Black Chicago's First Century

Chapter 5 Fair and War,1893-1900

> No one who has not seen it, can form any idea of the immensity and grandeur of the exposition; nor can I give any adequate description of it. It has been very fitly called The White City,' and one standing under the Peristyle and looking down the Court of Honor . . . might easily imagine himself in a fairy city.
>
> James Weldon Johnson, 1893

> If we fail [in military operations in Cuba] the whole race will have to shoulder the burden.
>
> Colonel John R. Marshall, Eighth Illinois National Guard, United States Volunteers, 1898

A major reconfiguration of the African American community was readily observable between the opening of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 and the immediate aftermath of the Spanish American War, a period during which Chicago laid claim to being the nation's "Second City." This transformation kept pace as best it could with the city's growth and development and a discernible class structure was becoming recognizable, but now it rested on the accumulation of wealth rather than cultural attainment and status. At the same time black Chicago's institutional base expanded with far more diversification and covered more varied interests than ever before. Interracial relations in the main still rested on amiability and demonstrated that fluidity existed in a city committed to individualized competition and civil order throughout the greater community.

While the world's fair of 1893 represented Chicago's affirmation of its Phoenix-like ability to rise from physical disaster to world class municipal status, one based on its technological progress in architecture, transportation, merchandising, and major areas of industrial production, African Americans claimed and won a meaningful role as workers, patrons, lecturers, performers, artists and visitors despite a widespread historical misperception indicating their exclusion. Persons of the African Diaspora who arrived in Chicago as visitors included Nubians and New Yorkers, Zulu from South Africa and energetic and curious "New Negroes" from elsewhere in the Midwest, the Eastern seaboard and the American South. As white America looked forward, Frederick Douglass's black America could never forget slavery, so it also looked backward to a period of national shame hoping that white America would respond with contrition. To many blacks the fair held the symbolic importance of being an important ritual of possible white racial redemption and black acceptance into the nation's body politic and social fabric.

Five years later, war afforded Chicago and the nation an opportunity to demonstrate their readiness for global involvement in trade, diplomacy and empire. Conflict with an effete Spanish Empire moreover afforded African American males their first opportunity since the Civil War to demonstrate their manhood on the field of battle. While not all African Americans agreed with the nation's latest imperial foray, this conflict allowed blacks the chance to reestablish the black martial tradition and confirm a powerful claim to citizenship rights. Once again, African Americans demanded the right to get involved as full-fledged citizens, this time as front-line combatants at the beginning of the conflict.

The foundation for another century's realization of a dream of inclusion neared as the fair

triggered an increase in migration of the talented and confident. Community corridors of opportunity and success emerged, from the South Side along State and Dearborn streets to the West Side along Lake street and into pockets of settlement in between. Within these enclaves, cultural and ideological transformation accompanied social reconfiguration and marked the character of this generation of "New Negroes" – able, optimistic, unrelenting and successful.

I.

Demography: The Arrival of The Masses and The Talented Tenth

The migration of the masses as well as the Talented Tenth to Chicago continued, spurred in part by economic opportunity and by the stories of the fabled "White City," the sobriquet for the world's fair of 1893 (which was officially designated as the World's Columbian Exposition). St. Clair Drake found "the great influx of Negroes coming to the World's Columbian Exposition served to introduce the Negro community of Chicago to Negroes in other areas, resulted in some persons staying in the city, and increased the interest in church and associational life. The trends originating during this period found their full expression in the [new century] which followed." Monroe Nathan Work fixed the size of the black population in 1896 at 22,742 out of the city's total of 1,626, 635 persons based on a recent school census. Fellow researcher Richard R. Wright, Jr. reported that the population of 1900 experienced an increase of 2000 persons in two months because of violence in New Orleans that induced their flight. As to the relevance of the young within this population, African American children constituted only a small proportion of this mass of laboring class persons. When Work examined the 1900 census and focused on the emerging Black Belt's Third Ward, he found very few children and an average family size of two to four persons in approximately 60 percent of the households. Two-headed families continued to dominate the community landscape. Single-parent families were present, but they constituted a small minority of all black families and tended to be incorporated within extended family networks and headed by middle-aged women who usually were widowed, separated, or divorced.

As dynamic as the migrants of past times had been, additional adult newcomers brought with them an even higher level of human dynamism to the benefit of black Chicago and the city in general. Most notable were civic activist Ida B. Wells, along with the activist, learned clergy, Reverends Reverdy Ransom and Archibald Carey of the A.M.E. Church. Wells made Chicago her permanent home in 1895, then Ransom arrived in 1896 and Carey shortly thereafter the next year. Not to be overlooked were Robert Sengstacke Abbott, Julius F. Taylor and Jesse Binga. Abbott visited the city during the fair, sang on the fairgrounds in 1893 as part of the Hampton Quarter and fell in love with Chicago. He returned for a permanent residence in 1897. Two years later, Taylor, an acerbic newspaper publisher from Salt Lake City, returned eastward over the Rockies and settled permanently in the city. In the process, he brought with him political ambition and the tool for its realization, his newspaper, the *Broad Ax*. Binga came to Chicago with ideas and a hunger for wealth. Never a person to relent in his personal quest to achieve a goal, he soon would own extensive plots of real estate and implement a plan to own his own bank.

The city, no doubt, gained reciprocally from the short presence of a young Mary McLeod Bethune in 1894. Her early interest and commitment to humanity led her through the doors and into the classrooms of the Moody Bible Institute where she studied various aspects of home and foreign missionary work. Another Southerner of rising prominence, Booker T. Washington, attended the world's fair and returned frequently late during the decade as a visitor just as the peripatetic Frederick Douglass had done until his death in 1895.

II

Topography: An Expanding City Landscape

The physical and human landscape of black Chicago continued to undergo dramatic changes during the decade that significantly molded its social and economic configuration for generations to come. Fortunately, this transformation and framing were documented contemporaneously by an African American researcher, Monroe Nathan Work, who inaugurated a social science approach that included examining the city's black population with microscopic precision. Operating from the campus of the fledgling University of Chicago during the early 1900s, Work, in his role as participant-observer conducted street level surveys that had him examining each of the three major sides of town – North, West and South – rather than just focusing on the most densely populated section south of Twenty-second Street that was to become the famed "Black Belt."

The pattern of settlement assumed a complexity of its own and the ghetto of historical and sociological construction did not exist at this point in Chicago's history. The work of Allan H. Spear is especially useful at this point because he pioneered in separating legendary housing patterns from documented, census-based patterns. The primary thesis tested in his *Black Chicago: The Making of a Negro Ghetto, 1890-1920* concerned itself with linkage between when an African American population became concentrated enough to establish its presence and possible control over housing and designated public space within the city *and* what that demographic hegemony meant to the quality of life of the population involved. The historical pivot in his study and others like it in Harlem, Detroit, Cleveland, Milwaukee and Buffalo became the "Great Migration" of 1915-1918 which attracted 50,000 new workers to Chicago amid the 500,000 it drew to the entirety of the North.[i] Although a major issue for examination, it is beyond the purview of what is to be covered in volume one of this study.

The distribution of the African American population over the city's landscape in post-annexation Chicago (after 1889) found many African Americans living in high concentration in the midst of their own group, such as along the Dearborn Street Corridor. Others were isolated from this heavy concentration in predominantly white communities such as those found on the West Side and North Side. Then there were African Americans residing in small clusters of what were statistically–but not in actuality–socially, racially-mixed areas such as Englewood, Hyde Park and the far South Side's Morgan Park neighborhood. Home owning rose dramatically in these areas as manifestations of claims to higher social status and economic protection of property investment.

On the West and North Sides of the city, the smaller enclaves produced a distinct experience for African Americans. There was social isolation at times if the community were predominantly white along with their limited social acceptance. If the neighborhood or cluster were predominantly black, there was social camaraderie with blacks and some social acceptance from and mingling with whites. Importantly, there was a semblance of racial peace. The dispersion of the African American population throughout the city represented the natural demographic contours expected in an area when restrictive housing agreements were nonexistent and exclusionary racial policies lacked the strength of custom.

On the West Side, with an image usually conjured up with its vast working class in mind, there resided families representative of various other segments of the African American population. The Johnson-Hudson and Cherry families belonged to the growing cluster of entrepreneurs and businessmen. Jesse Johnson left his native Tennessee where he had been born after slavery and

journeyed to Chicago in 1900 with his family. He distinguished himself as a master carpenter, quickly putting his skills to work he built nine houses over several years. James Hudson was a Tennessean who was born in 1889 and arrived in Chicago as a child in 1892. Once he reached adulthood, Hudson would marry the Johnson's daughter, Willie Dee, and make Providence Baptist their church home.

