be surpassed. His many eloquent phrases, and happy hits brought down the house.

He introduced himself in a few humorus remarks, and said that, "We should not delude ourselves with the idea that we are respected all over this Union. We are in danger in many places in this land. We ask you to examine the parties claiming your vote, and after examination, to see to which party we are the most indebted for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The Prohibition party is a sober party, but most too

sober. There is one party that never got so drunk, that it voted against me. To-day, not a slave is in the land. The party accomplishing this is a sober enough party for me.

Greenback, Labor, National—in whatever party it is [a voice, "Communism,"]—that mule party wants to take from the wealthy and give to the poor. In such an event there would be too many Annaiases and Sapphiras. If the leaders are honest, why don't those of the Nationals set the example and divide theirs? Mr. Kahlo, why does he not distribute his wealth among his followers? Yours is no new party. Deep down is the red hand covered up, atheistic in principle and communistic in action. I like chickens, but not these communistic chickens. We believe in honesty. They are building a fire which you cannot quench—one of the Democratic party. I don't know where to begin in speaking of that party. It is said the bloody chasm has been bridged over. Thurman says the party is alive, and as he is one of the doctors of it, and says it's alive, I suppose it is, as he ought to know. Horace Greely gave the certificate of death of the Democratic party. The Democratic party is opposed to human rights. I am opposed to it on account of its course during the war, and for every measure since the war. The Democratic party is alone responsible for the debt of the Nation.

Be loyal to principle, and vote the Republican ticket. The people I represent feel the wickedness of a denial to them of the rights of freemen by the Democratic party wherever it has power. Colored men are found who are willing to vote the Democratic ticket. Such are a fraud on their race."

His remarks were made with a variety of humorous anecdotes. "Put the Democratic party in power, and then it will rivet the chains of slavery as firmly as they ever were." He closed with a grand enlogium on that party, which set 4,000,000 men, women and children free, the Republican party.

On the following morning, the papers were replete with the well won plaudits of the talented colored orator. This endeavor was one of the rarest treats of the campaign of 1878, without distinction of party or race At times he grew grandly eloquent, sublime and poetical. Then again he would bring his language down to the understanding of the simplest person before him. He enthused all to the highest pitch, and accomplished great good.

On Sept. 21, 1876, the meeting held at Cadiz, O., was a grand success. Hundreds had gathered in front of the court house, the Cadiz Hook and Ladder Company (colored) in uniform having charge of the arrangements. After several soul stirring pieces of music by the Cadiz Cornet Band, Mr. J. L. Rivers opened the meeting in a few well timed and appreciated remafks; and then introduced Poor Ben of Urbana, as the orator of the day.

Poor Ben came forward, and in one of the most eloquent and thrilling speeches to which any one ever listened, held his audience spelbound for an hour and a half. He was then probably thirty-five years of age, well educated, of keen wit, apt, had a splendid use of language, and possessed one of the grandest voices for speaking ever heard.

At the evening meeting, he spoke for an hour, in his inimitable manner; holding the closest attention of his

audience, and giving the Democratic party one of the severest overhaulings it ever received at the hands of any speaker at Cadiz.

At a mass meeting, the week following, held at Springfield, O., there were loud calls for Poor Ben. He came forward, and made a speech which was not reportable in proper form, but was a sockdologer on the Democrats and their sham professions of reform, honesty and friendship to the colored race. One moment by his witicism and close hits, the speaker had his audience aroused to a high pitch of enthusiasm, and throwing their hats to the ceiling, and at another, when describing the condition of the slave, or the patriotic service of the colored people in the rebellion, his words took on such pathos and deep feeling as to draw tears.

One point made was that there had been a reversal of feeling since the war in the order of things, in more ways than one. Before the war the northern Democrats did the shooting of them; while now the southern Democrats do the shooting and killing, and their northern allies try to do the buying and selling.

At another period, he drew from his satchel a formidable looking document covered with seals, and told how he, a poor young man, working for fifteen dollars a month in the great State of Pennsylvania, had to pay thirty dollars for that paper, to prove that a little boy was born of free parents, in a certain place, at a certain time, was, therefore, himself free; and that he, Poor Ben, was the boy.

Notwithstanding the insults, and the many rights the colored people were deprived of, Poor Ben occasion-

ally received calls of active citizenship, from which colored people less favored were debarred.

While stationed at Toledo, O., he was summoned to act foreman of a jury, all of whose members, except himself were white. During the same year he again acted as foreman of a jury, all colored. These were the first instances in Ohio of a jury having a colored foreman.

Poor Ben was chairman of the committee on resolutions in the city convention at Toledo in 1872. He not only fulfilled his duty as a pastor of the church, and a teacher of the school, while in this city, but did full duty as a citizen; setting example to his fellow brethren of Afric hue, to be men, and get a chance and to do likewise. During this same year he was chairman of the committee on resolutions at the convention of the "Sixth Congressional District," that nominated I. R. Sherwood. It was composed of six counties.

Later we find our Poor Ben still a citizen of Toledo, and judge of elections there, at the election of General Grant. In this election, he gave the women a vote.

Again he was placed on jury which condemned the site of the Toledo water-works.

During the legislative session of 1879, Poor Ben filled the position of chaplain of the House of Representatives, at Columbus, Ohio.

Chapter XVI.

CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

NO one dreamed that in the cold, cheerless month of March, 1838, a burning and shining light had suddenly burst upon the moral world of the colored American. Its source and power may have been doubtful, in its early morning; but ere long, it caught the eye of the multitude perishing in darkness, and they now rejoice in its beam.

Nor will it soon burn out and be forgotten like a meteor flash; but sun like the influence of this light must be felt and remembered for generations—aye through all eternity.

I have in previous chapters given the reader a brief sketch of the history of Poor Ben's boyhood and early days of manhood. The few opportunities of an early education are also known. He had, by employing his leisure moments, improved his mind and gained some insight into natural science. I will not say Poor Ben's talent as a minister is an extraordinarily good one, however gifted he may appear to be. His public life in the school-room, Sunday-school, before societies and leagues all had a tendency to develop that which was within; and to prepare his vocal and oratorical powers for their future task. So continued practise added to his style, and perfected to a degree

(132) POOR BEN'S FAMILY.

the elements of his then professional influence.

Unless I, with a multitude of others, mistake, Poor Ben was intelligent, independent, and honest in purpose as a servant of God; and so long as he remained so, no point of success, however great, ought to be considered wonderful, or dangerous.

His personal influence wherever he is known shows him to be intelligent. His speeches, writings, teachings prove it. During youth, early manhood, and at the present stage of life, he was then and is now an assiduous and comprehensive reader, of whatever he deems of practical use. Nor did he learn from books alone, but often peered over their musty folds to read from the fresh green leaves of Nature; or turn to her more ancient volumes of rocky peaks, and salted beds of liquid blue, and there enlarge and embellish his store of intellect from dame Nature's realm of elegance and granduer. Then turning from her pages, closing the natural eye, contemplate, glorify and magnify, the author of all he had read; and enjoy wisdom not only from scientific works, but from the book of Nature, and the Word of God.

In the meantime he was accumulating literary treasures in the form of books; but his best acquisition of intelligence, was the accurate knowledge of human nature, which he had gained by juvenile and adult teaching; and in his diversified labors in early life. Here, reader, we leave Poor Ben highly intelligent, and now make note of his spirit of independence.

Here in lay his clue to professional success. I should not deem him divinely called to the ministry, who, like the wind mill, is turned in as many directions as the wind may blow, and subjected to change as

often; but he is called who like the beacon light at sea, is more staunch, firm, and resolute than brilliant; who is so hardy and strong that he must turn the winds. It is said that the watchman at a light house trims his lamp alone, never allowing another to do his duty; so that it pours its light to the best advantage under his skilled management. If every citizen on the land and sea were allowed to force their opinion and method of attending to the business, both light and lighter would soon be obliterated.

Poor Ben's success is due to his independence of religious views. There is not money enough in the Church coffers, nor force enough in the outside world to dig a particular rut for him to wheel along in; he is no respecter of feelings or creeds. When the truth of the text is in heart and brain, it bubbles forth from the tongue, and all must hear, or leave.

All can testify to his honesty of purpose. He sticks closely to texts, diverging occasionally to make a contrast with the precision of method. Poor Ben is possessed of much personal magnetism; frank, friendly, free, simple in language, often introducing the conversational and colloquial styles which hold an audience, better than other modes of address. The energy of soul, and its expression beaming from the eye, as well as being displayed in every word, tone and gesture, bespeak him a man of God.

Our subject possessed all these charasteristics of mind and soul in 1863; though in a lesser degree, or at least they were not cultivated, as now. It was at the above date, while teaching in Brownsville, Pa., that the subject of the Christian ministry presented itself most forcibly to Poor Ben's mind. The thought uppermost

with him was, how he could best use his time and talents for the good of his race, "What must I qualify myself for? "was the question he often asked himself. He was, at this time, studying under special instructors, who would often inquire, "What do you intend to do?"

He looked at the question from its human and divine standpoints; and while praying over the matter in the school-room, the voice of duty said, "Preach and teach."

He communicated his thoughts to Rev, A. Harwell, the pastor of his church, who gave him much encouragement, and advised him further by saying, "*Brother Bennie if I had your talent, I would make moccasin tracks in Time's sand, so deep that it would take more than one century to wear them out.*" This was said with great emphasis and earnestness; and with even more solemnity, he added, "*Go on, my son, God has a great work for you.*"

This good, fatherly advice was given to Poor Ben in an unexpected manner; nevertheless, he went out of the reverend minister's presence, feeling greatly encouraged.

He next spoke of the subject to Brother Thomton T. Baker, a local preacher, and one of the best of christian gentlemen. He said to Poor Ben, "If you are certain you have the right impression of your duty to save souls, you obey it. Good impressions come from God. The devil never impresses men to do good, or be good."

Shortly after this Ben, entered into conversation with his class leader, the Rev. N. T. Terrell, who advised him as to what course to pursue, and gave him

directions how and what to study to fit him for examination. He presented Poor Ben with a copy of Thomas Ralston's Elements of Divinity, which he faithfully studied. But before the meeting of the Quarterly Conference, Poor Ben received a letter from Rev. H. H. Garnet, requesting him to take charge of a school, at Washington, under the auspices of The African Civilition Society. He accepted and soon after arrived at the National Capital, Dec., 24th, 1864.

Here he at once joined Union Bethel A. M. E. Church. Rev. J. D. S. Hall was then in charge. During the first conversation he had with Poor Ben, he imagined if he was a preacher. "No Sir, was the prompt reply. "*You ought to be,*" said Rev. Hall, with much feeling. This so affected Poor Ben that he went home that night and made the matter a subject of deep consideration and fervent prayer; asking for light that he might be shown the will of God, as to his future field of labor. His petition was answered by a vision or presentiment or what many might term an unusal impression. It was an old man standing in the way. Poor Ben went up to him and spoke, without saying anything to him in words. The old man inquired, "Are you a preacher ?" Then Ben answered, "No." Ah, said the aged man, "*God has a work for you to do and the sooner you get at it, the better.*"

Poor Ben continued to pray and ask God to make plain this matter to him. The following morning, on his way to school, he met an old man, David Gettrel, who answered to a minute description of the one he had seen in his dream during the night just passed, and he came up and used the identical words spoken in the vision. This strange coincidence of fact and

fancy, thoroughly convinced him that his calling was of God, and not of man.

He told Rev. Hall of his decision to work in the vineyard of his Master; and asked for a license, which was granted, on the 31st day of March, 1865, by the Quarterly Conference, of the Union Bethel Church, of Washington. D. C.

Poor Ben's sentiments now were fully expressed in the language of that inspired poet from whom we delight to quote:

"We have listened to the preacher,
Truth by him has now been shown;
But we want a *Greater Teacher*,
From the everlasting throne."

He knew that only God could apply the glorious gospel to his heart, give him faith in Jesus, and make his word among dying souls an eternal success.

He preached his first sermon, at St. Paul Church, Washington Heights, D. C., April 9th, 1865. His text was, "Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples."

On his return home, he preached his second sermon from this text: "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."—Rev. Chap. 1, verse 7.

Poor Ben continued to act in the local capacity until the winter of 1865–66. He held a revival in his old home, Brownsville, Pa. During its session, eighty-five persons joined the church. Samuel Robinson lead the singing, and Poor Ben did the preaching, so it was known as, and called "Ben's and

Sam's Revival." Many of those who were converted at this time are still living, and are active members of the church.

In 1866, while on a visit to Uniontown, Pa., Poor Ben received and accepted an invitation to preach from the Rev. R. A. Johnson, who also urged him to join the traveling connection. Later he visited Rev. J. P. Underwood, who was anxious for him to join the Ohio Conference, which he finally consented to do. Rev. W. B. Lewis presented his name and he was recommended to the Quarterly Conference. He was examined, and his recommendation sent to the Annual Conference, which met at Lexington, Ky.,—this state being a part of the Ohio Conference. On Saturday, April 13th, 1867, he was admitted on trial, to the Ohio Conference. The following Thursday he received his appointment to the Walnut Hills Church, of which he took immediate charge, and preached his first sermon there on the following Sabbath. He remained in charge until May, 14th 1870.

His next appointment placed him at Toledo, Ohio, where he remained until May, 1873. On taking charge of Warren Chapel, he found a good but incomplete building, which had been standing unfinished for over six years. Poor Ben, contrary to the judgement of the Trustees, set to work to finish the church, and six months later it was completed and dedicated. Bishop Payne conducted the dedicatory exercises. Text Psalm 27, 4–6.

Rev. R. B. Pope, of St. Paul M. E. Church, preached in the afternoon from the 17th Psalm, 7th verse. In the evening Rev. S. S. Baxter of the Lagrange St.

M. E. Church delivered a sermon from Mark, 11;–22. The day's collection was by cash and subscription $800.

On leaving this charge to take a new post of duty, under the inexorable rules of the Church, Poor Ben's little flock felt acutely the loss they were so soon to sustain. They bestowed on him a souvenir that would hourly remind him of the appreciation in which he was held. It was in the form of a handsome gold watch. A presentation meeting was held. Speeches were made by Revs. Viney, Robt. McCune, Mr. Waring, Mr. Clark, Waggoner, who spoke for the press; and J. Madison Bell, delivered an eloquent eulogy upon the pulpit, its power for good, and the grand work accomplished for humanity. He closed with a fitting tribute to the worth and abilities of Poor Ben, and detailed at length the work he had done for Toledo and the race.