Among the professionals, the history of the Lewis family gives some insight into typical family life among this stratum. Before Dr. John W. Lewis, Sr.'s entering the medical profession during the second decade of the twentieth century, he had opened a pharmacy along the Lake Street Corridor. This occurred after he arrived in Chicago in the late 1890s from Oskaloosa, Iowa where he had worked as a pharmacist's assistant. Then he pursued medical training at Rush Medical School. Dr. Lewis' wife arrived in Chicago from Virginia in the 1900s. Their son, John, Jr. followed in his father's footsteps into medicine later in the century. The West Side had its members of the city's black elite with the Frenches and the Hancocks retaining the status they had established in the previous decade.

Life for young Lovelynn Miller Evans unfolded on the far North Side of the city. Born on March 9, 1893 in Chicago's Lakeview community, she grew up in a bi-racial household in a racially-mixed neighborhood where she recalled fondly how she enjoyed her childhood. As a child in the era before the dominance of combustible engines, she enjoyed riding her pony-drawn cart along the lake front with an air of complete freedom. Her African American father had arrived from Louisiana in 1888 and shortly after his daughter's birth, Joseph Miller and his German American wife, Elizabeth, were on the verge of seeing the fruits of their labor blossom as his moving and storage business seemed well on the way to success. Lovelynn Miller Evans attended the Horace Greeley Elementary School where one of her classmates was future journalist Westbrook Pegler. She concluded her education with graduation from Lakeview High School.

With the city's almost 20,000 black residents concentrated along racial lines, the famed "Black Belt" of the near South Side was assuming its legendary form. It was here that the population increase among African Americans assumed its most impressive dimensions within this Dearborn Street Corridor, which encompassed a small number of businesses along State Street and many family-owned homes along Dearborn, Armour, Clark and Butterfield Streets. Life patterns along the Dearborn Street Corridor produced their own rhythm for the bulk of the city's respectables as well as for most of the refined element. The area represented an expanding African American racial enclave which seemed to be in thick of everything of importance in the city. It was situated near the downtown section, the famed white Millionaire's Row on the South Side's Grand Boulevard where the homes of the wealthier Chicagoans lay directly to the east, the notorious vice strict known as the "Levee" which overlapped its northern boundary, and even the fairgrounds of the World's Columbian Exposition when it opened on May 1, 1893. Transportation abounded with major thoroughfares traversing through as well as running nearby, with north-south streetcars available on State Street and Wentworth Avenue. Accessible by streetcar and elevated trains, carriage traffic, or by foot, this community sat about two miles south of the heart of the central business district and five miles north of Jackson Park where the world's fair was taking place.

The Corridor anchored an expanding African American community extending from Twenty-Second Street roughly southward to Thirty-ninth, and from Wentworth Avenue on the west to State Street (and later Wabash Avenue) on the east. Importantly, it was home to about one fourth of the city's 20,000 African Americans, the bulk of its biggest and most influential

churches and black-operated Provident Hospital. Its impressive growth meant that building a successful commercial strip along State Street, one block east of Dearborn Street, entered the realm of the probable as African Americans expanded their economic options. While professionals such as Dr. Charles C. Bentley practiced in downtown offices by the 1890s, his close friend and confidant, Dr. Daniel Hale Williams maintained offices on Thirty-First Street as did so many others. Williams' offices were located at the edge of the Corridor in neutral racial space. There, he shared space in a magnificent building that housed white and black professionals on the northwest corner of Michigan Boulevard and Thirty-First Street. The better residences, as well as the poorer homes, were located along its streets. A substantial portion of home ownership was also found here, so this area qualified as the locus of social influence, cultural expression and economic stability for the Black Belt. Yet many African Americans sought to invest permanently in housing found outside its perimeters. While this diverse section witnessed the construction of some new edifices, overall, they paled in comparison with more substantial white and black housing immediately to the south and east. Basically, the housing construction of approximately 3700 structures within the Corridor had reached a point of completion and saturation by 1895. Heavily brick but with some wood framed, one- and two-story structures dominated. Many homes were substantial but there were no mansions. Contemporary descriptions told the story in all its complexity. When newspapers such as the *Broad Ax*, *Appeal* and *Indianapolis Freeman* reported on the activities of "society," the addresses cited were more often than not Dearborn and Armour Avenue sites. Attorney and Mrs. Edward H. Morris resided at 2712 Dearborn, indicating that it was more than a case of where you lived to attain status, rather it was the manner in which you lived. In the case of the Morrises, they lived well as manifested in their summer itinerary of 1899 which had them returning home from a grand Eastern tour of Boston, Newport, New York and Philadelphia.[ii] Along with Attorney Morris' rarefied status among black lawyers, Mrs. Morris' socialite mother, Mrs. Montgomery, added prestige to the family and their presence in the community. The elder socialite was remembered as "a stately woman of pale [smooth] complexion who wore a gray coiffure that had a close resemblance to that of Mrs. Potter Palmer."

Dr. A. Maurice Curtis and his wife called 3543 Dearborn Avenue home which was located seven blocks from his office at 2942 Armour Avenue. In the same locale, but at the other end of the time spectrum and in a newer generation, newborn Annetta, the child of Charles and Mildred Taylor, entered the world on March 1,1899. She would call this area home until almost the end of her 101 years as a resident of Chicago.

The Rev. Reverdy Ransom, a Social Gospel community activist, saw the area through a different set of spectacles. He understood its varied rhythms and would write that African Americans were "housed for the most part in flimsy, frame houses on Dearborn Street, Armour Avenue, and adjoining streets extending to the Chicago River. The condition of the streets was appalling. Not surprisingly, Rev. Richard R. Wright, Jr. remarked in a similar vein that "only a few of these streets are paved, 33rd street being the only one with asphalt and cedar block paving."

Yet, misery and deprivation in the midst of splendor and elegance was nothing new in urban living. Many of the veterans of the Civil War, along with their families, friends and acquaintances who resided in the area inhabited some of the least desirable housing units. By virtue of their occupation and income, they struggled in their daily living as part of the lower end of black Chicago's respectable element. Among the ranks of the veterans, residential mobility reached alarming rates with some individuals or families moving every year as they struggled to make ends meet.

Many joined the ranks of the lodgers, the non-family related renters who moved into a household until they could get established, acclimated to big city living and afford independent rental or self-purchased housing. The feature of the lodger was not an unusual factor, and not one necessarily negative, in housing and family life in Chicago among the laboring class. Single persons who came to the North and settled on the West Side were absorbed into the households in which they lived, becoming honorary members of those families. Dr. Daniel Hale Williams arrived in Chicago and immediately joined the household of Mrs. Mary Richardson Jones until he became solidly established. Unattached persons, and sometimes childless, recently married couples, lived with families both because of a shortage in housing and the institutional protection this arrangement provided. Not only was the rent or mortgage payment shared but also the valuable social life of the family, something European immigrant groups also enjoyed. There can be no doubt that the bane of the urban family was bad housing. By the same token, with opportunities for African American to secure decent housing for rental purposes or purchase were limited, so securing the scarce funds needed to survive loomed as paramount also. The city's worst housing and acknowledged slum, "Packingtown," was located significantly to the west of the Dearborn Corridor and inhabited by European immigrant.

As a locus of creativity, the Dearborn Corridor was becoming the geographical and cultural core of the Chicago African American community. So, it should not have been surprising to find that the excitement and bonding of 1893 found in activities on the fairgrounds and stimulating discussions in the meetings held inside the world's fair boundaries and at the Art Palace neither ended at the fairgrounds' perimeter nor did the activities held at the downtown Art Institute. They resumed or were replicated in parallel activities taking place continuously in Chicago's African American churches throughout the duration of the fair, of which more will be said later.

The residential landscape south of the Dearborn Corridor revealed that a number of the more prominent and socially rising African American families made their homes in racially-mixed areas of the South Side. These were in near proximity to heavily black settlements such as those found usually south of Fifty-First Street and parallel to State Street. The Gibbs family and recent Howard University graduate Grace, lived at 5023 Armour. Club woman Mrs. L. A. Davis, who was vacationing in summer, 1899 at Mackinac Island, lived at 5017 Armour Avenue. She planned to return to the city in time for the annual convention of the National Association of Colored Women where she would deliver the welcoming opening address.

Far southward of the Dearborn Corridor lay the diverse, predominantly white neighborhoods where numerous other African American families lived. When Richard R. Wright, Jr., University of Chicago student and son of the president of Georgia State Industrial School, reached the city, he resided with Rev. D. W. Jones who lived at 5520 Ingleside Avenue in the Hyde Park community. A mile southward, Professor William and Mrs. Fannie Emanuel made their home at 6352 Rhodes Avenue in the Washington Park subdivision of the Woodlawn community. The story was similar in other residential pockets in Englewood, Lilydale, Morgan Park, and the steel-producing Southeast Side.

A world apart from these experiences were those of the socially-dispossessed African Americans who lived immediately north and northwest of the Dearborn Corridor. Monroe N. Work identified twin cores of slum life where the bulk of them established their homes. One extended between Lake Michigan on the east, the Chicago River and Clark Street on the west, Twenty-Second Street at the south end, and Van Buren on the west, laying within the boundaries of the infamous Levee district which housed the city's vice amid slums. It was the area and the

population that Rev. William T. Stead examined for his work on degenerate behavior, If Christ Came to Chicago. It also housed "darkest Africa," derisively named and recognized by whites and by African Americans living to the south of the area.
Across the river rose the western version of these slums. Its boundaries were Grand Avenue on the north, Madison on the south, Jefferson Street on the east, and with Ann (Racine) Street as its west extremity. While the Levee was home to 4,900 African Americans; 800 lived in the western division. Unfortunately, the former was home to too many Civil War veterans and their families. The first in war had become the last served by the benefits of society in peacetime. One federal pension examiner wrote of the conditions under which one veteran lived in this area, making this observation: "He lives in a dive which is almost worth a man's life if I go into it. So I didn't."

Their presence in these economically depressed areas indicated, moreover, that all of the residents of these enclaves possessed different lifestyles so no wholesale classification for them as criminals is reasonable. In addition to their economic needs being denied, there were no major churches located in these areas to serve the spiritual needs of these Chicagoans, only missions and store front religious activities. Nationally, these slum dwellers represented the largest concentration of any the larger cities, including New York, Philadelphia or Baltimore.

III

The Economic Fabric

Chicago's African American laboring force knew of work intimately and had a tradition of hard work that was recognized by *Scribner's Magazine* early in the decade. Without a whimper, but with resolution, they conformed to a labor pattern that produced wealth and needed services for others while being misrepresented nationally as ne'er-do-wells. While in 1900 they represented 1.8 per cent of the total population, the males constituted 2.3 per cent of all breadwinners and the women 3.3 percent. They also continued to find themselves relegated them to the service sector which, despite its limitations, provided these workers with uninterrupted work along with survival level wages.

At the beginning of the decade, possible employment at the world's fair held out the promise of a bettering of conditions, if only on a temporary basis. By mid-decade, a combination of economic and racial influences stifled opportunity for the mass of workers for decades to come. Part of this economic saga was recounted by two African American journalists whose lives were to be forever intertwined after their professional collaboration in Chicago in 1893. In the most famous of Columbian literary pieces written by Africa Americans, *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in The World's Exposition,* Ida B. Wells and Ferdinand L. Barnett rendered some economic observations that linked the historical basis for the African American impoverishment and underemployment with somewhat present favorable conditions whites encountered. Wells wrote, "The labor of one-half of this country has always been, and is still being done by [the African Americans]. The first credit this country had in its commerce with foreign nations was created by production resulting from their labor. The wealth created by their industry has afforded to the white people of this country the leisure essential to their group progress in education, art, science, industry, and invention."

Ferdinand L. Barnett also clearly saw a problem when he analyzed world's fair employment, one with a pattern of clear intent to harm African Americans. To his credit, Barnett rejected in absolute terms a continued African American horizontal monopoly of jobs in the menial and service positions. He instead demanded a vertical integration of the work force, with African Americans sharing positions along the pyramid of work, from the base to its apex. Barnett's advantage over his future wife's views came with his intimate knowledge of the

Chicago scene and his contemporary perspective. However, he displayed a blind spot in reaching conclusions prior to his assessment of what transpired during the fair. In rushing to meet a deadline for publication of *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in The World's Exposition*, he first, penned his views before the event's opening in May 1893, and second, he allowed his precast ideological bent to determine a wrong before he completed a comprehensive observation of the situation. He wrote: "In this wonderful hive of national industry, representing an outlay of thirty million dollars, and numbering its employees by the thousands, only two colored people persons could be found whose occupations were of a higher grade than that of a janitor, laborer and porter, and these two only clerkships. Only as a menial is the Colored American to be seen - the Nation's deliberate and cowardly tribute to the southern demand 'to keep the Negro in his place'." However, for the black working class in a nation on the verge of a major depression, work of any kind was cherished. No doubt Chicagoan Barnett also perceived the ominous constriction of the white, skilled portion of the labor force, which had benefitted directly from the adoption of racist notions of hiring as part of Social Darwinian practice.

Meantime, on-the-scene observations of conditions at the fairgrounds at the south end of the city sometimes presented more enthusiasm about the possibilities of work opportunities. Two visitors to Chicago, both destined for greatness in the realm of letters, reported on their experiences. A young Paul Lawrence Dunbar of Dayton, Ohio arrived in Chicago in spring 1893 with plans to write a world's fair column for his hometown *Dayton Herald*. Once in the city, he joined thousands of other younger and older men seeking, but not necessarily, finding work. His biographer wrote that "out on the fairgrounds he tramped from building to building, but no workers were needed. Finally he got a job, cleaning one of the big domes. That lasted only a few days. His next job was in a basement shipping room, uncrating exhibit specimens. Here dampness soon brought on a racking cough. The cough got worse, and Paul quit to look for work out of doors, or at least where there was good air."

James Weldon Johnson also arrived about the same time from Atlanta but had easier access to work in carpentry and a guarantee of work as a chair boy. Thus, his work experience offered another dimension to the world of work for the skilled black man. When he wrote home to Atlanta University, he described how "by reason of our industrial training in Atlanta University, fifteen of us were employed to do work at the grounds as carpenters, at $3.25 per day of eight hours, and the other was employed as a plasterer at $4.50. There is more work here than men can be employed to do. Any price is being paid for workmen."

As to which experience was more common is worth examination, especially considering what *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in The World's Exposition* charged. An analysis of photographs and pencil sketches of the work site suggests the existence of a cosmopolitan work force, but by no means could a shaded face indicate with certainty that a worker was of African descent. Most trades such as designing, glaziering, surveying, painting, sculpting and moulding were off limits to certain groups, particularly African Americans, and many immigrants possessed swarthy hues easily mistaken from the mixed hues of African Americans from a distance or from the use of a faint pen mark.

While work on the fairgrounds for African Americans was finite, their presence could hardly have been said to been invisible. The official World's Columbian Exposition photographs of the various staffs included African Americans along with their colleagues. Director of Works, Daniel H. Burnham's staff photograph included E. Jackson, head janitor, along with his co-workers. Each man was dressed appropriately for the occasion. Chief Buchanan and his staff are pictured outside the Agricultural Building with J. Shreeves dressed dapperly. Manufacturers and

staff from the Hide and Leather Building posed for their place in history and included was an unidentified African American in the top row. The famous circular, steel framed wheel of William Ferris relied on A. S. Johnson to perform his duties as official office guard. Washingtonian Louis B. Anderson landed "the job of exchange reader in his department of Publicity and Promotion. Among the archives of the Exposition the scrap-books containing all newspaper references to the Fair throughout the world represent his work in that department."

The importance of the matter is found in the fact that despite some prevalent racism, these employees could have been excluded or hidden, but were not. They are featured as integral parts of organizations, appearing dignified and neither representing themselves nor their race in a derogatory fashion. In at least one exhibit depicting slave plantation Louisiana, the latter did occur.

Deliberate, calculated racial exclusion proved the rule for hiring men for the Columbian Guard, the elite, quasi-military escort, police and fire protective unit of the fair. Very early, hiring for the Columbian Guard unfolded in a depressing, obviously racist, Machiavellian scenario. Exclusion of African Americans became the rule as two thousand openings were filled. When William J. Crawford, a seven-year resident in the city, applied for a position, the staff physician deliberately misread a chest measurement to make Crawford fall one inch short of a required expanded chest size of 36 inches. Even Crawford's immediate reexamination by another white doctor failed to satisfy the Guard leadership. Two subsequent letters of reconsideration fell on closed eyes. The Guard remained lily-white for the duration of the fair. Ferdinand L. Barnett was especially vociferous in denouncing this practice which saw able-bodied, educated, capable African Americans exempted from this group purportedly because of weight, height and other deficiencies. Never the elite police force that its commander U. S. Colonel Rice envisioned, its stature could only have been enhanced by men such as Crawford. Although proving itself valorous by its acts of bravery and human losses during the horrendous Cold Storage Building fire during the summer 1893, fair goers commonly complained about the Guards' brusqueness, ignorance of directions and stiff, ineffective deportment.

In contrast, the fair's custodial staff, which included African Americans, served as a unit falling under the jurisdiction the Guard's leadership (until a week before the fair opened when it became part of the Superintendent of Buildings' responsibility). Photographs depict these workers immaculately dressed as one is seen walking across the fairgrounds in conversation and two others in a work-related situation. It is easy to imagine that their role exceeded their occupation as described. Commonplace in the South, refusing to dignify African American endeavors with their proper designations and titles probably occurred in this instance. The interests and needs of the mass of African Americans expected on the fairgrounds were no doubt met by this compromise version of the Guard. This would have also reduced the fears of white Southerners of experiencing some sort of equality while up north. Since janitorial duties were relegated to another segment of the work force, this explanation gains in currency. One other point is relevant and that has to do with photographic evidence from the family files of Civil War veteran Peter Andrew Jackson. His sons are pictured on or near the fairgrounds in police uniforms, lending another puzzling piece of history other story of the world's fair.