At the close of Mr. Waggoner's address, Mr. E. T. Claybrook, presented the watch in an address, admonishing him that it would serve as a constant reminder that time was fleeting, and that God would expect a good account of each moment. Poor Ben was scarcely able to express his feelings. He was deeply grateful for such an unlooked for recognition of his services in Toledo. He thanked all in behalf of himself, family and his aged mother, whose heart would beat with pride at this testimonial to her son. He also returned his thanks to his members, the clergymen and citizens, and the press, who each had encouraged, assisted and sustained him. The press had aided him in all he had accomplished; for while he could only speak to hundreds, it had taught thousands.

Poor Ben was next given the charge of the St. Paul A. M. E. Church, of Urbana, Ohio. He began his pastorial duties there, June, 1876, and faithfully served the church for two years.

During his last year's labor among the citizens, of Columbus a presentation concert was tendered Poor Ben, and not only his church, but the citizens generally, attested their genuine appreciation of him as a minister, a friend, and citizen, by presenting him with a set of Potter's Encyclopedia.

The fond christian ties that bind pastor and people were again broken, and the cords that had for two years made Poor Ben a resident of the pleasant little city of Urbana were loosened, and his face was turned toward Columbus, Ohio. This was his last charge. September 3rd, 1878, he entered this field of labor, serving the A. M. E. Church for two years; from which place he was called to fill a higher official post in his Church. Of this we shall speak hereafter.

During his pastorate at Urbana, he preached a most eloquent Thanksgiving sermon, in 1876—the Centennial year.

In this chapter, the reader has been allowed the privilege of following the ministerial career of the subject, from his entrance into the pulpit, until he was honorably taken from it to serve his Master in another capacity, We should not say that "he is taken from the pulpit" for his love of the work, his aptness to preach, his popularity, taken together with his spirit of self-sacrifice, keep him preaching, teaching, and doing the work of an active pastor, throughout the entire year. Seldom a Sabbath passes, but what he is called upon to fill some pulpit, one or more times; so that,

Poor Ben preaches on the average, as many sermons as any minister holding a charge. And in addition to this he has the annual addresses of many lodges, and benevolent orders to deliver; funeral sermons, wedding ceremonies, and baptismal ordinances to perform by special request. Then, his love of country, calls him into active service; and Poor, Ben is heard occasionally in the political field, gathering sheaves for his Uncle Sam.

Wherever duty calls, Poor Ben is found faithfully discharging the demands. Though there is not a token of remembrance attached to each favor, nor a public demonstration of appreciation made at the close of each generous action done, yet all is accredited to the name of Poor Ben, in God's great-day book of remembrance. Both penalty and reward are meted out by the Divine hand, and no act shall pass unnoticed. His intellect in early life, was acute; his power of acquisition great, and his perseverance unflagging. To these elements of character, let me add amiability, love of race, and uncommon self-reliance. Thus endowed, it may be readily believed that Poor Ben was, and is, still an acknowledged leader in the various religious, political, secular and benevolent circles, with which he is connected.

By daily enforcing the following rules on his mind, he with diligence under God, commanded success.

Poor Ben has commanded himself to—

"Love your work.
Do your duty.
Study the Bible.
Be punctual in all things.
Preserve order.

Occupy all your time.
Visit your charge.
Work for God and humanity.
Pray for success."

The examination, that is the annual examinations, will be held at the homes of the members, and in writing. Lists of questions will be fowarded to them, and by writing the replies the committee on examinations can judge whether they have read thoughtfully the books required. But it is not intended to prevent any one from attending the annual meeting of the T. T. S. C., and enjoying the lectures and addresses of the same.

The association will be divided into eleven schools or divisions, with courses of study, as follows:

1. The Sunday School Normal Department.
2. The Secular Teachers' Department.
3. The School of Elecution and Sacred Rhetoric.
4. The school of Languages. 5. The School of Natural Sciences. 6. The School of Art. 7. The School of Theology. 8. The School of Philosophy. 9. The College of Music. 10. The "Tawawa Scientific, and Literary Lecture Course." 11. The Tawawa "Chimney-Corner Circle."

Besides the successful endeavors of Poor Ben to establish the Tawawa Scientific, Theological and Literary Association, he has also succeeded in placing into the hands of the reading public a number of works pertaining to his Church. He has the following books in manuscript form, ready for publication: "The Lights along the Jordan," "Fifty Years in the Field, or the A. M. E. Church, in Ohio." "The Life and Times of Solomon H. Thompson," and "Methodism

in Columbus, Ohio." He has yearly edited and compiled the "Budget."

Literature has not been the sole business of Poor Ben's life; he has resorted to it as a relaxation from other arduous work, and hence it has been a pleasant task for him to compile these various religious and statistical works. By this means he has collected and placed in book form much valuable Negro literature of some the ablest and most cultured brains of the colored American, in the form of orations, addresses. sermons, essays and lectures. Much that is valuable in the historical and religious epochs of the American of color, may be found in Poor Ben's collection of Negro literature that cannot be found in any one collection elsewhere. On entering his library for an hour's reading, it reminds us of a sort of morgue; where we can seek and find the dead ones of other years; those of whom our fore-fathers have often spoken, and whose souls we here find substantially photographed in their writings. We here commune with them and learn that if aught of character is to be given the posterity of the black American, it must be reached by their excellence in polite learning.

Mrs. H. B. Stowe truly says that: "The literature of a people must spring from the sense of its nationality; and nationality is impossible without selfrespect; and selfrespect is impossible without liberty."

Providence intended us for a mighty nation. When God would truly educate a people He compels it to learn bitter lessons. By our enslavement we have known all suffering, and by our freedon we have known consolation; now through this freedom we should rise and assert our nationality; prove that our

nature is an armory of genius; wipe out the assertion that we are only *imitative surface creatures*; and show that like the lake, beneath our surface lies a living world of matter, *millions of fathoms deep.*

When we have stirred the depths of our national pride, others will cease to ridicule, and fear to come in willing contact with our elements.

Chapter XVII.

LITERARY WORK.

IT is a received maxim, that to write or speak well, one must think well. Poor Ben had become a good public speaker; possessed of an extensive knowledge, of his church work as well as well disciplined intellectual powers, that made him capable of comprehending its relation to other subjects, and to reason ably upon it. He had learned to "look his subject into shape," and this was highly conducive to his success as a minister and public speaker. Like Menandes, the Greek poet, who, when about to take part in a public entertainment, was asked when the time drew near, if he had finished his poem, he answered "the work is done all but making the verses." This shows how large a part of any undertaking of a literary character is done, when the the plan is well formed, and digested.

Were men simply intellectual beings, life would soon become a monotonous state of existence. But men have imaginations, and are succeptible of emotions. This imagination should be exercised and these emotions excited. Thus may both pleasure and profit be derived from them, Taste must be cultivated in order to judge of what is fitted to excite emotions of beauty, grandeur, sublimity and awe. Every intellectual being cannot determine the fitness of

particular causes for producing particular effects. One, from the scenes and events that have fallen under his observation, may have many associations connected with a particular object, which another may have never formed. One may go forth in the evening and gaze upon the starry heavens, and the moon strolling in her majesty, and feel emotions of sublimity. If so, we say he is a man of sensibility—from the original constitution of his mind, he is susceptible of emotions and of taste to a high degree. His intellectual habits and the circumstances of his life, have strengthened and cherished these original tendencies of his mind. Astronomy has taught him the size and number of these bodies, which is another inspiring incentive to his sublime emotions. Another, returning from his daily toil, may look upon the same scene and feel no emotion of beauty or sublimity. Still, originally, both may have been constituted with the same amount of sensibility but such has been the lot of the latter, that his sensibility; is lost, and he thinks only of the moon and stars as lighting him home.

All emotions lose their strength if disregarded; and if entirely neglected, soon cease to be felt.

Valuable thought, extensive knowledge, the ability to reason justly, and good literary taste are essential to form a thorough and systematic scholar.

The painter does not rest satisfied with a single look at a fine picture. He emphatically studies it in its design and execution. So every branch of knowledge, must be studied in order that profit and pleasure may be desired, and imparted, and thus be rendered of benefit to others.

Poor Ben's original constitution of mind was sus-

ceptable of emotions to a great degree; which cultivated produced a fine effect on the man.

He saw the need of an organization in which the intelligent men and women of the colored race might cultivate these faculties of mind.

The subject of a summer school at Wilberforce, was discussed in 1878—79 by a number of the leading men of the A. M. E. Church; but rested until the winter of 1880. In 1881, after some consultation, a committee which had been appointed, met at Nashville, Tenn., and a constitution was adopted, and an organization was effected, named *The Tawawa Sunday School Assembly, Theological, Scientific and Literary Circle.*

The subject was studied carefully by Poor Ben, who was appointed General Manager. In 1883, he finally went to work and threw the matter into shape and published a "Tawawa Journal," therein stating the plan of organization, its aim, and departments, which are given in this chapter

The following officers were elected July 24th. 1883: President, Bishop J. P. Campbell, D. D. LLD., Philadelphia, Pa. Vice Presidents—Bishop H. M. Turner, D. D. LL. D., Atlanta, Ga.; Bishop W. F. Dickerson, D. D., Columbia, S. C.; Rev. W. J. Gains, D. D. Atlanta, Ga.; Mrs. Sarah J. Early, Nashville, Tenn.; Mrs C. A. Townsend, Richmond, Ind.; Prof. C. R. McDowell, Bowling Green, Ky.; Rev. John T. Jenifer, D. D., Boston Mass.; Rev. W. J. Simmons. Louisville, Ky.; Rev. Bishop T. M. D. Ward, D. D., Benings, D. C.; Rev T. B. Caldwell, Louisville, Ky.

Corresponding Secretary—Rev. Thos. H. Jackson, D. D., Wilberforce, Ohio,

Recording Secretary—Prof. A. D. Delaney, A. B., Urbana, O.,

Treasurer—Bishop James A. Shorter.

Director of instruction—Rev. B. F. Lee, D. D.

Gen. Manager—Rev. B. W. Arnett, D. D.

Trustee Board of Tawawa.

Trustees for 2 years—Bishop J. A. Shorter, Rev. James M. Townsend, D. D., Rev. R. A. Johnson.

For 3 years—Prof. Samuel T. Mitchell, A. M., Prof. W. S. Scarborough, LLD., Prof. J. P. Shorter, A. M.

For 5 years—Bishop J. P. Campbell, D. D., LLD., Rev. B. F. Lee, D. D., Rev. B. W. Arnett, D. D.

Executive Committee.

Rev. B. F. Lee, D. D., Rev. B. W. Arnett, D. D., Prof. W. S. Scarborough, LL. D., Prof. J. P. Shorter, A. M., Prof. S. T. Mitchell, A. M.,

BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

Rev. B. F. Lee, D. D., Wilberforce, Ohio; Rev. C. S. Smith, M. D., Bloomington, Ill., Prof. J. M. Maxwell, Louisville, Ky.; Rev. B. T. Tanner, D. D., Philadelphia, Pa.: Rev. M. B. Saulters, Savannah, Ga.; Rev. Theodore Gould, Philadelphia, Pa.; Prof. P. B. Peters, A. M., Columbia, Ga.; Rev. S. A. Elbert, M. D., Indianapolis. Ind.; Rev. T. A. Thompson, B. D. Cincinnati, Ohio; Rev. O. P. Ross, Louisville, Ky.; Bishop J. P. Campbell, D. D., Philadelphia. Pa.

DEPARTMENTS —1884.

1.—*The Sunday School Normal Department*—Rev. C. S. Smith, M. D., Dean, Bloomington, Ill.; Rev. L. J. Coppin, Secretary, Baltimore, Md.

2.—*Secular Teacher's Normal Department*—Prof. F. S. DeLaney, B. A., Dean, Madisonville, Ind.; Prof. E. A. Clark, B- A., Secretary, Evansville, Ind.

3.—*School of Elocution and Sacred Rhetoric*—Rev. W. B. Derrick, Dean, New York City, N. Y.; Miss H. Q. Brown, Wilberforce, Ohio.

4.— *School of Languages*—Prof. W. S. Scarborough, LL. D., Dean, Wilberforce, Ohio; Rev. J. C. Waters, D. D., Secretary, Columbia, S. C.

5.—*School of Natural Science*—Mr. S. C. Scarborough, Dean, Wilberforce, Ohio.; Miss E. R. George, Secretary, Wilberforce, Ohio.

6.—*School of Art*—Prof. C. W. Bell, Prin. of Penmanship, Colored School, Cincinnati, Ohio; Miss V. M. Burks, Ass't. Prin. High School, Louisville, Ky.

7.—*School of Theology*—Rev. T. G. Steward, D. D. Dean, Philadelphia, Pa.; Rev. Richard Harper, B. D., Nashville, Tenn.

8.—*School of Philosophy*—Bishop Daniel A. Payne, D. D., LL, D., Dean; Rev. A. J. Kewshaw, Secretary.

9.—*College of Music*—Miss Cussie E. Clark, Dean, Wilberforce, Ohio; Miss Bertha B. Wolfe, Secretary, Columbia, S. C.

10.—*The Tawawa Literary and Scientific Lecture Course*—Bishop J. P. Campbell, D. D., LL. D., Dean, Philadelphia, Pa.; J. P. Maxwell, Secretary, Wilberforce, Ohio.

11.—*The Tawawa Chimney Corner Circle*—Rev. B. W. Arnett, D. D., Dean, Wilberforce, Ohio; B. W. Arnett, Jr., Secretary, Wilberforce, Ohio.

The following persons have been invited to deliver addresses on special subjects: Bishop J. M. Brown, D. D., Bishop R. H. Cain, D. D., Prof. B. K. Sampson,

A. M., Bishop L. H. Holsey, D. D., Bishop S. T. Jones D. D., Mrs. F. E. W. Harper, Dr. J. M. Walden, D. D., Prof. W. H. Parham, Principle Colored School, Cincinnati, Ohio; Prof. J. R. Blackburn, A. M., Principal High school, Xenia, Ohio. Dr. Bunyan, Xenia, Ohio.

THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION.

Is the best that we can do at this time, and if experience shows that anything needs modifying, the matter is in the hands of the directors, who, we trust, will consider the matter of the work, if the organization is worthy of their time and talent.