An additional portion of the work force found anywhere from 1,017 to 2,000 janitors on nightly duty who had the responsibility of cleaning up the fairgrounds and buildings after closing. Some African Americans were hired as "washroom caretakers." Demanding on his time, but not deleterious to his dignity, Paul Lawrence Dunbar took such work at a pay scale of $10.50 per week with Tuesday being payday. The persons who engaged in the various types of work

described to this point constituted that segment of society referred to as the respectables. For the students from Atlanta University and elsewhere at white institutions, they earned their money as attendants who would roll moving chairs throughout the fairgrounds at seventy-five cents per hour, of which they received a percentage. As to the rate of pay, the student chair boys expected to earn up to $40.00 a week. The miles of fairgrounds with the countless exhibits to be viewed by the average fair goer illuminated the importance of this conveyance service. "The rolling-chairs that run about the grounds and through the buildings are the salvation of many a fainting spirit. To thousands of human beings with nothing but a human back and human legs the fair would be a failure without them. They are a support for the weary, strength for the weak." In all, more than one thousand young workers were hired, and at least 50 presumably were African American. According to James Weldon Johnson, writing for his college newsletter, *The Bulletin of Atlanta University*, he and his classmates experienced anxiety and anticipation at having the opportunity to visit the nation's second largest city, along with availing themselves of opportunity to earn money toward their school expenses. Whether this opportunity was available to the adult males of the city's African American community is unknown.

There were also instances in which racism spoiled what were amiable relations between the college men. James Weldon Johnson noted that usually anything derogatory said about the members of his race were voiced outside earshot. As to relations with other whites who would ride in their “gospel chariots,” it might have been captured accurately on an occasion or two by this assessment of human contact. "There is sometimes a contrast in manners and education between the occupant of the chair and the man behind that is not in the favor of the former. When one sees what is evidently a citizen with far more money than brains, and without the faintest appreciation of the beauties that encompass him, wheeled about at seventy-five cents an hour by a youth so far his superior that any comparison is impossible, it causes one to realize Fortune is indeed an irresponsible flirt, who is never so happy as when doing the wrong thing." Particular exhibits, such as the Pullman’s, used company workers. Another challenge to maintain the dignity of labor took place during the summer months of 1893 when the Pullman Company placed its famous Palace Cars on stationary display at the world’s fair at the imposing Transportation Building. A rather demanding of his workers, but basically servile "Mr. Fritsch," provided regular status reports to his “honored Mr. Pullman” on the number of visitors inspecting the cars, the number of important dignitaries who viewed the cars with a prospect of adding them to their railroads or personal travel accouterments, and the efficiency of his retinue of porters who kept the cars spotless. On one occasion, Fritsch proudly wrote to Pullman, “we had a fine train to show today. It was cleaned well inside and outside, as I had made it pretty lively for the [work] force yesterday and am determined to return a well-kept train to Pullman [town, on] Oct. 31.” Porters on the rolling trains worked just as hard as this crew on the stationary exhibit, yet the prospects of decent wages never materialized for any of them, a feature all too typical for all employees of the Pullman Company.

The small number of African American musicians in the city and from around the nation who secured work in Chicago before the fair played in isolated settings, such as in the Levee. On the fairgrounds, however, they faced complete exclusion. The overwhelming number of the organized bands in the city was white, so they dominated the musical scene. When the Haytians celebrated their designated day at the fair in July, the highly regarded and all-white Iowa State Band provided the music. Even the eagerly anticipated Colored American Day in August advertised the participation of the all-white Gilmore’s band. The many visiting African American musicians, such as pianist Scott Joplin of Sedalia, Missouri, were left to find

employment where they could, in his case on the periphery of the fairgrounds where many visitors retired after their exhaustive strolls. In fact, he might have headed a band.

Despite the restraints on the performance of both black performers and the music, some probably played immediately outside the fairgrounds along Stony Island Avenue or near the Midway. Singing groups such as the Fisk Jubilee Singers and the Hampton Quartet sang extensively at African American functions both on and off the fairgrounds and were well received by both races. Another group, the Standard Quartet, performed at a musical concert in July 1893, singing "Negro spiritual songs while others contributed patriotic songs." Significantly, the only authentic African-based music played on the fairgrounds occurred at the Dahomey Village, and it was apparently enjoyed by as many as it might have annoyed with incessant rhythmic and counter rhythmic drumming. Equally important, Will Marion Cook dated the birth of ragtime to the year and occasion of the fair According to Cook, "About 1898 marked the starting and quick growth of the so-called 'ragtime.' As far back as 1875[,] Negroes in questionable resorts along the Mississippi had commenced to evolve this musical figure, but at the World's Fair in Chicago "ragtime' got a running start and swept the Americas, next Europe, and to-day the craze has not diminished."

The question of long-term work throughout the city loomed far more important than employment at the fair, which was temporary in nature (1891-1893). For the city's unemployed, their plight could not be denied forever, although that appeared to be the case at times. The African American laboring class suffered through the depression of 1893 just like their white fellow citizens. The fifth of the nineteenth century's major, national economic depressions affected the Chicago economy (after the previous dislocations of 1837, 1857 and 1873) with a devastating impact. In its intensity, it lasted at least until 1897 and while blacks did not resort to violence as white workers did at the Pullman Works in 1894, they endured the same economic deprivation. They also suffered from the slap of exclusion that found the American Railway Union endorsing a racial clause in its constitution that denied them membership in 1894. Reminiscent of Haymarket, racism once again denied African Americans a part to play in a major industrial confrontation. Decried as only good enough to act as strikebreakers, some blacks angrily acted out that role as part of an "Anti-Strikers Railroad Union."

The longevity of work for the blacks depended on countervailing forces– the tenacity of the regular white labor force to hold out for its demands, the successful manipulations of the packinghouse owners to exploit a low paid and therefore cheap labor force, and in the eyes of some, the benevolence of the packers. Utilized as workers in the Union Stockyards on a very limited basis between 1881 and 1894, African Americans tolerated limited opportunities in order to work in this better paying work environment. In organization, the stockyards represented a labor-intensive workplace where large numbers of unskilled and skilled laborers performed such duties as killing livestock and then hauling, carrying, stuffing as well as skillfully carving carcasses. By July 1894, with the introduction of some Southern-born strikebreakers into the stockyards to replace white sympathizers to the American Railway Union's strike, an invidious combination of labor and racial antipathy built against black workers. Within another month the strike had ended, leaving in its wake the permanent scar of scab on black workers in the white mind. Surprisingly, in the following years, with their exceedingly low numbers they were able to continue working without incurring the wrath of the newest wave of foreign-born white workers whose numbers dominated this workplace after they had displaced German and Irish workers.

Among the packinghouse magnates, Philip D. Armour, who died in 1900, was remembered on the occasion of his death as a friend to African American labor as much as he

was to black charitable efforts. Fannie Barrier Williams memorialized him in early 1901 thus:

> The death of Philip D. Armour, the millionaire packer and philanthropist, has deprived the Colored people of a friend who did more than is generally recognized for their advancement. Mr. Armour's helpfulness was of a practical kind and went to the heart of our difficulties–the lack of opportunities to earn a living in the great hives of industry built upon by American capital and genius. The Colored people have a just complaint against nearly all the great employers of skilled and unskilled labor in the North in that they are mainly indifferent and even contemptuous to the demands of Colored men and women for a chance to earn a livelihood . . . Not so with Mr. Armour. His heart was large enough to recognize the demands and needs [of African American workers] . . . His instructions were that "all must be treated alike . . . His confidence in the Colored man as a worker has been justified in the fact that the number of Colored employees has increased from year to year.

Williams also found words to praise the other packers and thereby has laid out a challenge for researchers to re-evaluate the pre-Great Migration role of black workers in the meat packing industry through the analysis of hard data.

In a turn of events during the summer of 1900, black strikebreakers in general labor succumbed to white entreaties to leave the downtown site of the under-construction Mandel Brothers Department Store and honor the concept of workers' solidarity. This act did little in the long run to improve black job chances or improve race relations. On this occasion, journalist Fannie Barrier Williams concluded that "a race that can be systemically deprived of one occupation after another becomes an easy victim to all kinds of injustice. When they can be reduced to a position to be pitied, they will cease to be respected."

Economic progress in Chicago was more evident with successes in the business sector. According to Franklin and Moss, "it was only natural that African Americans observing the success of various individuals during the age of heroic business enterprise, should enter the fields of business and industry. Frustrated in their efforts to participate in the businesses of whites, they embarked on a program of 'Negro business enterprise'."[iii] This proved to be so much the case that when the socially-conscious Rev. Reverdy Ransom surveyed the economic landscape, he observed optimistically that there was success in abundance among the African American population. He talked with pride and awe about businessmen such as Theodore Jones and could expand his range of economic accomplishments to include Edward H. Morris, Edward H. Wright, Ferdinand Barnett, S. Laing Williams, along with Drs. Daniel H. Williams, George C. Hall and Charles C. Bentley. All enjoyed success in a competitive, biracial competitive market. Five years after the dawn of the new century, an estimated 566 black businesses were operating with 180 located in the retail sector and with 374 providing services in a variety of areas. Professionals such as Dr. Daniel Hale Williams and Dr. Charles E. Bentley prospered in their fields, providing services to white as well as permanent black patients. As top medical practitioners, they earned far in excess of the remaining twenty physicians who realized lesser amounts of $1500 to $5000 annually. Attorneys (excluding Edward H. Morris) earned much less than the doctors, averaging less than $2000 per year. Most African Americans either had little money to pay these professionals or little use of their services. To supplement their earnings, the lawyers turned to politics.

Both viscerally and cerebrally, a significant segment of Chicago's African Americans

acknowledged that Chicago and the nation were in the midst of a financial, technological and machine revolution. African Americans participated as builders off the fairgrounds as they constructed or opened new residences and places of trade. The *Indianapolis Freeman* reported that Adam G. Smith was erecting "a large hotel at 2713 South Dearborn" and that he was one of the wealthiest Negroes in Illinois. When Joseph S. Miller, a native of Louisiana, reached the city in 1888, he arrived as a man with a dream. Within five years he realized it with the opening of Miller's Buena Park Express on the far North Side of the city. The newspaper announced that the "saloon business, of course, has gone way up" and that S. J. Manning and W. M. Grant were the proprietors of a "mammoth grocery house." But when Hampton Institute graduate, Robert Sengstacke Abbott of Savannah, Georgia, sought work as a printer, a trade for which he was well qualified, he faced racial rejection repeatedly. He turned to law instead and was graduated from the Kent School of Law.

For one group of professionals, public school teachers, the picture was mixed. Lettie A. Trent, a school teacher whose name figured prominently in protest at the fair, was one of perhaps a half dozen African American teachers in the city whose ranks reached 13 by 1900. Almost the entirety of Chicago's teaching corps of 5100 in 1895, excluding its 300 college trained teachers at the secondary level, wore the mantle of being considered a mediocre mass of politically-connected, high school-trained, clericals. Their earnings by 1900 ranged from $850 to $1500 per year, further reflecting Chicago's shameful neglect of the educational process. School teachers, therefore, lacked the professional status and liberal training in the 1890s to be considered part of the refined cluster.

The onslaught of the depression in 1893 was devastating, and only gained momentum as time passed. Massive unemployment affected all of the city's workers, with 100 black workers on the recently-constructed elevated lines (the famous "El) being summarily discharged "without ceremony" so that whites could be hired. Labor strife was common among white workers and their demands for consideration in this instance took precedence over fairness. For African Americans, another deleterious feature of American life emerged to exacerbate conditions. The racism associated with tenets of Social Darwinism resulted in a negative reaction from whites who either patronized black service providers or used their labor. Fannie Barrier Williams identified the period of economic change as being around 1895. She noted erosion in so many fields that the description of a nadir seems appropriate. Barbers began to lose their monopoly in the downtown area where they traditionally cut the hair of the white middle and upper classes. Janitors started to lose their jobs to Swedish men. In the wait service, both white men and women were replacing "Colored men in nearly all the first-class hotels and restaurants." Greek workers took over shoe polishing.

In transportation, the number of African American men working as teamsters, express drivers and coachmen drivers also started to decline in the business districts. The latter suffered from a change in fashion which saw the wealthy choosing among the Irish, Swedes and African Americans as though they were inanimate pawns on a board instead of human beings. Members of Chicago's reigning royalty, the Pullmans, helped set the stage for this practice as they dismissed their black coachman of eighteen years as part of this new fashion. One coachman described his situation: "The lady of the house [said], I am going to New York to buy a rig, something new, and I am going to bring my driver back with me, and so she [did] .You see, Chicago copies New York and New York copies Europe and every time the black man gets the worst of it."

IV.
The World's Columbian Exposition

The significance of the World's Columbian Exposition, or as it was popularly known and remembered, the world's fair of 1893, led to its being accorded the third star among four in Chicago's future emblematized municipal flag. Of international, national and local importance, the exposition's real, symbolic and recollective power was felt in global economics and empire-building, diplomacy and race relations, and importantly for this study, the continuous transformation of the African American community in Chicago. After studying the impact it had on its contemporary world, Drake assessed it as "throw[ing] some light on Negro-white relations and the strength of Negro institutions during the nineties." In its reflective light, the world's fair illuminated much more than the fairgrounds along the south lakefront, the event permanently implanted into the black psyche the idea and image of Chicago as a city, where even if the playing field was not level, it was at least accessible for competitive entry. The old adage applied: "If you can't make it in Chicago, you can't make it anywhere." Perceived then as a haven of economic opportunity, it became a magnet for African Americans who had lived in the East and the South. Its effect on the demographic composition of black Chicago was just as dramatic. The exposition attracted the talented, the productive and the restless in a manner no other occurrence had before. To the city's benefit, many were destined to become permanent residents as a result of their attraction to Chicago.

As Chicago acted as the host for the nation's second world's fair during the late spring, the summer months and into the early fall of 1893, the stage was set for a historic moment to transpire. Understandably, the world's fair represented both an awe-inspiring event and a once in a lifetime experience to millions of fair goers–black, white, brown, yellow and red. Just as prominent white Chicagoans felt pride in their city's accomplishment as Chicago showed itself capable of successfully hosting the exposition, so did blacks even if their role was restricted because of race along with their limited wealth and social status. As proud Chicagoans, they relished the experience of the world's fair and its influence posited another element in African American thought even though they were not directly involved in decision making over such matters as finance, administration and operations. The idea of the fair assumed a central role in "Old Settler" thinking of the early twentieth century precisely because of its remarkable success. It led these older African Americans to impose near proprietary control over the memory of the event based on their real-life participation in 1893.

If the World's Columbian Exposition appeared as a godsend to the working class because of the employment opportunities it afforded on the eve of a major economic depression, it presented an even different image to educated and professional persons both in Chicago and the nation. Seen as a prism, it shone light at many different angles that almost appeared incongruous in nature because of the disparate interests of various African American groups. Only twenty-eight years after the emancipation and the end to slavery, to certain African Americans concerned and conscious about their social status, the event represented a signal opportunity to show the white world the extent to which African Americans had progressed beyond their distressed conditions in 1865. Whatever their backgrounds or interests, African Americans wanted to participate to the fullest extent that they could given the racism of the period.

In Chicago and throughout the nation groups of African Americans forged an ambitious strategy and implemented plans to attain their goals of respectful recognition and full inclusion. Complicated, yet earnestly conceived, it unfolded as African Americans used the fair as a benchmark for racial progress, or a lack of it. As they pursued high-level administrative

involvement, they hoped to mold their image for the world and nation. In exhibits, they envisioned a grand display of their collective abilities. Regarding Jim Crow, African Americans prepared for the worst, but often they encountered the best in America society as their high level of involvement and participation revealed.

Beyond special, although important, interests the average black visitor wanted a grand tour of the fairgrounds, to see the world literally at eye's and arm's length. Visitors also wanted a glimpse of how well the black community was doing in the nation's second largest city. This meant a trip to the Dearborn Street Corridor with its many churches and homes as well as State Street with its entertainments. The words of the African Americans who witnessed the grandeur of the fair encompassed all that could be said. In what they saw and in the manner they interpreted the event, a semblance of the thinking of black Americans of the period can be fathomed. This was especially important in determining the effect of the fair on black Chicagoans and how they saw their city and the world. A Hampton Institute correspondent wrote that "I was, as perhaps most people are, more impressed by the grounds and buildings themselves than by any of the exhibits. The picture of the Court of Honor, as I saw it on two evenings, encircled by the brilliantly lighted buildings, with the shining lagoon in the midst, the constantly changing electric fountains, the great search lights seeking out first one point and then another, the golden statue of Columbus standing guard over the whole, and the glimpses of the blue lake here and there between the majestic columns of the Peristyle, is one that will live long in my memory. I hope never to lose it." James Weldon Johnson shared his amazement of the White City, called by that name because of the imitation marble columns of the neoclassical buildings that bore white paint. Sharing his views with his fellow students at Atlanta University, he wrote: "No one who has not seen it, can form any idea of the immensity and grandeur of the exposition; nor can I give any adequate description of it. It has been very fitly called 'The White City,' and one standing under the Peristyle and looking down the Court of Honor . . . might easily imagine himself in a fairy city." Then, Robert Sengstacke Abbott, future publisher and founder of the *Chicago Defender* in 1905, seemed "undoubtedly impressed by the display Negroes made of their progress in Chicago." All had seen the power and potential of global humanity, felt a kinship and deduced that African Americans could harness that same energy to advance their interests.