This organization is something new to us, though it is a necessity. The work we have to do is to train the race, and move back the clouds which hang over us. We must allow nothing that will in any way assist in training the race pass, but we must grasp every opportunity, and never let it go until we have utilized it for the good of race and mankind But says one: "Why not go to Chatauqua? There you will find the best talent of the land." That is true; but when we go to Chatauqua we only have one part of the benefits of the place. We can be pupils but not instructors, we cannot impart that which we know. We have, in the Tawawa, an opportunity for planning and executing the same. We can collect more persons together who stand in need of the kind of instruction that we impart at this time. We want not only to be drilled but to be "drill-masters." We want to see what we can do for ourselves and mankind. We want to set up housekeeking and take the responsibility of the work upon us. We want to awaken a new life in our young men and women, and start them out in bands into the

fields of research and scientific investigation and speculation. We want an army of "TEN THOUSAND" WHO WILL RESOLVE THAT THEY WILL NEVER GO TO BED AT NIGHT UNTIL THEY KNOW SOMETHING BY STUDY WHICH THEY DID NOT KNOW WHEN THEY AROSE IN THE MORNING.

Now if we can have them do this we will have "ten thousand" new thoughts every day, and in one year the "ten thousand" men and women will have collected from the field of thought 3,650,000 new thoughts, and in four years 14,600,000, that are to come by study; so that you can readily perceive that by so doing we shall be the means of our race occupying its proper place in the amily of man.

But if we can get only one person to study in every community, that person can have 365 thoughts every year, and at the end of the course of study 1460, and then add that which he will gain in a reading course, he will have 2800 new thoughts, which will enable him to converse upon any subject with ease and intelligence,

This new organization aims to promote habits of reading and study in nature, art science, and in secular and sacred literature, in connection with the routine of daily life, especially among those whose educational advantages have been limited so as to secure them the college student's general outlook upon the world and life; and to develop the habit of close, connected, persistent thinking; to utilize the "Chimney-Corner" so as to make every a school and church; in fact, to organize in every community a band of thinkers—those who desire to elevate the race and to increase their knowledge and usefulness. This organization will give an opportunity to discover the undeveloped mental and moral power of the race, and to bring into requisition all the available

forces of our men and women; and by being thus united, they can accomplish more for their good than they otherwise can do as individuals; for it is intended to use every spare moment for the improvement of the mind—to husband our time and never to go to bed without knowing something more than when we arose in the morning—to *learn something by study every day—to observe and think—to think and observe*—" to teach the mind to think, the heart to love and the hand to work for God and humanity."

It proposes to encourage individual study through the organization of local circles for mutual help and encouragement in study, by Summer Courses of Lectures and "Students' Sessions" at Tawawa, and by written reports and examinations.

An average of an hour's reading each week day will enable the student in nine months to complete the books required for a year. More time than this will be spent by many persons, and for their accommodation a special course of reading on the same subjects will be indicated. The habits of thinking steadily upon worthy themes during one's secular toil will lighten labor, brighten life and develop power.

Chapter XVIII.

TWO YEARS A REPRESENTATIVE.

THE sympathetic term, "Poor Ben," is now illy applicable to our subject, whose reputation is national, and whose fame as an orator and statesman is meager honor due him. Reader, you will not find an object, flimsy Representative—double-sided, without pluck, or ballast; but a well balanced man; of vigorous mind, resolute will, strong common sense, and buoyant spirits. His judgement is generally accurate, and his reliance upon it implicit. He is fitted rather to command than to obey; and his views of pure, systematic government belong more to the patriarchal, than the present dispensation.

The talent will reveal itself to the consciousness of the possessor; and it also teaches the one so endowed that, to have done a thing, is the proper proof that he can do it, and the doing, is the only evidence of his actual ability.

This we have found true of Poor Ben, and leaves us at a loss whether to class him with the patriarchs of the Hebrews, or the censors of the Romans.

However, this inflexible integrity, and uniform consistency of character, are self-evident through his life.

There is a well known writer, who, having a great dislike for politicians, says, that the man who can

make two ears of corn, or two stalks of wheat, grow where only one grew before, deserves more of mankind, and renders better service to his country, than a whole race of politicians. The sentiment is an unjust one. Those who think, speak, and act, must govern them that toil. Any industrious, progressive farmer can, by his work alone, double his crops of grain, by his knowledge and use of the improved methods of agriculture. But it takes thousands of able minded men, scores of years to form and perpetuate a perfect State. And as a storm may devastate a farm in an hour, so may the political work of a day lay a State in ruin.

It is pleasant to record a character whose resplendent qualities are not darkened by any serious defects. Adventurous and heroic, brilliant and brave, has our subject proven. Poor, without patrons, he began his career on the lowest step of fame's ladder; and by energy and effort alone, reached the lofty steps so near the summit—yet never became dizzy by elevation, nor exhibited any of those weak or wicked passions power and rank so invariably develop.

Poor Ben was constantly before the public,—political committees sending him invitations wherever he went, to address the people on the issues of the day. All the time that he could spare from church and lodge duties was earnestly spent, by him, in leading the race into the right road toward the ballot box of their State and Nation.

In 1885, Poor Ben was, in the following petition, placed before the county for office:

Greene County Primary Election, April 6, 1885.
To the Republican voters of Greene county:

The presidential contest of '84 produced our candidate. No man in the county contributed more to achieve that wonderful victoryof Republican principles in Ohio, than ———. In appreciation of the assistance thus rendered, and to have an opportunity to reward his ardent zeal and efficient service, many of the leading Republicans of the county urge him to offer himself as a candidate for State Representative at the next primary election, and assured him that a grateful party would not fail to return to him the full measure of their obligation. Thus urged and assured, ——— is before the voters of this county.

In brief terms, we invite your attention to his claims. ——— is a man of wide experience, of marked ability, and of national reputation. No colored man in Ohio enjoys greater preeminence. He is the peer of any candidate before you. Recurring to service rendered:—In 1872, he made thirty-two speeches for Grant; stumped the State for Hayes, and for Garfield; supported Hon. John Little before the Springfield Convention, in a speech that was regarded as the most brilliant of the occasion; and in the canvas for Blaine, was declared by the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette, and other leading dailies, to be one of the most effective speakers in the State. These facts are known to you, and we ask a comparison of this record, with that of any other candidate.

We ask your support on other grounds. For twenty long years the colored voters have cast a solid ballot for the candidates of the party. Ten times have they made possible the election of Republican candidates.

Estimating their strength at one fourth the entire

Republican vote, they have been entitled to representation at least twice in twenty years. They have had none, yet they have adhered to the party. Will that party now, in the face of two decades of duty, refuse its support to this candidate. The hour demands equal justice. The change in administration may invite popular favor. The colored vote will be sought. It behooves Republicans to deal fairly with their constituents. If in Greene county, on the 6th of April, simple justice be done, ——— will be nominated by a handsome majority. Voters of the county, we have stood with you and for you in many a contest. Can we have your vote once in twenty years?

Colored voters, of ——— you may be justly proud. Never have the rights of the race found him silent. Do your duty on the 6th of April. Use your influence at the polls. Work manfully; let not a voter fail, because it is a primary election, to cast his vote. Be willing to lose a half day, if need be, to nominate ———. Hamilton and Cuyahoga have deemed it justice to be represented by colored men. Greene has a right to her turn. Nominate ———, and the whole country will honor Greene county in her choice.

Signed on behalf of the party at home,

J. P. Shorter, Chairman,
S. T. Mitchell,
T. H. Jackson,
W. S. Scarborough,
J. P. Maxwell,
P. O. Connell,
A. R. Winter,
Committee."

The voters of Greene county were true to the call, and elected their candidate to the Sixty-eighty Grand Assembly of Ohio; Poor Ben receiving the highest number of votes of any official in the county except J. B. Foraker, who received 4689, and Poor Ben 4328.

Prior to his election, the subject of this sketch was often called upon to make campaign speeches throughout the State, by the Ohio Central Committee, and responded to the call of ten districts out of thirty-three.

Space forbids the insertion of any speech in full; only a few quotations of Poor Ben's characteristic expressions will be needed to portray his style of oratory.

At Columbus, when he was introduced, the dense crowd applauded lustily, and using that as his cue, he said that that was one of the reasons why he was a Republican, because they would cheer a colored man as quickly as a white man. He then eulogized the character and records of the candidates, Foraker and Kennedy. Said that Greene county Republicans would always join hands with their brothers in ratifying nominations made at Springfield. The pioneers of Greene county went into battle to give freedom to his race, and their children would ever follow the precepts of their fathers, and demonstrate the principles of the party, by according to the black man the true recognition of his worth—his vote. Said that the Republican party had given the black man his freedom, and was now going to give him what few colored men had obtained—an office—for he soon would be where he now looked. Here Poor Ben made a pause, leaned over the platform, and gazed toward the House of Representatives. This expression of faith in his party, was greeted with yells of applause.

Then he said "the Republican party is the only one that took me up when I had no flag, and gave me a flag; when I had no freedom, it gave me freedom; when I had no vote, it gave me a vote; now I have no office, it is going to give me an office. I speak not egotistically, but to express the sentiments of my grateful race.

This is the only party in which every man has a free chance in the race of life,—that is all we want."

A Wilmington, Delaware paper, commenting on Negro qualifications, cites, as a case in point, Poor Ben s career. It says,—"He is a standing exemplification of the possibilities of the colored race. He is the Republican nominee for the legislature. A nomination in his county, which has a Republican majority of 2,300, is equivalent to election. His opponents for the Republican nomination were two of the most prominent socially and politically speaking, gentlemen in Xenia, —one, a rich banker, the other a landed proprietor. Yet in an open field, he carried the votes of the populace,—and it is a white population. The question arises here, and in all justice it must be conceeded, that there exists in this colored man those qualities of leadership, personal superiority, and all the subtle conditions of moral manhood, which are self-assertive of leadership.

There must be that vim in him that we Anglo-saxons claim solely as our birthright, to the exclusion of the quality in the Latin races—and this is discovered in a Negro! It is a strange ethnological revelation. What would Darwin say of it? Heis not altogether an exceptional case either, for there are other colored men whose records run a parallel course. He

has demonstrated not an equality, but a superiority to the white race in the moral, as distinctive from the religious question."

The above eulogy comes from the pen of an able writer, unsolicited. It is simply the out-pouring of a noble Anglo-saxon's honest convictions; and speaks volums of encouragement and praise for the race.

In June of 1885, the Ohio Republicans had a grand rally at Columbus. Besides the candidates on the State ticket, and members on the State Central Committees, there were a great many representative Republicans present from all parts of the State. Great interest was shown in the organization, and the most encouraging prospects reported from all quarters. The general feeling for Republican success was never better. There was harmony and a determination to rebuke the betrayal of the past, and the poor administration in Ohio for two years.

The speakers of the day, Captain Foraker, General Kennedy, Mr. Koshler, Captain Brown, and General Jones were escorted to the stand by General Beatty, Hon. Nash, Colonel Taylor, Hon. Watson, Hon. Poor Ben, General Neil, Mr. Herbst, Hon. Hanna, and others. The Fourteenth Regiment Band rendered fine music, and the Blaine and Logan Glee Club sang a number of its patriotic songs in that perfect manner for which it has won great fame. Each speaker, in turn, made the welkin ring with his eloquence.

This was the opening of a campaign notable for many things, but more particularly interesting to us, because it made legislators of three men of our race.

In 1885, Poor Ben was elected a member of the House of Representatives, from Greene county; and

during his two years of office, labored faithfully as will be seen from the fact that he succeeded in getting two important measures through the Legislature; thereby augmenting his already great renown.

When he first took his seat, Poor Ben was unusually quiet; yet ever busy. However, he soon gained the reputation of being the liveliest member;—bright eyed, magnetic, prompt at repartee, and earnest in conversation.

He, by persistent digging, finally made deep inroads in the minds of the benevolent members, and his moralizing style of debating opened the flood gates of their honest convictions. and verrified the old adage "right is might." Thus the repeal of the Black Laws, and the Temperance Bill, by his efforts became laws.

The bill for the repeal of the Black Laws was introduced by Poor Ben during the winter of 1886, and passed the House, sixty-two yeas to twenty-eight nays. Then it went over to the Senate, and on Feb. 16, 1887, passed by an overwhelming vote of twenty-five to seven.

The reader cannot expect the writer to give in full the many eloquent addresses delivered at the various jubilees, given in honor of the death of the Black Laws. Grand celebrations were held at Columbus, Springfield, Cleveland, Toledo, Xenia and other places throughout the State. Every loyal hearted citizen, black and white, rejoiced. Certainly no one who witnessed the joyous gatherings at Columbus and Springfield, could feel otherwise than thankful that Ohio's statutes had the Black Laws erased forever from them.

The people of Columbus held their jollification meeting at the city hall. The crowd streamed in from sev-

en to eight o'clock; at which time five or six hundred citizens and visitors had assembled. On the stand was a galaxy of distinguished men. Among them may be named, Gov. J. B. Foraker, Senator Ely, Senator Pringle, Dr. W. Gladden, Prof. W. S. Scarborough, Hon. Poor Ben, Rev. J. Poindexter, Messrs. D. K. Watson, F. C. Session, W. S. Thomas, J. Clark, and others.

After prayer by Dr. Gladden, Hon. C. L. Maxwell, the colored lawyer of Xenia, presented Governor Foraker in the following able speech:

"My countrymen: Living as we are in the morning sunlight of the second century of our national existence, and in the evening twilight of the first century of the government and political existence of the northwestern territory; which by the ordinance of 1787 was dedicated to human freedom forever; and out of which territory were carved the great states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and our own loved and beautiful Ohio. She, the richest and fairest of Virginia's daughters, has repeated the history of the "Old Dominion," in that, for her Washington, Monroe, and Madison, she has given to the nation her Grant, Hayes, and Garfield; and for Virginia's Jefferson, she has to offer her most illustrious son, John Sherman. Living in such an epoch, and in the light of such a history, is surely cause for the most sincere thanks to Almighty God; and a source of infinite joy to every patriotic citizen of Ohio, without regard to party, creed or color, to know that the last vestige of slavery has been wiped from her books forever."

Governor Foraker arose amid a storm of applause, and in a thirty minutes speech, showed how like a miracle the American Negro has risen from the depth of a debasing servitude, to a station of citizenship where he enjoys all the rights enjoyed by the whites of this broad land. He said that he was happy to know that the great State of Ohio had finally made the colored man the equal of any white man in the land; and had

blotted from its statutes the discriminating laws, which made separate schools possible. He said he received letters daily, complaining that the repeal of these laws, which to him and all sensible citizens were extremely obnoxious, was detrimental to the prosperity of the Republican party of this State. He, for one, knew this to be untrue. He said,

"There was a time when the black laws of Ohio provided that no colored man should be allowed to become a resident unless he carried with him a certificate that he was a free man, and in addition to that, furnish a bond of five hundred dollars. That same statute made it a penal offense for any man in Ohio to employ a colored man, to even give him a day's work, in order that he might earn something to live upon, until he had first entered upon his bond. Such is the index of public sentiment with respect to this grand question of human rights, as it was placed on the statute books by our fathers. (Cries—Shame! Shame!) But that has long been swept away. And so it is, that we have been progressing, step by step, until in the matter of legislation, we have now reached a point where our book is clean from such legislation. (Tremendous applause.)