The refrain often heard on the fairgrounds of "All the World Is Here!" proved itself a truism. The experience of the African Diaspora unfolded in grand fashion as supposed Old World Africans and their younger, New World counterparts, had an opportunity to interact. African Americans were joined by Africans from the continent and various Diasporans from throughout the Caribbean. The visitors arrived from Dahomey in West Africa, South Africa, from Nubia and the Sudan and from the North African littoral. These persons interacted with millions of people at the fair, and it truly became a world's fair. At the Dahomey Village, the Fon people exhibited their craft production, demonstrated their dances, provided a higher level of Western appreciation of syncopation to musicologists, and dazzled the small number of friendlier citizens of America with their genuineness and warmth. Frederick Douglass met them and was embarrassed. A.M.E. church member James Alston traveled to the fair from the East to witness it as a spectacular event, but also to greet these kinsmen from afar. As the Fon marched almost daily in the ranks of other international contingents, they acted as good will ambassadors from Africa. At the exhibitions found dispersed throughout the fairgrounds at the Agriculture, Liberal Arts and Mining Buildings, Diasporan and continental African progress was on display. From African American to Caribbean to Brazilian to Liberian exhibitions the presence, spirit and

dynamic of the black world resonated.

Although there were no Chicagoans at the fair who could match the reputations and achievements found among the nationally prominent ranks of Frederick Douglass, A.M.E. Bishops Benjamin Tanner and Henry McNeal Turner, Rev. Alexander Crummell, Booker T. Washington and Ida B. Wells, some Chicagoans did emerge as significant participants. Once on the fairgrounds, Fannie Barrier Williams, Attorneys Ferdinand L. Barnett and Edward H. Morris, along with Drs. Charles E. Bentley and Daniel Hale Williams others, lectured, observed and played host to visiting African Americans from throughout the nation. In their homes, churches, clubhouses and businesses they provided a level of hospitality solely needed in a nation where civility and amiability could never be taken for granted.

On the local scene, teacher Lettie Trent, journalist Fannie Barrier Williams, lawyer Ferdinand L. Barnett, clergymen, the Revs. John T. Jenifer and Augustin Tolton, and others protested over the character of black representation in exhibits and administration at the fair as well as becoming involved as lecturers and guides for visiting blacks. Transplanted Ohioan and Missourian Hale G. Parker performed his duties as Missouri's alternate delegate to the National Board of Commissioners with efficiency, according to one influential local contemporary. Of the few other black Chicagoans who participated fully, Fannie Barrier Williams contribution was exemplary as lectured at two major Congresses. Using the Haytian Pavilion where Frederick Douglass held court as their headquarters, African Americans fashioned a presence rivaling those of other participating ethnic and racial groups. Chicagoans who had honored Hayti in the pavilion's opening ceremonies dropped by with visitors from time to time. Visitors Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Ida B. Wells, Will Marion Cook and other rising stars of the Afro-American world were present almost on a daily basis. George Washington Carver and Henry Ossawa Tanner could be seen canvassing the fairgrounds and observing the fair's marvels. Dr. Charles E. Bentley reported on the activities in the field of dentistry as that profession's official observer. James Weldon Johnson and Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and Robert Sengstacke Abbott were there, and hundreds, and probably, thousands of their racial kin joined them, experiencing exultation along with disappointments, enjoying themselves in every manner possible, benefitting from the event having happened, and leaving their imprint on American society.

Part of advancing the race involved building a network of like-minded individuals committed to their group improvement through cooperative social, creative and intellectual linkages. In this, African Americans accomplished one of their many goals for 1893 at this international conclave. Assuredly, in the most unequivocal of terms, there *was* a noticeable black presence at, matched by a fervent interest in, the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Beyond the social acquaintances forged at the fair and the individual and associational linkages being shaped among African Americans who traveled from throughout the nation, intellectually-stimulating encounters at more than one hundred parliaments and congresses proved equally appealing. African Americans participated in many of these major intellectual and social phases of the fair's activities, which included 1245 sessions featuring nearly six thousand speakers in various congresses and brought blacks into contact with the 700,000 participants who also participated. Of especial importance to African Americans were those meetings featuring discussions on the Negro, women, labor, Africa, education and religion.

Pertinent issues were debated ranging from those nationalistic to those gender-related to those economic. The practicality of emigrating to Africa was explored at an eight-day conference titled "The Congress on Africa." The status of black women became the focus of over half a dozen African American women at the World's Parliament of Representative Women, one of the

fair's most discussed conferences. At the Congress on Labor, the plight of the Southern farmer, whether sharecropper, renter or owner captivated the attention of the economically-inclined mind. The scope of the world's fair extended beyond these conferences with other less-heralded meetings which warrant examination, especially one that discussed the future of attaining civil rights.

Because of the attention the fair enjoyed nationwide during the summer of 1893, the three-year-old Colored Men's National Protective Association shifted the location of its planned convention from St. Louis to Chicago. The Protective Association aimed to fight against Southern outrages such as lynchings, peonage, and disfranchisement and discrimination and race prejudice everywhere. The agenda of this year's fair focused on implementing constitutional changes to revitalize the organizational structure of the Association. National in membership, representatives arrived from every state in the Union. Chicagoans were present but in small numbers, interspersed as they were among 300 delegates.

Being a host group, Chicagoans asserted themselves to the extent they could with Attorney Edward H. Morris, who was national secretary of the Afro-American League, temporarily presiding over the conference. Morris balanced complaints of his heavy-handed decisions from the chair with his smiles and wit which allowed "management of some of the refractory brothers." As for his important, initial contribution to the conference, Morris set the tone as he said, "we are here to try and hasten the time when all over the land the humblest, the poorest, the blackest citizen will not be obliged to beg and plead for the thing which he has the right to demand–ordinary justice and common fair play." Chicago attorney Edward H. Wright acted as secretary and read a paper entitled, "The Immigration of the Negro to Africa." Acknowledging the many obstacles to enjoying full citizenship in America, Wright still argued that the most logical option for persons of African descent lay in foregoing emigration to Africa. The spirit of Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth lived as Ida B. Wells spoke forcibly about protecting the basic rights of citizenship. It continued as Lettie Trent called for a boycott of the fair because of repeated racial slights extending back to 1891. Her militant tone disturbed so many present that they shouted her down.

After three days of deliberations, the most salient results of the meetings were a commitment to return home and share their insights with local citizenry on the merits of the Association, and to vote on the constitution. A call to all African American organizations to support the next year's conference brought immediate support as did condemnation of a proposed Colored American Day as a move to separate the races. As the organization addressed its national commitment, it devised an inclusive organizational structure that included an Iowan, George E. Taylor, as president, a Louisianan, an Arkansan, a South Carolinian, a Mississippian and Ida B. Wells as vice presidents. Also, Wells and Lettie Trent served on a Ladies Auxiliary Board of Directors. Edward H. Morris and Edward H. Wright joined the National Executive Committee and Committee to Address National Issues on Race, respectively.

More important, Frederick Douglass' presence at the opening session conveyed legitimacy on the organization's existence and in its program. When word spread that he would attend the meeting, even whites came to hear the American legend speak. Although Douglass entered the hall and initially sat inconspicuously in the rear, as soon as the conveners noted his presence they immediately asked that he speak from the podium. Douglass' speaking routinely meant he would challenge the perennial Caucasian obsession with the "Negro Problem.' Douglass tore at the heart of the Anglo-Saxon's fixation on blaming the victim. "The black man was not a problem. He was a man. There was nothing problematic about the Negro. The Negro

was all right," declared Douglass, "whose great head of white hair was very conspicuous among the darker heads of his brethren." He concluded, challenging America to live up to its promise of opportunity for all as embodied in the Constitution and Declaration of Independence.

At the breakthrough World's Congress of Representative Women, black women distinguished themselves along with others of the world's female luminaries. The voices of six black women shone. Two presented major addresses and four provided commentaries with the address delivered by Chicago's Fannie Barrier Williams excelling as the most notable. In the years preceding the fair Williams had gained acknowledgment as an accomplished speaker and most importantly, a person of intellect. Her being conversant on the New England transcendentalists and in other intellectual matters reconciled her cerebral qualities with her being described as "delightfully vivacious and pungent." In her lecture geared for this Darwinian decade she would have to demonstrate an acuity in racial politics and race imaging as well.

Whatever the depth of her presentation, she was sure to the hold the mostly white assemblage's attention with her Victorian countenance, being near white in complexion, "petite in size" and with a face that was "one of rare sweetness of expression." Described in the twenty-first century as a feminist pragmatist, on May 18, 1893, thirty-eight-year-old Chicago journalist Fannie Barrier Williams eruditely lectured on "The Intellectual Progress of the Colored Women of the United States Since the Emancipation Proclamation." Short discussions by Washington, D.C.'s Anna Julia Cooper and Philadelphia's Fannie Jackson Coppin followed.