In Southern Ohio where I was, when a boy, I can remember a church,—it was called a church, but it was only a log hut built by the colored people; and such was the sentiment of that community in regard to colored people, that they built it without a window, that they might be safe from violence in the worship of God. There was only a hole in the wall, through which the light might come; but not large enough to admit a stone. Such hatred existed that they could not worship in peace.

Fellow citizens, we are growing better, and we, white people may rejoice that we have progressed, until we can recognize "the brotherhood of man, and the fatherhood of God," and say to our colored brethren step up to the full measure of your manhood, and to the enjoyment of that absolute political equality with us, to which you are now entitled (Cheers and applause.) If however any of you get to be Governor, I think you will find that we have a great State, that is full of letter writers, from the rivers to the lakes. And I don't care what a General Assembly does, the Govern-

or will the next morning, be deluged with letters about it. I have had my full share about this repeal of the black laws, and this intermarriage of races.

A few years ago, we saw banners carried full and high, inscribed "Save our daughters from Negro husbands!" (Laughter.) The daughters for whom these banners were borne were in no danger. Neither are they who are complaining now. My observations of the colored people are, that they have tastes of their own; and that in consequence you could not with a writ of mandamus compel such marriage, as were prayed to be saved from. (Applause and laughter.)

But, that is not all. There is no danger from the other feature of this legislation, whereby separate schools have been done away with. To-day, I got a letter of bitter complaint. It then occurred to me to put the matter to the test of practical experience. So I called in my boy, fourteen and a half years old, and my three little girls, all of whom are in attendance at the mixed schools of Columbus. I asked them about the matter. The boy said that there were a number of colored boys in the class with him. 'Do they disturb you in any way?' 'Oh, no,' he said, 'they don't bother me any, except all of us are bothered to keep up with one of them, who seems to have a notion that he must lead the class. If that boy was only out of the class, I wouldn't have a bit of trouble with them." (Great applause.) I stopped the inquiry right there. I thought if that was all the difficulty that could be seen by so observing a boy as mine, this whole matter of mixed schools would take care of itself for the future. Whatever is right will take care of itself."

Governor Foraker, after a fine eulogy on Grant, introduced Hon. G. H. Ely, a member of the senate, who rose amid long continued applause, and responded in an earnest speech. He was followed by Rev. J. Poindexter, Senator D. K. Watson, Poor Ben and W. Thomas. Letters were read from Senator Sherman, Hon. W. Lawrence and Dr. I. S. Tuppins.

At Springfield the platform was enstarred with many brilliant speakers. Among whom were Hons. J. W.

Keifer, C. M. Nichols, A. S. Bushnell, Mayor Goodwin, J. F. McGrew, Esq., Rev. Zeigler, Rev. Warren, J. K. Mower, Esq., James Buford, Prof. Scarborough, Senators Ely and Pringle, and Poor Ben.

Again we shall only quote a few of the many striking things said by the different speakers.

Rev. W. H. Warren said: "Another victory has been gained by right and justice, in the body politic. What is for the elevation of one class is none the less so for the other. All legislation recognizing any difference between men born of different races, or nationalities, or creeds is eternally wrong and should be swept away."

Gen. J. W. Keifer said: "Lincoln recorded that the slave should be free. The thirteenth amendment records the judgement of war; the fourteenth recognized citizenship; The fifteenth made all equal at the ballot box; but the law just enacted, in Ohio, that says that there shall be no distinction of race or color in the great free schools of the country, is the best and final one."

Rev. Poindexter said that Poor Ben reminded him of Thomas Corwin, the wagon boy, and he did not like to follow such a man in a speech. "I am not here simply to rejoice that God recognizes the colored man, as the white man. I am fighting for a principle higher than that. I look to the South and see what prevails there; and I maintain that, unless the Northern states wipe out the existing differences, the people of the South will keep the black man in what they are pleased to term--his place,—and that a very narrow place. How often must we adopt the language of the great Lincoln, "Root hog, or die."

J. F. McGrew paid a glowing tribute to those who so ably discussed the question of mixed schools.

Prof. Scarborough said: "There was a great principle at stake in the battle that has been going on—the principle of equality. The Black Laws have been erased, and that principle is established.

Hon. Pringle said that he and his friend Ely had made a speech on this question, that counted for more than any made that night. And it was only one word. "*We voted aye, at Columbus.*"

Gen. Bushnell linked the longing of the American Negro for civil equality to the longing glances of the Israelites toward the promise land.

H. C. Smith, encouraged the colored people to take heart, hope, and work for the best; citing the satisfactory experience of Cuyahoga county.

Hon. Rawlins said that he had worked long to attain this end, and was glad to be present.

C. M. Nichols said: "I have the great honor in my day of being on the unpopular side of so many great questions. I thought I would sit still and let the procession get up to me. It has gotten to me. You have your rights, and I hope to live to see the day, when Ireland also shall be free."

James Buford simply thanked God that "this day has come."

Senator Ely said: "I am glad to realize that the words of St. Paul, uttered under the shadow of the acrobates, at Athens, centuries ago—'God hath made of one blood all nations on the face of the earth,' had at last been realized. Though the world has been very slow, it has at last come, and many hearts are happy to-night."

Poor Ben, the author of the bill, was the next speak-

er, and in words of eloquence that cannot be recorded, congratulated his fellows on the triumph, at last, of justice long delayed He said: "Mr. CHAIRMAN AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

By the favor of the Republican party, I have a great deal to say, and yet I cannot find language to express myself on this occasion. I am happy to begin with —I am more than happy, I am glad. I am more than glad, I am overjoyed. I am glad to meet you, and see so many fellow citizens come together to rejoice at the victory of the last battle for human liberty in the State of Ohio.

I am old enough to know something of the battles and the heroes of the past. I know something of the cost of the liberties that we now enjoy, and have some idea of their increased value. I remember, in the years of my childhood, there was a song then, sung in Pennsylvania, 'Roll on, Liberty's Ball.' I was but six years old, and how could I know any thing about it? But there was something in my young soul that told me it would roll, and thank God I have lived to see Ohio's brave sons 'Roll on, Liberty's Ball.' In 1840, when John G. Burney started this ball to rolling, in the United States, there were only 7,150 who dared to say, 'Roll on, Liberty's Ball!' In 1844, 167,000 said 'Roll on, Liberty's Ball!' In 1848, when Fremont's party was born, 246,000 sang the same song. In 1852, John P. Hale and George W. Julian started out shouting the same strain. Then my poor mother lifted up her voice and sang 'Roll on, Liberty's Ball!'

In 1856, when Fremont was a candidate, that grand old organization, the Republican party, started out, and 1,300,000 men voted for John C. Fremont, shout-

ing the while, 'Roll on, Liberty's Ball!' This ball was growing larger, and the South knew that it was coming. Our fathers prayed, and the Republicans voted. The Southerners framed constitutions to keep the ball from rolling; but prayer is a mighty thing, for over 2,000,000, in 1860, shouted, 'Roll on, Liberty's Ball!' Then the war cloud rolled on. We kept on praying, and it brought rain. They fought and voted, then said, 'Come and help us boys.' Our boys said, 'Give us a flag,' and they got it. The boys in the blue fought the battles and gained the victory; though it was a country in ruins. Then every man and woman cried 'Roll on, Liberty's Ball!'

Now, the joy of this day is like getting married, the wedding day, and the pound-cake. [Tremendous cheering.] But now we can expect no more from Ely and Keifer, and no more pound-cake from the Republican party. It can no longer be said that our children's teeth are on edge because their parents ate sour grapes. The schools are open; the churches are open; and the penitentiary is open. [Applause.] What I mean my friends, is this; if you do wrong they will punish you as other men; and if you do right, they will honor you. But the opportunities, blessings and privileges of this day bring with them corresponding responsibilities; and to make this victory secure, our race must vindicate itself in the State and country. With education for your heads, religion for your hearts and money for your pockets, you can stand up in your own innate powers. Ohio, third in population, now stand sfirst in human rights, with the immortal John Sherman in the lead."

Poor Ben's was one of the most eloquent speeches

given in Springfield, for it came from the heart of a man, who felt all he said. It was punctuated throughout by great applauses.

Good music was rendered at intervals during the speeches by the Cadet Band.

The demonstration of both white and colored citizens at the wigwam and at the banquet at the St. James Hotel, over the repeal of the Black Laws, was one of the most significant occurrences ever known in that city. The immense audience represented all races, and the utterance from the platform were most sensible, practical and inspiring. Both black and white men declared that now the American citizen of African extraction was the equal of any white man, under the law; they had their own future in their own hands, and were expected to be the architects of their own future. The sentiments of the occasion, though earnest and fervid, were in good taste, courteous, magnanimous, and in every way befitting. The committee of arrangements of the jubilee meeting, deserve the thanks of the thousands of citizens who enjoyed the addresses, and of the fortunate few who were invited to the banquet. Here toasts were responded to in rapid succession, and showed no inferior order of intellect, or lack of wit and humor. The guests were many of Springfield's most prominent citizens. At two o'clock A. M. the company began to disperse, dismissed with the benediction. Thus befittingly closed the labors of Poor Ben for the repeal of the Black Laws.

In February, 1887, Representative Ben introduced the Educational Bill, prepared by the W. C. T. U. Mrs. Fannie Leiter had been in Columbus more than a month trying to find some man with courage enough

to introduce a bill that tended toward the proper education of Ohio's boys and girls. Not an Anglo-saxon was found to champion the measure. All honor to Poor Ben, the Anglo-African, who dared to do right, regardless of what whiskey politicians might say.

The COLUMBUS DISPATCH says of this bill: "Poor Ben is credited by his hearers with having made the strongest speech that has been made in the Ohio House of Representatives for many years. There are always a few very able men in that body. The fact that he was a colored man, and advocated a bill to add to the text books of the public schools, one showing the physical effects of alcohol and tobacco on the human system, are matters of no little interest. His eloquence and arguments were loudly applauded by the members of both parties. Crowds of ladies haunted the chambers with the persistancy of crusaders."

They were on hand to hear Poor Ben, and their enthuiasm was kept up until the vote was taken, showing that the bill had passed by a vote of 62 yeas to 27 nays. 46 Republicans and 16 Democrats to 8 Republicans and 19 Democrats.

This announcement was greeted with cheers from the ladies, all of them having taken off their gloves so as to clap their hands the louder. And for once the women of the State gained a victory through the earnest efforts and unanswerable debates of Poor Ben.

Mr. Hull congratulated Poor Ben on being the only man on the Republican side, who had the courage to speak his convictions. Col. Harlan of Hamilton county, acted as interlocutor and made the chief argument against the bill. As it was one colored member against another the House listened with rapt attention. Col.

Harlan's questions seemed only to inspire Poor Ben to greater lights of eloqnence, and drew from his soul the most withering fire of keen retort, that had been heard in the House, completely silencing his opponent, and fully vindicating the race from the aspersion, sought to be put upon its representatives. Poor Ben was well primed, and his answers to Col. Harlan's factious questions were quick and distressingly pointed. His witty retorts brought roars of laughter, and round after round of applause. When Col. Harlan took his seat he almost wished that he had not contested for his place in the House, and that the election frauds of Hamilton county had not been so favorably settled for him.

Twenty seven states had already passed similar bills, and the following one of Poor Ben's made Ohio the twenty-eighth.

The Scientific Educational Bill was as follows:

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio*, That the nature of alcoholic drinks and narcotics, and special instruction as to their effects upon the human system, in connection with the several divisions of the subject in physiology, shall be included in the branches of study taught in the common or public schools; and in all educational institutions supported wholly or in part by the State; and shall be studied by, and taught to all pupils, in all schools, as thoroughly as other like studies required, are studied and taught in said schools.

SECTION II. That it shall be the duty of the proper officers in control of any school described in the foregoing section, to enforce the provisions of this act; and to any such officer, school director, committee, superintendent or teacher, who shall refuse or neglect

to comply with the requirements of this, or shall neglect or fail to make proper provisions for the instruction required, and in the manner specified by the first section of this act, for all pupils in each and every school under his jurisdiction, shall be removed from office, and the vacancy filled as in other cases.

SECTION III. That no certificate shall be granted to any person to teach in the public schools of the State or any of the educational institutions, receiving money from the State, after the first day of January, 1889, who has not passed a satisfactory examination in physiology and hygiene with special reference to the nature and effects of alcoholic drinks and other narcotics upon the human system.

Poor Ben had been in his seat regularly all the session, and had said so little; but he soon disabused any mind that deemed him mute, when these two bills, that so interested him, came up for discussion.

Nowithstanding the many opposers of the measure in the Senate, and their various objections, Poor Ben championed the bill nobly, and it passed.

His term of office as a legislator was now drawing to a close; and he was being warmly urged by both white and colored friends to announce himself a candidate for reelection to the office of Representative.

Ex-Representative Gest's paper, "The Torchlight," which had not been favorable to our Greene county member, on account of the bill he fathered, waved its objections, and paid him a very modest compliment, under the circumstances. We give the editorial:

"In view of Hon.——— candidacy, we desire to say that the Torchlight has not and will not be in any manner connected with any movement or scheme that

may be inaugurated for the purpose of defeating him. He has made, so far as we are informed, a capable and industrious Representative; and it is eminently just to him, that a second term for him be considered in that light. The Torchlight will not oppose, or fight against him, because he is a colored man, or indirectly foster or excite prejudice against him by reason of that fact; or the legislation of which he is the reputed father. This statement we consider is just to ———, and, at the same time, an honorable position for us to occupy."

Of Hon. Poor Ben's candidacy, little or nothing was positively known, until March 9, 1887; as he had refused on all occasions, to state whether or not he would be a candidate for reelection.

In answer to a letter addressed to him by a number of friends, on the subject, he said:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Columbus, Ohio,
March 9, 1887.

To C. L. Maxwell Esq.,

DEAR FRIEND,

According to promise, I send you my final decision, on the question of my candidacy. I have come to the conclusion, that I will not stand for a reelection. My business relations are such, that I cannot attend to my duties as I ought. Therefore, you can inform my friends, who may inquire, that I am not a candidate; but feel to be under many obligations to my friends and the party, for having done so much for me and my race. I am more than thankful to them, and will in the future, as in the past, do all that lies in my power to forward the interest of the party, and help my friends of Greene county.

I am Yours for God and the race,
Poor Ben."

Poor Ben found that the duties of another term would interfere with his labor as Secretary and Treasurer of the African A. M. E. Church, and would be a hindrance to the fulfillment of the requirements of the high office of Bishop, to which it was universally understood he was to be elected. His withdrawal was not on account of the opposition created by the repeal of the Black Laws, for he still could have secured the nomination of Greene county, whose loyal citizens are not apt to forget his great service in time of need to the Republican party. How, by his matchless oratory and eloquence, he had on many occasions aroused the latent patriotism in the hearts of thousands, black and white, when it most needed stirring up. Neither will they soon forget, when all over the 7th Congressional District, there was fraud and treachery practised. as well as reckless disregard to duty, on the part of many Republicans, Poor Ben dropped important work on the Pacific coast and hastened home, entered the political strife, and worked day and night for the success of Hon. John Little, and the entire Republican ticket. The fact that, notwithstanding, the bogus colored conventions gathered by Campbell and the Schwab gang, flushed with money, only three colored men in Xenia deserted the party, is a sufficient evidence of what Poor Ben's services were worth. Whether he made a mistake in the repeal of the Black Laws, or whether his success is the master stroke of his political life, the Republicans will ever hold Poor Ben in honor. If we are not mistaken in the credit, to use his own language, "Republics may be ungrateful, but Republicans never."

On March 7th, 1887, Poor Ben returned home from

his labors, and was received with cheers and gratitude. A grand reception was tendered him at the Xenia Opera House, by the citizens. The gathering was solely to do honor to the man who had done his whole duty as Representative of Greene county.

The platform was occupied by Hon. John Little, Poor Ben, Dr. Jackson, Elder Graham and Lawyer C. L. Maxwell. Short but eloquent addresses were delivered by each gentleman. Mr. Maxwell then introduced Poor Ben to the audience, and with finely worded remarks, presented him with an elegant gold-headed cane, on behalf of his constituents. Poor Ben, in response, spoke as only he can. He felt that while a member of the House of Representatives, he had been treated with a courtesy, by the members, not excelled by the annual conferences of his own Church and people. In returning the trust imposed upon him by Greene county, he did so without the smell of corruption, or taint of fraud thereon. His address was full of fiery Republicanism. Hon. Poor Ben was, at first, very much affected on receiving the cane.

A few of the good things he said were: "Republicans of Greene county, I have not words to express my thanks for this precious gift from those who in their hearts feel kindly toward me for the humble part I had the honor to perform as their Representative in the Legislature. For reasons over which I had no control, I felt it my duty to decline a reelection. It affords me no small pleasure to know that I have not disappointed my constituents. True, I have not been able to satisfy all; neither would have any one else you might have sent."

He then reviewed the work of the Assembly, urged

his friends of color to stand up in their manhood, and use every endeavor to advance their race. In closing, he again tendered his thanks for the handsome cane presented to him; not only for himself, but on behalf of his sainted mother, whose spirit has ever been an inspiration, leading him to do right; and on behalf of his wife and children; and lastly in the name of his race.

His closing remarks were very touching and beautiful. With the adjournment of this reception closed the career of Poor Ben as a Legislator.

As at the beginning, he was showered with many congratulatory telegrams and letters, so the close of his labors was showered with essages bearing compliments of the highest order from more friends than can be mentioned here.

It is peculiarly noteworthy that Representative Poor Ben was chosen to represent a county entitled to only one member, and yet he was the sole representative. His case is the only one in the United States of a colored man being the only representative of a white constituency, by selection and election.

During his term of office, he was chairman of the Committee on Temperance. He was also called upon to preside over the Republican Legislative caucus at Columbus, a position which he filled with marked ability and dignity.

Poor Ben, all though life seems to be fated to receive the honors so justly do him, by keeping his good name unscathed and his honor out of peril, has caused his name to become a pseudonym for clubs, lodges, camps, churches and schools, ages after he will be gone.

During Poor Ben's stay at the capital, the David Jenkins Club gave a grand banquet in honor of the three colored representatives. Never in the history of the city had there been a fairer representation of Columbus people than gathered at the parlors of Ruhl and Corbott that Thursday evening.

Letters of regret were received frrm Governor Foraker, Hon. Fredrick Douglas, Hon. B. K. Bruce, Prof. C. A. Cottrill, Hon. P. H. Clark, T. Thomas Fortune, and others.

At the head of the table sat Riley F. Williams, the President of the Club, surrounded by its special guests; Hon. Poor Ben of Green County, Hon. J. A. Brown of Cuyahoga County, and Hon. Robert Harlan of Hamilton County. Among the other gentlemen entertained by the Club were Secretary of State Robinson, State Treasurer Brown, Adjutant-General Axline, and the representatives of the press. Mr. Williams, as president, delivered the address of welcome.

Mr. I. D. Ross, as toast-master of the evening, called upon Mr. Walter S. Thomas to respond to the sentiment: "Our Honored Guests." The well known young colored orator and politician made remarks which were entirely extemporaneous, but he handled the subject in an unusually happy manner. He began with Colonel Robert Harlan, and told his listeners of the many acts which that gentleman had performed in behalf of his race, beginning with the first work done towards obtaining an appropriation from the State for colored schools, at a time when it was an offense to teach a colored person to read and write. He followed this with a sketch of the Colonel's work down to the present time, and touched upon the handsome

indorsement given him by the people of Hamilton County. Poor Ben's progress from the coal mine to the christian ministry, and Jere A. Brown's jump from the carpenter's bench to the legislator's seat, were described in that peculiarly happy style which belongs alone to Mr. Thomas, bringing forth round after round of applause.

Colonel Robert Harlan's life-long efforts to obtain school entrance for the colored children of the State made the toast "Common Schools" a very appropriate one for him to respond to, and the manner in which he handled the topic was fine and well received. He appealed to the few hundred Negro school teachers of the State not to stand in the way of the abolition of separate schools for colored children, and pointed out to them the vast opportunities for noble work among the members of their race in other states of the Union.

Daniel A. Rudd, the young colored editor, was thought to be the fittest member of the Club to tell about "Our National Guard," of which he was a member. He pointed out the glorious things the Ohio National Guard had done, and made an eloquent appeal for its proper treatment by the people and the legislators of the State. In conclusion he told the David Jenkins Club that the Guard appreciated the compliment paid them in being remembered on the list of toasts. Said he: "We sing of our silent soldiers, 'Dead, but their souls go marching on.' When I look over the list of Ohio statesmen who now repose in the bosom of an unknown eternity, and reach the name of David Jenkins, your intellectual brilliancy sends back the answer, 'Dead, but his soul goes marching on."

Hon. Poor Ben was one of the best speakers of the evening and spoke upon "The Negro in Politics" in the powerful and eloquent style which makes his oratory so effective. He said:

Mr. President and Members of the David Jenkins Club:

Accept my hearty congratulations for the honor you have conferred on me personally, and the thanks of my constituency, whom you honor by honoring their representative.

Green county is the banner Republican county of the State, for in that county we hold more offices than in any other county in Ohio. All honor to the noble Republicans of that county. May their numbers increase, until every county in the State recognizes that the Negro is in the politics of the State to stay, and work for the success of the principles of liberty and equality, and may he be as loyal in the future as in the past.

I wish I had the time to inquire as to the origin of the Negro, to find his ancestry, to inquire into his social and political status, of his moral and religious habits, of his intellectual achievements and culture, and, finally, to bring to the attention of this audience some of his ancient glory. For I am credibly informed that there was a time in the history of man that the Negro was the master in the commonwealth of letters, and was sovereign of the kingdom of the civilized world. Then it was that the music of his sons and the songs of his daughters were only excelled by the orchestra of nature, and was the only true type of the harmony of earth and the symphony of heaven. Alas! he became subject to the laws of other men, with whom he aimed to be in harmony in devising a plan for the

government of earth, he was displaced, his subjects were enthralled, and the sons of kings became the servants of servants. The herdsmen were enthroned on the seat of power. The Negro was the first politician of the world. The first city built by man was built by the ancestry of the Negro, and from that day until now he has always had something to do with the politics of the nations. Who was it that first announced the division of governments? Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses, was the first to set captains over tens of hundreds, tens of thousands and tens of hundreds of thousands. Thus we have municipal government, county government, state government, and finally national government.

We have heard it said that there were only three steps from Africa to England—from Africa to Greece, from Greece to Rome, from Rome to England. Thus we have judicial, executive and legislative departments of government, the sense being African.

When we consider him in politics, there are many things to consider in relation to him as an individual, in his family relations, in his social status, in his relation to art, science and religion, for on these depend his place in politics.

In this country of freedom, we have intellectual power, social power, spiritual power and political power. Then there is, what is termed by some, commercial power. The Negro has exercised to some extent all of these. How successful he has been is not a question of debate. There is not a man, who has any knowledge of the history of this country, but will give him credit for his industry The cities of the South are monuments of his skill as a mechanic. The bloom-

ing gardens and the cultivated fields are the evidences of his industry as an agriculturist. The many inventions which has been credited to his name, and his master's, where he is not mentioned, are monuments of his genius. The happy homes and cultured families are the signs of his frugality.

There never was a day in the history of this country that the Negro was not the most influential member of all political parties. He has been in every convention since the days of Washington. He has elected more men to places of trust and honor and emolument than any other power in politics. He has defeated the ambition of many a thousand, who have not loved him nor his children. He has been in, on or under, every platform of all the parties in the last century. He was in the Whig and under the Democratic, but not until the days of the Free Soil and the Republican parties, *in* and *on* the platform, and from that day until now he has been a full participant in the body politic.

The Negro in politics during the Reconstruction in the South was called upon to take charge of the constitutional conventions. He was required to make a constitution where he was formerly prohibited from reading the Declaration of Independence. He was called on to provide for the legislative, executive and judicial departments of State, and he had to be teacher and pupil at the same time. He was unacquainted with the duties of government, but there was one thing he did know, he knew what freedom was, and with him the best and sweetest consolation was the liberty of his race, and the supremacy of the Union. He did his duty well. Some persons speak of him as a failure, but, when we consider the school in which he was

educated, we think he has done nobly. In twenty-five years he has filled every position in the government, except one.

We have had two United State Senators, Revels and Bruce; one Registrar of the United States Treasury, who was required to sign the money of the country. He was one of the race whose unrequitted toil had enriched the Nation.

We have had fifteen congressmen, and fourteen hundred who wanted to be congressmen. We have had one chairman of the National Republican convention; we have had the chairmanship of State and county conventions; seven lieutenant governors in the Southern States, and one acting Governor of Louisiana.

The following will show what success the Negro has had in the political field. If any man can show a better record for any people since the day Nimrod became the first monarch of the earth, let him produce it, but until then we claim the first place in the temple of success.

Rev. John W. Asbury was on the State ticket in Kentucky, and was a Congressional candidate in the Henry Clay District of Kentucky.

1870—Joseph H. Rainey was elected a member of Congress from South Carolina and served eight years; R. H. Revels, United States Senator from Mississippi, first colored Senator in the United States. In 1871—Robert C. Delarge, member of Congress from South Corolina; R. Brown Elliott, member of Congress from South Carolina, served two terms; Benjamin S. Turner, member of Congress from Alabama; J. Milton Turner, appointed Minister to Liberia. 1869—E. D. Bassett, appointed Minister to Hayti. 1872—First

National Convention admits colored men. 1873—John R. Lynch, member of Congress from Mississippi; re-elected in 1875 and 1880; P. B. S. Pinchback, United States Senator from Louisiana. 1877—Frederick Douglass, first colored U. S. Marshal; John F. Quarles, first colored Consul to Spain, Oscar J. Dunn, of Louisiana, first colored Lieutenant Governor in the United States; J. B. Smith a colored member of the Massachusett Legislature, introduced and secured the passage of the resolution to erase from the records the resolution of censure against Charles Sumner; Hon. John R. Lynch, temporary chairman of the National Republican Convention, at Chicago, Ill., June, 1884; Rev. Jno. T. Jenifer, first colored man in the State of Ohio appointed postmaster, at Wilberforce University, by Andrew Johnson, President, in 1866. 1881—Sidney Hinton, first colored Legislator in Indiana, secures repeal of Black Laws; Prof. R. T. Greener, Dean, Howard University, Washington, D. C.; Henry Highland Garnett, appointed Minister to Liberia. 1882—Wm. H. Hardin, first colored Representative in Wyoming, secures repeal of Black Laws; Blanche K. Bruce, appointed Register U. S. Treasury; J. P. Green, colored Representative, called to the Speaker's chair of the Ohio House of Representatives; J. F. Smythe, reappointed Minister to Liberia; C. C. Astwood, appointed Consul-General to San Domingo. 1877—J. W. E. Thomas, first colored man elected to the Legislature of Illinois:

STATE OFFICERS.—Oscar J. Dunn, Lieut. Gov. of Louisana; P. B. S. Pinchback, Lieut. Gov. and acting Gov.; C. C. Antoine, Lieut. Gov. Alonzo J. Ranson, Lieut. Gov. of South Carolina; Richard H. Glenn, Lieut. Gov.; F. L. Cardoza, Sec. of State and State Treas-

urer; Alex Davis, Lieut. Gov. of Mississippi; James Lynch, Sec. of State; J. C. Gibbs, Sec. of State, Florida; John McCabe, Auditor of State, Kansas; W. H. Brown, Supt. Public Instruction, Louisiana; J. C. Corbin, Supt. Public Instruction, Kansas.

Department of Justice, 7; Department of State, 20; Navy Department, 40; Department of Interior, men, 106, ladies, 9; Post Office Department, 54; Treasury Department, 342; War Department, 44. Total, 620. The Assistant Librarian of Congress; The Assistant Law Librarian of the Supreme Court, J. F. Wilkinson, a friend of mine.

James S. Tyler and W. S. Thomas were the first clerks in the State House. Rev. Jas. Poindexter, the now silverhaired pioneer, was the first colored man to run for the Legislature of this State. Prof. Peter H. Clark was a candidate for the Constitutional Convention of 1872. William Boyd was a member of the City Council of Urbana, and was president of that body in 1878–'79. C. L. Maxwell was City Clerk of Xenia for six years. Wm. Hunter has been elected three times Street Commissioner of Xenia. Dr. Lindsey is one of the Police Commissioners of the same city. Chillicothe elected Rev. W. J. Johnson, a member of the School Board, and this year elected a Councilman. The town of Jackson elected a City Clerk and Clerk of Township. S. G. Brigham is a member of the School Board at Springfield.