In her carefully crafted, lengthy address of approximately 5500 words, Williams analyzed the exploited status of African American women within the American political economy, their victimization by white leadership, the cruel and enduring legacy of slavery, and the hypocrisy of white liberals on the issue of social equality. Most important, black ears heard about their achievements despite seemingly insurmountable odds along with recognition of the indomitability of black women as they protected and enhanced their virtue and sense of womanhood.

At the end of the session, an invited guest, but an uninvited speaker, who was seated on the podium rose upon special invitation to address the assemblage. By his presence, demeanor and message, the individual had to be the Sage of Anacostia, whose ubiquitous appearances became an integral part of fair activities. Frederick Douglass's stature loomed so large that he was the only male invited to speak after the opening session and before the General Congress of the woman's conclave. The response of Douglass validated Williams' demands and clearly stamped them as appropriate for the nation. Douglass's words carried such weight that a portion of his remarks must be included. He proudly concluded: "I have heard to night what I rarely expected to live to hear. I have heard refined, educated colored ladies addressing-and addressing successfully-one of the most intelligent white audiences that I have ever looked upon. It is the new thing under the sun, and my heart is too full to speak; my mind is too much illuminated with hope and with expectation for the race in seeing this sign . . . Fifty years ago and more I was alone in the wilderness. . .. (Tonight I know that is no longer true and) . . . A new heaven is dawning upon us, and a new earth is ours, in which the discriminations against men and women on account of color and sex is passing away . . . the grand spirit which has proceeded from this platform will live in your memory and work in your lives always . . .." In light of his contribution to the pamphlet, *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in The World's Columbian Exposition*, which had promulgated the idea of black exclusion, perhaps Douglass had begun to realize that the Colored American was a part of the World's Columbian Exposition.

Future Chicagoan Ida B. Wells did not speak at the conference, simply because she complied with Frederick Douglass' request to substitute for him on a scheduled anti-lynching speaking tour campaign throughout Great Britain. This commitment kept her out of the country until after the opening of the fair. As soon as she returned from England, however, she headed immediately for Chicago where she spoke frequently and fervently on various topics related to the African American condition. In her multifaceted pursuits, she proved herself the equal to any feminist of the day, with views crossing the intellectual spectrum from emigration to culture to labor exploitation. Within a month of the fair's opening, Wells had her first opportunity to participate at the fair. Immediately, she sought out her mentor, Frederick Douglass, at the Haytian Pavilion and used that site as her headquarters of sorts as she distributed the famed pamphlet *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in The World's Columbian Exposition*. The Congress on Labor began its proceedings on August 28, 1893 against a backdrop of national depression and widespread unemployment. The Congress's relevance was manifest in the economic conditions of the day and in the very existence of the fair. Throughout Chicago from the South Side to the lakefront and downtown, the specter of the unemployed, overwhelmingly white, appeared so real as to require its being hidden by city officials. Nonetheless, labor riots provided daily fare for the city's newspapers who denounced the unemployed as ingrates, tramps, and communists and in general, deserving of the plight in which they were consumed. Chicago's most revolutionary black voice, Lucy Parsons, the widow of Haymarket martyr, Albert Parsons, spoke constantly this year of capitalist injustices, but not on the fairgrounds where she would probably would have faced harassment or arrest. A North Sider who lived in the midst of the radicalized German community as a matter of personal preference, Parsons was uncompromising in her exposure and denunciation of labor abuses, tenement housing, poor water, the exploitation of women and other issues. A true revolutionary on the issues affecting labor, hers was a presence conspicuously missing and needed to speak for northern black workers.

As the summer progressed, the Parliament of Religions, the fair's most anticipated convocation, began on September 11, 1893. This monument to religious tolerance was preceded and followed by a series of small denominational congresses extending from Sunday, August 27, 1893 to Sunday, October 15, 1893, which allowed the total racial inclusion. African American Protestant involvement was significant, however, a delegation of African American Catholics even met as part of the Columbian Catholic Congress giving them "a spotlight never dreamed of." Headed by Chicago's Rev. Augustine Tolton and by Baltimore's Father Charles R. Uncles, they discussed the benefits of membership in their universal church and the encouragements evident in the rising recognition accorded African American Catholics. For the larger conclave, Christians of various persuasions were joined by Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Bahai, Taoists, and many other religionists.

The next important conference assumed high importance because of its provocative topics, outspoken lecturers, transcendence over oceanic boundaries and relevance to the contemporary issues pervading African American life. It directly broached the question of emigration to Africa or permanent residence in America notwithstanding its ingrained racism. The Congress on Africa was unique in that it was held over an eight-day span extending from Monday, August 14, 1893 through Monday evening, August 21, 1893. The outgrowth of an idea developed by Frederick Perry Noble, the son of a Congregational pastor of a church in the racially-diverse West Side of Chicago, aimed from its onset to be reflective of the linkage between political democracy and humanistic religion. Noble took immense pride in his

denomination's causes and could enthusiastically describe how "Congregationalism, by its freedom from any taint of complicity with human bondage and its work since 1839, has done more for the American Negro than any other church." This conference encompassed the hopes and dreams of a panoply of white liberals and abolitionists along with Social Gospel advocates, as well as self-perceived humanistic imperialists, perhaps anti-imperialists, who wished to continue the tradition of bringing Africa into the orbit of industrial, Christianizing Western Europe. Interestingly, it fit into a pattern established at the Congresses of Berlin and Brussels (held respectively during the winter of 1884-1885 and 1889-1890).

However, as humanistic as the Congregationalists and other Protestants thought they were, the most compelling question before the conference had a familiar ring, given the context of the times. It involved the possibility of transforming the African, whether Diasporan or continental, into a new person into an Afro-Saxon who conformed more readily in temperament, disposition, and level of civilization to Anglo-Saxon standards. Even when attendees to the conference heard the voices of past and present nationalism in the persons of Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, Rev. Alexander Crummell, and a certain Professor Henderson of Straight University of New Orleans, theirs, too, were the voices of transformation, of making the continental African in his home a new and better African. Consistent with their thinking, continental Africans faced transformation into the mold of Anglo-Saxonism.

Because the Congress was being held in the United States, its scope was broadened to devote an immense amount of time to the status of the African American as subsumed under the rubric, "The Negro Problem." The latter was a saving point to many whites, because it allowed them the opportunity to work out a problem close to home. In this sense it had great relevance to the process of urbanization and Americanization that the black population was undergoing. Of course, Frederick Douglass assessed the problem of America as a moral crisis involving inhumane treatment and requiring courageous action on the part of whites.

Significantly, what originated as an endeavor conceived by white American humanitarians, intellectuals, and foreign policy advocates to examine, validate, and perpetuate the most humane features of Great Power hegemony over the African continent, along with finding ways of eliminating the worst features of American racism, was (and to their amazement) dominated rhetorically by the diasporan and continental Africans themselves. This marvel occurred partially because of the dynamism inherent in the invited African American participants. In their ranks were both assertive, educated Chicagoans such as Ferdinand L. Barnett, Ida B. Wells, Edward H. Wright, Rev. John T. Jenifer and others who joined visitors Frederick Douglass, Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, Rev. Alexander Crummell, John Mercer Langston, Bishop Benjamin J. Arnett, Henry Ossawa Tanner, Prof. William Crogman, Hallie Q. Brown, and an impressive young member of Vai royalty from Liberia, Prince Monolu Massaqiou.

As the opening formalities ended, and the presentations proceeded, it was left to the iconoclastic Bishop Henry McNeal Turner of the A.M.E. Church to create a "sensation." Following the reading of the paper on black continental progress prepared by Johnson of Nigeria, Turner rose to cover the same topic written on African American progress while he explored the progress and contributions made by Africans of the Diaspora in manufacturing and the trades. As was to be expected, he also touted the genius and resourcefulness of his group despite the obstacles imposed on African progress by an outwardly racist South and a smug, latently racist North.

Then Turner launched into a peroration on the African origin of humankind, the subsequent debt owed Africa, and the need for a new understanding between the races based on the two previous gifts:

> Revolting as the theory may appear to some present, I believe that all humanity started black-that black was the original color of mankind. That all of these white people present descended from black ancestors, however remotely in antiquity they may have existed. If theoretical geology is entitled to any consideration whatever, the time was when the poles of the earth and the now icebound arctics were so warm that the fjords of the now tropic zones grew there luxuriantly, and the same animals that now live at the equator roamed abroad in that ancient forest. This has been verified by the bones which have been found there of the animals now restricted to the tropical regions. So as I see it, instead of black being an abnormal color, as execrated color, a color to be despised and made the badge of degradation and infamy to the extent that it involves the humanity of those who are black, if it is any color at all it is the primordial, most ancient and original color of mankind.
>
> I have reached this conclusion after years of meditation with such lights as revelation affords to my understanding, aided by the stylus of geology and the archaeological collections found in the British Museum. Yet my interpretations may be greatly at fault and my conclusions wholly absurd, but scientific analyses undoubtedly make black the base of all color and the black man is, therefore, a primitive man.
>
> The drift of nature, whether interpreted speculatively or historically, would, therefore, appear to be whiteward. Primitive man who doubtless has existed for ages longer than our chronology fixes it, in my opinion was black and is the father of the white races of the earth; and, the same black, primitive man gave to the intermediate color or red Egyptian civilization learning, sciences, and philosophy; including skilled labor in its highest form, and this red race has transmitted to the white races letters, poetry, logic mechanism, and all the fundamentalities that the white races have embellished, refined, and improved upon, until it has reached the grandeur of this world-famed Chicago exposition.
>
> Without the black man, Christianity itself would lack a purpose. For while the white man gives it system, logic and abstractions the black man is necessary to impart feeling, sanctified emotion, heart throbs and ecstasy. Thus God and nature need the black man for without him there would be an aching void in earth and heaven. The universe would be in want of a balance wheel, and the God of eternity would again give to light the forgers of creation and perform another day's work before the morning stars would sing together and the sons of God shout for joy.