Then, as to other places, the Negro is in nearly every department of the State. In Guernsey county they elected a colored Township Clerk last year, and this year he was re-elected with an increased majority. J. R. Hawley was re-elected to the City Council of Wil-

mington. In this State, we have for the first time three members of the General Assembly. They represent the intelligence, wealth and industries of this State—the Queen City of the West and Forest City of the Lakes—one by the Hon. Col. R. Harlan and the other by Hon. Jere A. Brown. What a grand change, what a grand old party, that made it possible to see and witness such unparalleled advance as has been the case with the Negro in politics.

The most important part of the Negro in politics is the part he occupies as to the representatives in Congress and in the Electoral College.

More than one half of the Nation's illiteracy is in the South, and our race, if left to his own free will in casting its ballot, would always be on the side of justice and liberty.

Lieutenant Rudd, the gallant young soldier, has just recounted to you the deeds of valor performed by colored men—deeds written on the page of history with the sword and bayonet. Lieutenant Rudd's words have left their impress on my soul.

There is one thing that I desire to call the attention of the gentlemen present to. That is, we, as politicians, have neglected one duty that we owe to the men who made it possible for us to go into politics. I mean the gallant soldiers of the Union, the colored men, who were told that it was a white man's war when the first gun fired; but when the war cloud hung low, and the nation was trembling from center to circumference, when the minnie ball was whistling its song of death, then the colored men, who had been denied a place in the ranks of the Nation's defenders, forgetting the insults and wrongs of the past, said.

"Give us a flag so free, without a slave, and we will fight to defend it as our fathers did so brave." The order was issued and they were enlisted from the prairies of the West, from the pine forest of Maine, and finally from the Savannah of the South, the loyal sons of the race came, as fair as the moon, as clear as the sun, and as terrible as any army with banners, and sent up a shout that was heard around the world: "Onward, boys, onward! It's the year of Jubilee! God bless America, the land of liberty."

We must see that a monument is built to their memory in the National Capital, so that all the nations of the earth may know that our forefathers won for themselves an honorable place on the roll of fame, and wrote their names in blood as precious as was ever shed on fields of ancient or modern warfare. We want our children, as they walk on the streets of our National Capital, to see something to remind them of the part the colored soldiers took in the war for the Constitution and the Union.

We want something to enable them to say with the pride of an American, our country, our father's country.

The men who took part in the Revolutionary war have nothing to show in the National Capital that their strong arms were used to wring from Great Britan, the Queen of the Western Hemisphere.

But, sir, we intend to see that there is a suitable monument erected in the city of Washington to the memory of the heroic dead.

Let every Union soldier of the race assist in this matter. We want a convention of the veterans and appoint a committee to have charge of the matter, and

collect money, receive designs and then have the monument built and dedicated.

Then our children can come from near and far and kindle the fires of soul and body fanned with the breath of the young and rising generations, and the old veterans could once more meet at the Capital they suffered to save. What a grand time this would be to have the heroes of Fort Wagner and Port Hudson, the heroes of Nashville and Miliken Bend; march together in their front the banner of freedom redeemed to their sons and to the present and future generations.

Think of it, no monument to the men who were first to march into Richmond; no monument to the men led on by Capt. Callieux; no monument to the gallant Sergt. Carny and Major Delaney, who enlisted in the battle's van and cried 'rally! boys, for God and Gov. Anderson.' They must and will, so help me God, have a monument.

What shall we say of the Negro in politics? He has been an eminent success. He has done much good to the race and his country. He was loyal when others were disloyal. He was true while others were false to the country. He has exhibited to the world what it is possible for men to do. The Negro in politics means the Negro in human government. Where is his place and what is his position? Why, he must secure his place by his intelligence, industry, courage and character, wherever that puts him. The day has passed when we want a place for a colored man on account of his color, but for his worth as a man and political factor. But we do not want him thrown aside because he is a colored man, nor do we want him advanced on his race connection alone; but give us a fair show in the race of

life and for office. Let us beat them if we can, and they beat us if they can. All we ask at the hands of the political parties is to give us equal laws, equal opportunity, and then, if we cannot keep up let us fall to the rear, and take our place as followers and not leaders.

Gentlemen, I see before me the hope of the rising generation—young, intelligent men, who will not stop until every law discriminating against the race is wiped from the State and National statutes; until every man can enjoy his rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, no matter whether in Ohio or Mississippi.

Gentlemen, think of it! Twenty years of freedom, and not a foot of ground purchased for a monument for the men who laid down their lives that the nation should be preserved and a race redeemed! Twenty years of advancement and education, and no statute of brass or column of marble to the memory of the heroes of three wars!

Twenty years in the legislative halls and in the school-house, and no corner-stone of a monument by a grateful race!

Twenty years in the land of Canaan, yet no memorial on the plain of Gilgal!

I entreat the members of the David Jenkins Club to dedicate the work of the young and rising generation to the rearing of a monument to the memory of our *hero dead.* Let contributions come up from every State and from every county in the States, the free-will offerings of a redeemed people. Let Ohio lead the train of free-will offering, and every man, woman and child send their mite, and raise a shaft of beauty and glory to the gallant soldiers of the race, and send the word

from generation to generation that the 'black troops fought nobly.'

There are in the Southern States about 12,000,000 whites, and about 6,500,000 Negroes.

In these states, with one-third of the Nation's population, are found nearly three-fourths of the Nation's illiterates.

Thirty per cent. of the white minors, from 10 to 21, and seventy per cent. of the Negroes of the same ages are illiterate in the South.

The illiterate voters in the South, where one hundred and fifty-three of the two hundred and one electoral votes necessary to elect a president are cast, number 1,354,974.

In the midst of such ignorance, a popular election is but little more than a miserable farce. The Negroes are at the mercy of a few designing men, and the country is the sufferer, for the effect of the ballot is felt to the utmost extremity of the body politic, it touches every industry and trade, it accelerates or retards the wheels of commerce and fills the avenues of trade with life and general activity, such as is found in no other country.

We have here 4,923,451 persons who are unable to read the bible or ballot, and a man who can neither read the bible for instruction, nor his ballot so that he may know for whom he is voting, is at the mercy of his fellow-men, and is not competent to discharge the duty that he owes to his country.

The time allotted will prevent me from entering into the details of the various Congressional Districts and examining the methods by which the people are denied their just rights in the body politic.

The relation of the Negro in the politics in the country may be seen by the following from the census of 1880:

Total number of white persons twenty-one years and upward	21,984,202
Total number of white persons twenty-one years and upward unable to write	56,463
Percentage whites twenty-one and upward unable to write	9.4
Total males twenty-one years and upward, estimated	11,343,005
Total number males twenty-one and unward unable to write	886,656
Percentage male twenty-one and upward unable to write	7.8
Total number of females twenty-one and upward, estimated	10,641,197
Total number females twenty-one years and upward cannot write	1,169,804
Percentage females twenty-one and upward cannot write	11.0
Total number colored persons twenty-one years and upward	2,937,235
Total twenty-one years cannot write	2,147,900
Percentage	73.1
Total males enumerated	1,488,344
Total unable to write	1,022,151
Percentage	68.7
Colored females twenty-one years and upward	1,349,891
Total enumerated unable to write	1,125,749
Percentage	77.6

Thus you see, that in the government of general government we ought to have more than two congress-

men. We now only have the Hon. J. E. O'Hara, from North Carolina, and gallant Capt. Robert Small, of South Carolina. Think of it! Only two when we ought, at the least calculation have ten men at the seat of government to represent the cause of the laborers of the South and the interest of human liberty!

One of the grandest men of the century is the illustrious citizen, the prince of orators, Frederick Douglas, the first man of our race to receive an appointment that was one of honor, trust and emolument, and in its very nature material, and international in its execution. He has long represented our longoppressed and suffering people. When there was no arm to save, when there was no heart to pity, when there was no eye to see our wrong, and when we were voiceless in the councils of the Nation, he was our clansman—the voice of one crying in the wilderness Prepare ye the way for my people! The hour of deliverance has come, and we all rejoice in his light, as a true and tried leader.

Gentlemen, while we rejoice to-night over the victories of the moral heroes in the past, over the race prejudice of a century, we must not forget what it has cost in blood and treasure, what is the price of this banquet, no one can tell; who can estimate what has been paid, and what yet remains to be paid, for the hospitality of this David Jenkins Club.

Who can bring the labor of my dead mother, who, in other days, furnished me bread, sometimes corn bread, that it might be possible for me to eat at this banquet, where the choice viands of the season are waiting for us?

What care was exercised by her to impress on my mind a love of race, and my duty to man. I wish I could have *her here to join with me.*

Let us thank God for kind mothers, who were devoted to the interest of the race, and gave us our early lessons of manhood.

We should not forget the disinterested labors of the fathers of the past, men, who, without a hope of reward, were true to all the interest of the race, and went forth weeping, bearing precious seed; men who sowed in tears, that we might rejoice in the fruition of the hope of the race. We have the man who made the first run in this State for the Legislature, James Poindexter, the pioneer in all efforts to elevate man, and to secure equality for all men. He has been permitted to live to see the day of redemption, and to-night he joins with us in our rejoicing, and is now willing to pass the banner of liberty into the hands of the young men who are to assist in governing this, the greatest nation of the earth, and say to them: "Young men, this old *banner* has *never trailed* in the dust, nor has it ever protected a traitor to the race nor to the old flag."

Gentlemen, let us be united in the great work of race elevation. Let each member of this organization be a moral, intellectual and political force in his community. We must dedicate ourselves to the patriotic duty of erecting a monument to the living. We must use the powers of race elevation; we must have education for the head, love for our hearts, and money for our pockets. God bless the David Jenkins Club, of Columbus, Ohio.

Hon. Jere A. Brown, the member from Cleveland, is himself a horny-handed son of toil, and knew where-

of he affirmed when he talked about "Our Relations to Labor." While a strong defender of the right of the labor cause, and of labor organizations, he is conservative and sensible, and his recommendations, delivered with a fervid eloquence, were received with enthusiasm by the members and guests.

Mr H. C. Smith, of Cleveland, editor of the Cleveland Gazette, issued in the interest of the colored race, made a strong speech about the "Press," in which he showed the importance of that factor of civilization, and promised the support of his paper to everything having in view the betterment of the colored man.

Mr. G. A. Weaver as the best looking man present, responded to the sentiment, "The ladies." Had any of the fair sex been present they must have been highly pleased with the eloquent praises given them by the young orator, and even the fifty-three men who listened to him were compelled to give noisy evidence of the coincidence of their views with his.

Mr. C. L. Maxwell ended the toasting by responding to a call from the master of ceremonies to tell about "The David Jenkins Club." His speech was eloquent and loudly applauded.

General J. S. Robinson, Adjutant General Axline, Rev. Jas. Poindexter and State Treasurer J. C. Brown were called upon, and spoke in glowing terms of the Negro's past and future.

Between toasts splendid music was furnished by the Clipper Quartette, composed of Messrs. John Brown, Ben. F. Payne, George Redd and Walter Spotswood. After their first song they were encored three times, on one occasion giving a song in which Mr. Redd was

given a chance to show his qualities as a warbler. It was pronounced as fine as any professional's warbling. Mr. Dan F. Smith, of the Exchange Hotel clerical force, sang the bass solo.

The banquet was in every respect a success, and reflected great credit upon the management.

Chapter XIX.

THE A. M. E. CHURCH.

POOR BEN became a member of the General Conferenceof the A. M. E. Church in 1872 at Nashville, Tenn., and served it in the position of assistant secretary. He was elected secretary-in-chief of the General Conference of 1876, which convened at Atlanta, Ga. In 1880, the General Conference met at St. Louis, Mo., and he was elected to serve a second term.

Of this gathering of noble men and christians, the "*Globe Democrat*," which was the only city paper that gave its readers full and copious reports of the proceedings of the Conference, paid it this high compliment:

"During the past two weeks, the Quadrennial Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, has been in session, and the occurrence is one which deserves more than a passing notice. Our readers are able to judge for themselves of the high personal character, the religious activity, and the genial intelligence which have marked the conduct of the members and the proceedings of the Conference. But, to our mind, the most remarkable part of it is not that the meeting should be a body of so much worth, but that there should be such a thing as a Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

During the session, the delegates have been noticed on the streets and on 'Change, and elsewhere, and their appearance has created an universally favorable impression. Their grave, wise, kindly, thoughtful faces, dignified bearing, courteous manners, and espe-

cially something in the rich deep tones of voice, so common, even among the lowliest of the African race, have done much to dissipate old prejudices, and to give a better and juster idea of the Negroes in this country. Seeing them carrying on important deliberations, handling immense responsibilities, ecclesiastical, pecuniary and social, managing great trusts, and all with order and success, it is impossible not to admit that the future of the African race, in this country, far from being a danger or a menace, is something which needs only time and opportunity to convert it into a source of national strength."

And yet it has only been twenty years since the time, when in St. Louis, slavery was looked upon as the natural condition of this race. Only forty years since the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Cincinnati, formaly rebuked two ministers for preaching against slavery. Twenty years ago, the bishops and the delegates who are now welcomed in St. Louis, as pillars of a free church, would have been put under surveillance as "free niggers," and anything like a meeting of such a dangerous class would have been impossible. The world has moved somewhat in twenty years, and in that time something has been done for humanity and freedom, and for the equal rights of man. Though we have made it an inflexible rule never to mix politics with our religion, it is very hard to resist the impulse now, to say a few plain words against that slaveholding, persecuting spirit of Democracy, which has not moved quite as fast as the world has in the last twenty years, and which, if it had its way to-day, would make things lively for any conference of the A. M. E. Church it might come across.

The General Conference of 1880 elected Poor Ben to the office of financial secretary. At this time he had charge of the St. Paul Church at Columbus, O. The

"*Sunday Capitol*" of that city made this comment on his election:

"Rev. ——— has been for the last three years the popular and well known pastor of the St. Paul A. M. E. Church, located on Long St., and now his labors come to a close, and he takes his departure to enter upon a new work. At the last General Conference of the A. M. E. Church, held at St. Louis, Mo., ——— was honored by being elected financial secretary, an office second only in importance to that of a bishop. His bond is $10,000, which shows the magnitude of the position. His bond is signed by some of the leading white men of Columbus, an emphatic compliment to the reverened gentleman.

He goes to Nashville, Tenn., where his general office is located; but he will do considerable traveling. He has just returned from Washington, D. C., where he went to qualify for his new position. Coincidently, it is said, that ——— made his trial sermon on April 9, 1865, the day of Lee's surrender. Also, just fifteen years ago, he was licened to preach and ordained in the very church at Washington, where, the other day, he was inducted into the office of grand secretary.

The well wishes of many friends follow ——— into his new field of labor."

Poor Ben's first term of office in this capacity expired in April, 1884, and at the General Conference of the year which convened at Baltimore, Md., he was re-elected by an almost unanimous vote. His financial summary for the four years being $169,389.75, and the percentages retained by the several conferences amounting to $54,500.51, he having traveled during that time over 51,000 miles.

Poor Ben was elected Bishop of the A. M. E. Church, May 19th, 1888, and ordained May 24th at the Quadrennial Conference of the Church which convened at Indianapolis, Indiana.

He was appointed to the Seventh Episcopal District, composed of the States of South Carolina and Florida.

He made his first visit to this district, July, 1888, and since his episcopal residence in South Carolina, he has done much toward building up Allen University, and has increased the number of students to three hundred and ninety. Through his efforts a new chapel has been built and paid for.

The following statement will show the financial progress made during the first two years of Poor Ben's administration:

INCREASE IN DOLLAR MONEY.

Columbia, in two years, has increased				$2,646.37
S. Carolina,	"	"	"	$1,244.06
Florida,	"	"	"	$1,227.45
E. "	"	"	"	$3,073.58
			Total,	$8,191.46.

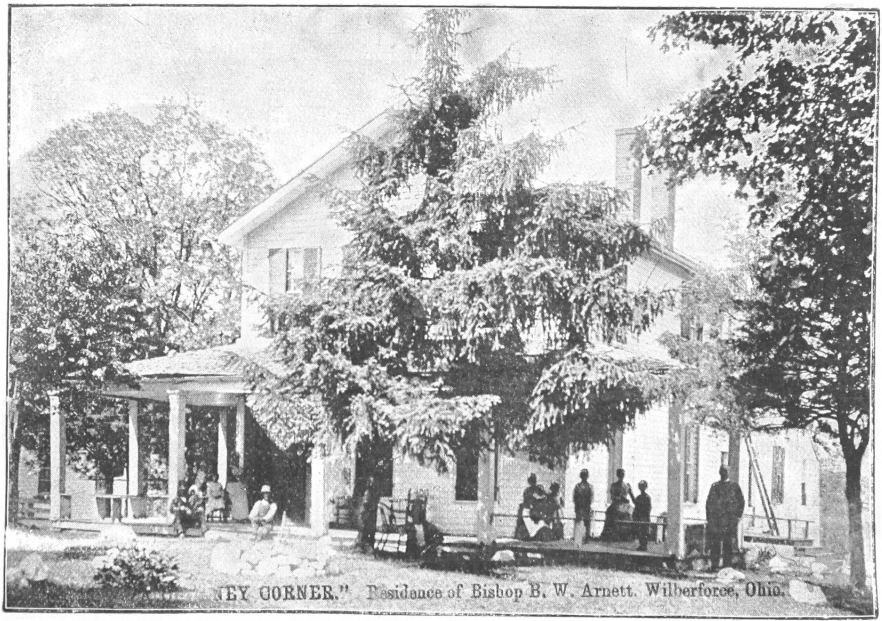
DOLLAR MONEY TABLE OF YEARLY INCREASE.

	1880.	1890.
Columbia,	$3,594.15	$4,301.00
South Carolina,	$2,813,00	$4,127.00
Florida,	$1,207.95	$1,870.00
East Florida,	$2,423.25	$4,463.85
Totals,	$10,038,35	$14,791.85.
		$10,038.35.
	Increase,	$4,753.50.

For the support of the educational department of the Church, Poor Ben has been laboring earnestly and with great success financially for the last two years in the district over which he presides. The following statement will show the large sums collected at the various annual conferences of the States of South Carolina and Florida: The Florida conference has given for education alone, the sum of $1,793.00, the East

Florida conference, $2,504.47, making a sum of $3,297.47 given by the State of Florida. The Columbia, S. Carolina, conference has given $3,378.00 for Allen University; the South Carolina conference has given $2,040.50. Both conferences have given for the education of the race $9,715.98.

During the past few years of episcopal duties, Poor Ben has not only attended the conferences of his district, but has shown by his labors that he is intensely interested in the educational work of the church and largely instrumental in aiding in founding and endowing various schools, and in selecting efficient teachers for both the colleges and public schools of the South. Although his term of episcopal service has been very short, yet he has traveled extensively, met in all the sessions of his district conferences, preached many sermons, ordained eighty-five deacons and eighty-four elders; besides rendering services on various special occasions. He is an indefatigable worker in church, school and state, as well as society; and has already acquired a national reputation in the bishopric.



NEY CORNER." Residence of Bishop B. W. Arnett. Wilberforce, Ohio.

POOR BEN'S HOME.

Chapter XX.

His Home.

As a husband and father, Poor Ben claims a notice in this chapter. Some of the incidents of his life have been chronicled, and we have followed him through the many vicissitudes of nearly fifty years, and now view him as a man of family, of varied intelligence, of religious and political notoriety, occupying positions of highest note and trust. Now as the mid-day of life is verging into the evening, we behold him surrounded by warm friends, who stretch forth their hands in friendly greetings, from every division of this our glorious Union.

The image of his childhood home must still be unmarred in memory, and ever dear to him; yet, now, he has but to look about him and see a still dearer home —a home blest with the presence of an accomplished wife and mother, and dutiful children. A home so fitted that the lives of his dear ones are brighter and better than those of his parents and their little ones were.

Had his whole life-work been solely the establishment of this kingdom, this grandest of all institutions, a perfect home, Poor Ben would have accomplished a grand

work, and been worthy of the appellations husband and father in their fullest sense.

Aided by his noble wife, who possesses such a constellation of virtues, he has fitted up and ruled his kingdom with seven loving children as subjects. Children who, in after years, when father's and mother's eyes are to be looked into no more, when their voices may not be heard, nor their touches felt, will then be thankful that they made much of the bountiful gifts of good parents.

Only in coming years can they rightly read the expressible love in their mother's eyes, construe the gentleness lavished in her touch, the unbounded good in her firmly administered punishments, and sound the unfathomable gulf of generosity, from which father bestowed all his favors for the cultivation of their talents and virtures.

When they see their dear monuments of decay, touched by the finger of their Builder, crumble and fall, and the long entombed spirits rise through the immensity of space, it is then that the child drinks with a chilling sadness the real essence of human and paternal love.

The residence of Poor Ben is a spacious and lovely one, located at Wilberforce, Ohio, three miles from the city of Xenia. There is an air of peace and rest to be inhaled as one approaches the long and wide gravel drive leading to the entrance of this quiet country seat of Poor Ben's, this Tawawa Chimney Corner.

The sharp, angular character of the architecture of the building is softened and beautified by the mass of forest trees and evergreen foliage in which it seems to repose.

It is indeed a picturesque and home-like place, with its broad varandas, wide door-ways and substantially shuttered windows, without any of the varied and exciting colorings of our most recent villas. On entering, you find long comfortable halls and recesses, roomy parlors finely furnished, while beaming from every wall, are the many portraits of prominent men and women of our race. Passing on further, you will find yourself in the cheerful and spacious dining-room, within the walls of which, tri-daily may be heard that

> "Over powering knell,
> That tocsin of the soul—
> The dinner bell."

To the rear of this is the well stocked and kept kitchen, and adjoining store and wash rooms.

The rear of the lots contains the stable, cowsheds, and the hennery; animated respectively by Annie and her colt, old Sallie and her rollicking calf, and little Alphonso's and Flossie's host of pet chickens.

As you return and pass up the broad stairway, and through the upper halls, you have on either side large airy chambers, familiarly known by their numbers. On this floor are the sleeping appartments of the family, the spare rooms for the frequent guests of Poor Ben, his office and his library.

His library requires two rooms in which to be shelved. Every side is lined with books of all descriptions; ancient and modern, historic and religious; works of art and science. Nor are these works all culled from the white man's brains,now written by his pen, but hundreds of volumes of Negro literature fill two large book cases, and compare favorably with

the genius and talent of the volumes penned by hands of a fairer hue.

As one passes from the larger library, where the air seems perfumed with an A. M. E. fragrance, into the smaller room at the left of a small recess, he is struck most sensibly with the intense odor; for now one breathes the atmosphere of a purely African Methodist Episcopacy. Like an inhalation of ether, it pervades the whole system. First a musty swiff, then a fresh sup, then a commingling, and gradually one becomes so intoxicated with the spirit of African Methodism, that he exclaims, "If I were not an *E.* I would be an A. M. E."

The President, W. J. Simmons, D. D., of the State University of Kentucky, on a visit to Poor Ben's home, called it the "Mecca of African Methodism." No fitter appellation could adorn its arched gateway.

You have followed the writer's pen as it has pointed out to you a traveler, and the many road-side pictures, and more remote scenes along the highway of this being's life, whose full name you shall soon learn.

His whole life shows, incontestibly, what a poor creature, man, would be, however highly polished he may become, if he be destitute of the knowledge and experience of those comforts which true religion yields. It teaches what egregious fools men are, who squander a life time in worldy pleasure; seeing only the gay exterior, dazzled by its glare, without glancing inwardly and caring for the soul.

The man or woman who leads a godly life cannot utterly fail to gain the success that must belong to the servant of Christ; and such can mark the contrast be-

tween the anticipations of the reward of the soldiers of Jesus, and those of the wornout servants of sin.

We have not tried to wrap our subject up in language of profound research, nor in writing have we held to the unvarying gravity and dignity of an historian; but have indulged in familiar anecdotes, and mixed Poor Ben's very self freely with his personal affairs, and then added to the mixture of character and events the public affairs which his life commemorates.

With the double aim in view, first, of presenting him in pleasing simple story form to be read by the old, but more especially by the young; and second, of furnishing the future historian of the great and good pioneer men of our race a valuable storehouse replete with names, dates and events as well as other needed material, the writer hopes, in a measure, to have succeeded.

Poor Ben, throughout the varied occupations of his boy-hood days, evinced the same traits that now shine forth in the spring of man-hood.

The fortitude and courage displayed under his several misfortunes still holds its place in his nature as he nerves the summit of life's hill. His power of learning and teaching, preaching and organizing are ever ready and asserting themselves. His love of race, Church and benevolence still swells his soul to overflowing.

At the dawn of man-hood, Poor Ben began taking active part in the political campaigns of that day. Although he was not then seeking nor holding any public office, he was an open and ardent advocate of the Republican party, the Union, of peace and the reconciliation of the two elements, black and white. He

has labored faithfully, and at all times in the field, except when his Church and official engagements prevented.

Few men of any nationality in his state have attained a better standing politically; although it is undoubtedly true that church duties, to which he owes much, have divided his attention, and detracted from the exercise of his full powers and abilities in the strict line of politics. Yet public opinion still accredits him with the rank of an able politician.

His oratory is of that logical, earnest and persuasive kind, mixed with anecdote, satire and keen wit, which render a speaker popular on the stump, before the mass of people, and effective in legislative halls.

Poor Ben has been a beneficial worker in the campaigns of 1876, 1880, 1884, besides each Ohio campaign dating from 1872 to the present.

Notwithstanding his statesman-like turn of mind, he is never found making his religious calling and church offices subordinate to State or national interests, but paramount to all else. If he stumped during the week, he preached more eloquently on the Sabbath.

He has been, and still is an ardent laborer for common schools, and benevolent orders; a friend of education in all its branches, and few men are more fully trusted and highly esteemed in such interests in the community where he resides, and by his race throughout the Union.

Much more might be written in his praise, but such is his modesty that we forbear, lest we might inflict a wound where we simply aim to do justice.

The duties of the high and responsible position of financial secretary of the African Methodist Episcopal

denomination of America he ever discharged with the modesty and address which has characterized him in all his official and professional callings, together with his various labors for the up-building and aggrandizement of his race.

To all who know Poor Ben personally, or have learned of his true character through these pages, it is evident that his works will be a monument of which his native state, Pensylvania, as well as Ohio, and the entire United States, but more especially the A. M E. Church may well have cause to be proud.

We have given you, reader, all we could glean of the life work and surroundings of Poor Ben during the eventful epochs in which he has annually peeped over the shoulders of time, and caught sight of the back of fifty one years, as they fled in terror from the unrolled scroll of futurity.

It seems but a short time since we presented you a tiny subject, the infant little Bennie, whose existence began in the humble cot, near the banks of Dunlap creek, Brownsville, Pa. Now you recognize him in the broad shouldered man, six feet in height, remarkably well proportioned, and gracefully formed. His features of boy-hood days remained but little changed, and unhidden by a beard. His temperament active, his muscles of purest steel, his brain large, his forehead high, his eyes bright, cheerful and full of genial, soulful friendship, his mind full of quick apprehension, and his will strong, followed instantly by his convictions. His imagination active and creative, and by a mysterious combining of all these faculties, propensities and acquirements, with divine assistance,

Poor Ben has been lifted above the ordinary level of life among us as a race.

In the days of genius, when poets were born, not made like Caedmon, who a mere cow-boy, void of any form of education was aroused from sleep to compose verses on the creation, did so in admirable versification. Men may possibly have been "born not made," but in this day the true, noble man must not only *be born*, but he must afterward *be made*. Made like our subject by force of adverse circumstances, and by an imperative surmounting of every barrier, *be made*.

When in future years, family and friends mourn the absence of Poor Ben's sustaining and comforting presence, may his spirit still linger over the Church to which he faithfully administered, over the campaign fields and party he defended. May his name be enrolled on the heart register of his race in this Republic, and his illustrious deeds become a part of our race glories, to be cherished and perpetuated.

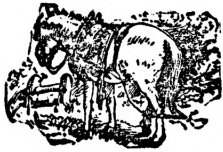
In every sphere, in every transmutation, from the cradle to the grave may his character be as free from reproach as the world now knows it to be, glowing with all the active virtues of a noble manhood.

You have learned the prelude of a life whose author is God. On earth we are permitted to hear the only concordant and discordant chords of the prelude to that wonderful master-piece, man. In heaven it shall be ours to enjoy the grand harmonic theme of each life.

Indulgent reader, Poor Ben shall hereafter be known to you by the more familiar and dignified name, which his rank and age merit: Hon. and Rt. Rev. Benjamin W. Arnett, D. D., Bishop of the A. M. E. Church. Under these titles, thousands greet him as an honored

ex-member of the Ohio Legisture, bishop and friend. Nearly a half million of Church members grasp his hand in fellowship, as a member of their church and ministerial fraternity, and as their ex-financial secretary, while nearly every benevolent order recognizes a brother in name.

Are you of humble birth, ignorant and obscure? "Go thou and do likewise!"



Chapter XXI.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

"Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part; there, all the honor lies."

WHEN Demosthenes was asked what was the first part of an orator, what the second and what the third, he answered, "Action." This may be said of a well spent life. Its every part is God-like action.

By true and noble action is achieved all that we call fame and success. Each being, who has reached the years of accountability, first, by thought and comtemplation, generates within self that which is good or ill; then, by action, propagates it; and thus strengthens the good or bad faculties of mind, body and soul. These actions, good or bad, may not, to the outer world, give a just estimate of the noble or ignoble qualities of the being; but they must clothe him with an immortal mantle, intensely loathsome, or infinitely glorious.

Perhaps we may find a man in whom the principle of honor is overstrained; too scrupulous in the eyes of the majority. Honorable to such a degree that the possession of the trait is a loss to him financially. There are profits to be made with another's means that will in no way effect the capitalist's interests, whose

wealth he handles. Shall he speculate and at the stipulated time turn over the amount and profits which his employer expects, and receive the praise, "well done," and at the same time shake down into his deep pocket the surplus of gain, which may, questionably, be called his own? Says one, yes; there is no dishonor in appropriating another's capital to your own use with the intention of returning it. Another says, the dishonor lies in appropriation without consent. Here are examples of what the majority would call honor in the one; overstrained honor in the other. In almost every application of the latter type, its consequences are good. It inculcates a chivalrous, noble feeling that renders its possessor incapable of a mean, unworthy action. Years of such life will impart strength to and confirm the fact in man, that all honor he has acquired has been useful to him in every action.

The first step is the detection of the need of a good character, which is the essential foundation of every business transaction with our fellowmen, and which aids in the unraveling of that tangled skein which makes up human motives, and by which mortality is most justly judged.

To have in early life that inborn sense of high honor, and to cultivate and augment it, while climbing up the steep ascent to manhood, and then like a load of ermine, securely protect and retain it in that dangerous descent from manhood's prime to the marble vault that awaits it at the base of life's hill, is a virtue so seldom found in man or woman that, when found, makes the being a rare variety, and a sort of deity among his tribe. Such honor as this is not a necessary conjunction with praise. The few of this type

that the world has produced, may have passed away without being accredited with but little of their share of praise, and sleep without a slab to mark their dust.

One Alexander lives while thousands are forgotten. Notwithstanding true honor may not receive its full share of merit, it is worth more to possess it than it costs to get it.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and before honor is humility.

Along the high way of life each one must encounter that which is in the way to meet him. He is a fool who stands still, and allows life to flow past him like a panorama; he is a greater one, who, minus honor and respect for his Creator, seizes life's machinery, checks its proper action, and tries to change its pictures for others better suited to his depraved, dishonored propensities. He can only distort and injure; yes, ruin them. When the destruction is complete, he must only look back upon awful shadows of scenery in ruins, the work of a dishonorable, Godless life. He must plod along and let remorse teach him that it is better to accept nature as it is, have confidence in God, and in his own powers as the gift of God; better to trust in work than in money. He learns that to trust in work is to trust in strength—strength of body —strength of mind—strength of soul—self existent, original strength, which is God alone.

Man only begins to be strong when he has learned that separated from the essential life, which is God, he is weakness itself. Weakness is inability to do, to have, to be; it is incapable of action, being or state. In God alone he lives. Man is strength, if he be one with his origin—God.

The strong man—strong in honor, strong in action, strong in faith in God,—is happy and gloriously hopeful as he see his sun going down behind the hill he is ascending toward the eastern sky of life; and, as he returns through old age to the second childhood, goes to meet the rising sun, the new day, the better life, which shall not be taken away.

Honorable, God-like action, leads a man from a lower to a higher condition in life—out of its earthy, away from its animal, mineral matter, into its air. Honor and faith teach him to live above the baser elements. Action and hope carry him from a plane of noble existence to a higher, while humanity and charity, persuade him to reach down a helping hand and draw up the strugling ones from the lower world. To know God as the beginning and the end, to recognize Him in all things and conditions of existence—is life. To do God's will in anything that reveals itself to us as duty, whether it be simple or mighty, is faith.

The being who has life and faith, however adverse his circumstances may be, need not be hungry long, nor have an empty pocket all his days.

Willingness and earnestness in labor.—Willingness and earnestness in labor is a trait which we see most vividly portrayed in the foreign element, with which our country is flooded. They are more especially characteristic of the German and Scandinavian, than of the French and Italian. There is no class of labor in which these people will not engage. Even the women and children go to work with a joyous good will, that is seldom displayed by the colored people.

I believe that it was Twickenham's great poet, that said, "Get place and wealth if possible with grace; if not, by any means get wealth and place." This seems to be the theory adopted by the foreigner, the moment he steps on the shores of our Republic. The black American ought then to drink deep of the spirit that fills his native air, and "get wealth and place by means of grace," as readily as the European, and Asiastic. The chief reason of our despicability is not our ignorance nor color alone, but our poverty. Every rich black man stands shoulder to shoulder with his white brother of equal wealth and ignorance. Every willing, earnest and respectable black laborer, ranks as high as his white co-laborer in the same vocation, with equal bulk of capital. The one is as highly esteemed by the wealthy class as the other. Whenever a colored citizen shows his equality or superiority in every feature of mind over a white citizen, then he becomes a co-laborer with or ruler over that white citizen, and the white man's views become coalescent with or subservient to those of the black brother. The truthfulness of this has been proven in many instances, during the past two decades. Now if this be true of individuals, it must be true of us as a distinct branch of humanity. If we, by the acquirement of morality, wealth and education, show our heretofore, slavery-dwarfed brains to be equal to those who, for hundreds of years, have been accumulating brain capital, then we may pull equally with them in harness, and accomplish the great work of life. If the whites continue in the advance, and we remain as we are, we must ever expect to be poor, dependent, despised; mere dust to be scraped from the heel, and discarded at the entrance of the door to opu-

lence and ease. But if we by rapid strides, the use of ready hands and willing minds, work earnestly at any honorable paying employment, studying and praying before and after the heaviest work is done, we shall in the next two decades, take the reins; and seated in God's great revolutionary wagon, drive on until we have been recompensed for the sweat and blood of our forefathers. Not returning evil for evil, we would carry a whip of kindness and mercy, and as we drive from Egypt to Canaan, seek shady roads and cooling streams for all. In such a revolution will be shown the hand of Justice rewarding the transgressors of former days.

Longfellow's "Retribution" comes to mind, and this beautiful passage seems applicable:

"Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience, He stands waiting,
With exactness, He grinds all."

Ambition, worthy and unworthy.—However high a point of excellence we may attain, however greatly esteemed by the world we may become, we must bear in mind that there have been, and ever will be, others equally or more excellent and esteemable.

"Hills peep o'er hills and alps on alps arise." Ancient, mediæval and modern history present striking examples of unworthy ambition, and its disastrous consequences. Such was the curse of Caligula and Nero. Inhuman sports, tyranny and extortion were the food of their ambition, which reached a height so great that they declared themselves gods; then as suddenly fell from that greatness to the level of the brute creation, and died at the hands of their slaves.

Cardinal Wolsey's ambition led him to aspire to the papal chair, a worthy ambition, perhaps, had it not caused him to swerve from right and commit an act so base to please his king that the unworthy deed instead of aiding, thwarted him; and when unworthy ambition had blighted his life, dying remorse lead him to exclaim, "Had I bnt served my God with half the zeal I served my king, in this hour, He would not have forsaken me."

So every desire which tends alone to selfish ends is sooner or later rewarded or foiled in its execution. That ambition which sacrifices the rights of family, neighbor and fellow-citizen, for the sake of reaching its goal, is unworthy; and he who possesses it, must ignobly fail in accomplishing his end. Rockets like this sort of ambition ascends; stick-like, descends.

Again this tendency to rise displays itself in another way. Many young persons who feel a spirit to be and to do, yet say, "Oh well! as each day comes and goes, I find no time or means for improvement and elevation above my present situation." Enviously they sit and watch the progress of others, and make no attempt to rise. Later in life another fit of jealous ambition seizes them; they madly thump their cobwebbed brain for business skill to come; for scientific knowledge to aid them; for even dear old mother wit; then the purse of gold, but not one of these wonderful assistants is at home to answer the call. So the door remains locked to the end of time. Debarred from the circles of intelligence, wit and wealth, such beings turn their faces fateward, and find themselves—*living, dead men.*

Still another sort of unworthy ambition exists, and is the ruling passion of the largest class of ambitious people. It is an ardent, egotistic thirst for praise and honor. It so often debases the possessor that he will creep and cringe in order to soar in the future, he will be lead by it to commit evil deeds under the appearance of principle. This ambitious passion is the most inflexible that lurks in the human breast.

That ambition only, is worthy, which seeks the good of others as well as that of its possessor. It is that trait which the apostle urged the Roman christian to cultivate—an ambition that "condescends to men of low estate;" an ambition that builds a bridge over that great chasms which so widely separates the rich and poor, the learned and ignorant, the black and white. That ambition only is worthy and good which teaches mortality to prepare for immortality; teaches the human to cultivate the divine; teaches all that existence here is only a preparatory step toward life eternal.

Success.—Man esteems a fellowman who is successful in an honest attempt; woman loves him; the world worships his name and lauds his successful achievements; God aids him in every good effort of self and race aggrandisement. Such a man is called smart, shrewd, and often lucky. The word luck in its general meaning, however, has little to do with a successful life. A man may seem to be lucky; but, when we so call him, we only mean that he possesses those faculties and characteristics, which rightly employed, almost invariably lead him to success.

Pages might be filled with instances of the characters of those who spring at rare opportunities for

securing wealth, or making a fortune and gaining fame in any enterprise. When such cases are met with, the cry comes, "Oh, he has had a streak of luck! Good luck runs in that family's blood!" These instances do smack strongly of luck; but, if it be chance or good luck, be assured that the man himself possessed prior to his streak of luck great qualifications for the business in which he was so successfully engaged. He accepted an offer under no more favorable circumstances than any other being has offered him, at least once during his life time. But by ambitious effort, earnestness in scheme, willingness in labor, or by a sort of a go-a-head-ative-stick-to-a-tiveness, he masters the plan of work before him, and becomes what the world proclaims him—a successful man.

We admit that while the times and peculiar surroundings amidst which a man moves, have much to do with his achievements; still he must have the means of prosperity within himself, or he will never be permanently successful. A man's work is born with him.

The name that ranks first with the gold kings, today, once said that he didn't want an unlucky man to come near him. He may have been superstitious, and to his avaricious soul an unfortunate creature may have seemed like a frightful thief of his fortunes. It is not well to encourage a superstitious idea; yet no one should make a partner of a systematically unlucky person. There is no chance work in success or failure.

The unsuccessful man is wanting in his make-up. He lacks perception or caution, discernment or honesty; as a business man he is sadly deficient. The time spent by the successful partner in correcting the

faults, preventing the poor investments of his unqualified colleague, dwarfs his own facilities for success, and finally is ruinous to their enterprise. Then, the cry of the superstitious is, "I told you A would fail if he formed such a partnership; for B is an unlucky man."

Luck has little to do—at least it never brings success. On the contrary, success brings luck. For success is man's while he yet lolls along on all fours, with nose to the ground in hope of finding a bit of refuse meat luckier curs have passed. When found, it strengthens his better endeavor. No kind hand of luck then throws him even a dry bone. But, when by dint of perseverance and indefatigable fixity of purpose, he finds that which luck refused to give him, and in time becomes successful and wealthy. Then it is that luck meets him on the road, pauses in his vaunting pride to fawn upon the "lucky dog," to extol him on the success and power so rapidly acquired, to shower him with the choice bits from the best game, to give him orders for quarters in the most prominent oxtalls of political preferment, to introduce him favorably to the "bulls and bears;" finally to kill the fatted calf and make the "lucky dog" a permanent guest at luck's mansion.

The man who, like the subject, rises above ignorance and other adverse circumstances through his own endeavors, thanks kind Providence for his failures in earlier life. His reduction to abject poverty was his most potent incentive. Driven by necessity, he became successful.

But for the evils of poverty and other misfortunes, scores of the most eminent men of the Nation, whose names and deeds are burned into the tablets of every

memory, would now be living lives of obscurity, without name, honor or wealth.

The past history of departed worth presents no more striking illustration of unlimited success in the life of a man than that of Benjamin Franklin's rise from small and low beginnings to such high rank and noted consideration. Yet, amid all the honor, fame and riches with which his success had crowned him, he retained that christian-like humility which teaches man not to love fortune alone, for it soon palls, nor that vain glory which only unfits him for the part assigned him.

Franklin proved his greatest success in the acknowledgement of his gratefulness to God for all the ills and fortunes of life, and for victory over death.

Though nearly a century has rolled above his ashes, yet he lives to-day a monument of prosperity. The words Benjamin Franklin and success are synonymous. This prophetic ephitaph written by him has become a revelation:

"THE BODY

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

PRINTER.

Like the cover of an old book,
Its contents torn out,
And stripped of its lettering and gilding,
Lies here, food for worms."

The ultimate destiny of the subject herein presented, cannot but be just such an example of success to the

colored American as Franklin was to the white American of former days.

A deep vein of genuine piety and gratefulness to his Counselor and Guide, pervades the words, actions and very life of Poor Ben.

Few public speakers have had more influence in politics and religion than he. By close study and deep reflection, he has developed an extraordinary force of intellectual power. He is concise without being abrupt, and, though not always eloquent, never montonous, for he appeals more to the understanding and common sense than to the imagination and fancy of those whom he addresses.

We have traced his eventful life from its beginning through its many vicissitudes to the present. In placing a sketch of this man's life into the hands of the intelligent classes, whether black or white, native or foreign, we place before you a bold refutation of the many misrepresentations which have been hurled against us as a race. Those who so dearly love to descant on the "natural inferiority" of the Negro are either ignorant of the characteristics of our race, or else too base and ignoble to acknowledge that truth which has already been proven, and which is as inevitable as the grave.

The Negro, like all other races, has risen from barbarism. There is naught in race, blood, color or features that imparts susceptibility of improvement to one class of people over another. Knowledge is not innate. The mental faculties, left to themselves from infancy, remain blank. It is development that makes the mind of man. He, who thinks that the Negro labors under some incurable, natural inferiority, is

more inferior in his perceptive faculties than the brute creation that recognizes man as man regardless of his race or color.