The immediate response from the African Americans in attendance was enthusiastic and ecstatic. "His address [was] . . . something of a revelation to many of those present. . . [and] he concluded

amid loud applause," read one of newspaper account. At one point in the program, occurring shortly after an especially stirring rendition of one of the traditional "Sorrow Songs" by one of the original Fisk Jubilee Singers, the magisterial Bishop Anderson of South Carolina arose from his seat on the platform, raised his right hand and proclaimed, "Bishop Turner is right! Turner's allusions to African genius from the days of antiquity struck a responsive chord among many African Americans. Their growing sense of specialness, of human agency, rather than a loathing of their very being, was pervasively evident in the city, as well as throughout the nation. Recognition of a special quality inherent in blacks was found everywhere in African American society but especially in Chicago among the refined and the respectables. For the refined, their belief in a specialness in African Americans manifested itself in their ability to compete and achieve in a hostile Anglo-Saxon world so rapidly after citizenship status was conferred. This constituted their *raison d'etre* for demanding equal footing in planning and managing the world's fair. Even though their efforts proved basically fruitless, it was not because of their lack of desire and preparation. For the masses of African American peasants found in the South and domestic and service sector workers located in the North, they believed as their ministers had told them of their messianic mission to redeem America through their past and current sufferings and deprivations. Even the lower stratum of the undesirables knew enough about Anglo-Saxon foibles, as the latter wallowed in vice and corruption along the Levee, to know that there was nothing morally or physically special about being cloaked in a white skin.

If Turner's ending was thought-provoking and "sensational" at a fair ostensibly committed to proving Nordic, or Anglo-Saxon, supremacy worldwide, his expected presentation on the topic assigned was just as significant. He extolled in black achievement, mentioning to an enthusiastic audience that it was Frederick Turner of Atlanta who had invented an air traction engine likely "to revolutionize" locomotion; that Stephen Smith of Philadelphia successfully turned a $15 start-up amount in the coal business into an endeavor capitalized at $350,000 at his death; that a Mr. Jackson in Bermuda had established the largest dry goods store on that island; and that William "Bill" Fisher of Columbia and Charleston, South Carolina, used his genius and skills to gain recognition as "the greatest architect in his day."

The joy ringing in the ears of some Chicago blacks resounded well in the city's general press. Chicago's newspapers faithfully carried portions of Turner's postulation under such headings as "Black Adam in Eden," "Was Adam a Negro?" and "Negroes, Not Apes." Reaction to the bishop's utterances was respectful, with significant portions recalled without sinister or malicious comment. Moreover, he was described in daily newspapers as "one of the most learned and eloquent colored clergy in America." It is uncertain what the *Conservator* and the Appeal wrote about his presentation even though it would have fit into their pattern of extolling all things black. Ida B. Wells, who had just written a piece somewhat favorable to African emigration after Bishop Turner's return to America from Africa, however, was not impressed in this instance. The irascible Ida B. Wells found Turner's manner uncouth and his presentation inelegant.

Beyond Turner's praise hymn to African American advancement, the program featured well-conceived scholarly papers on a variety of topics. One paper discussed "Diseases and Medicine in Africa" and was written by Dr. R. W Falkin of the University of Edinburgh's School of Medicine, a former resident of Uganda. His presentation was followed by Chicago Provident Hospital's Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, who spoke on "American Negroes as Surgeons and Nurses." Williams' contribution cannot be overstated. At this point in his career he became the first surgeon to successfully complete suturing on the human heart in which the patient survived.

From his work at Provident and other Chicago hospitals, he built a reputation as an institution builder and was to leave for Washington, D.C. to head the Freedmen's Hospital and develop a framework from which other black hospitals would originate.

Finally, the eagerly awaited debate over African emigration commenced. To the white abolitionists and liberals of the 1890s, the mere mention of, let alone a debate on, emigrationism caused disappointment, embarrassment, and consternation. The voluntary departure of African Americans from the country would have clearly indicated that the nation had failed to live up to its avowed principles as embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Seeking to keep faith in the ability of their fellow Americans to respect both the spirit and the intent of the law in a nation of laws, they sought affirmation from interracial gatherings such as the Congress. As they interacted with diasporan Africans as fellow human beings, governed under the same rules under which they were, they aspired to convince them of white sincerity. To black Chicagoans with a half century of familiarity with the debate, the outcome proved revealing.

By the time Professor Henderson of Straight University read his paper in defense of leaving the United States, Bishop Turner had more than adequately spread the gospel of emigration with enthusiasm wherever he went in the city. Turner was correctly described as "having no faith in the future of his race in the United States, as he believe[d] the ignoble status of the colored people in the South and their scullion employment in the North [were] sources of degradation and nothing but nationalization [would] work out the elevation of the race and he holds that Africa is the field for that." Henderson began his address with a scenario familiar to students of this nation's history:

> Let there be formed a joint stock company such as those under which Virginia and Massachusetts were colonized, and let distinguished philanthropists without regard to race be asked to assist. Let a commission of experts be selected and sent to Africa to find a place for settlement . . . Let 10,000 . . . persons be selected, such as artisans, bricklayers, machinists, doctors, lawyers, preachers, and teachers, every trade and profession necessary for the establishment of a civilized society. I have no doubt such a plan would be feasible. Our race would respond to such an appeal.

Attorney Ferdinand L. Barnett of Chicago ably presented his side in rebuttal as he read absent New Yorker T. Thomas Fortune's paper entitled, "Should Negroes Colonize Africa?" Its aimed to demonstrate why African Americans should keep faith in the American Promise. The strength of Fortune's argument lay in the recognized failure of recent emigrationist projects, one of which less than a year ago left hundreds of diasporan Africans on the way home stranded in New York. Fortune's basic challenge rested in this question: "Why did the Germans or Irish not go back to their native land? What advantages does Africa offer the Negroes that are superior to those of the United States?" The *Inter Ocean*, the racially-progressive white newspaper with a predilection to favor the anti-emigrationist, abolitionist position, reported, perhaps accurately, that "ringing applause . . . followed that left no mistake as to the answer." However, it was Barnett's own personal comments, challenging the emigrationist position through ridicule, that supposedly neutralized it. Along with Edward H. Morris' earlier pronouncements on emigration at the Colored Protective Men's Association conference, the voices of the city's black elite rejected the notion of leaving America. The reaction of the city's respectables, the rank and file,

is unknown but this was not the end to the issue. For nationalistically-inclined African Americans, the Congress on Africa and the presence of continental Africans at the fair stimulated an increased interest in Africa.

The world's fair's most controversial gathering and the one that angered and infuriated more African Americans locally and nationally than any other was Colored American Day, held on August 25, 1893. It originated as a result of concerted, nationally-based African American protest about exclusion at the fair. Thus challenged by this charge of unfair treatment, the fair's managers set aside a special day for African Americans, much in the manner of Irish Day or Illinois Day. Colored American Day, in spurring intense debate both pro and con throughout the nation became one of the most publicized events held at the fair. A scrupulous overview of the disparate activities of the fair in which African Americans participated indicated that Colored American Day was perhaps of tertiary importance among all the hustle and bustle on and off the fairgrounds. Ranking ahead of this solitary day's limited activities was the eight-day Congress on Africa that concluded triumphantly several days immediately preceding Colored American Day. Further, Haytian Day and the daily activities at the Haytian Pavilion ranked higher in importance. Yet Colored American Day earned unwarranted recognition because of the controversy surrounding it contemporarily and the interest it garnered subsequently through a misreading of the past.

The *Chicago Inter Ocean*, filled with pride because of the intellectual deportment of its black friends in holding substantive discussions during the Congress on Africa the previous week, chided the group that it had a racial obligation to insure that Colored American Day maintained a comparative level of decorum, and to "make it a day that will give other visitors as good as impression of the colored race as did the discussion and the attendance at the African congress last week." As for Colored American Day, Frederick Douglass' involvement in planning the celebration pleased the racially-progressive *Chicago Inter Ocean* immensely. Rightly so, because at the moment Douglass assumed the presidency of the committee planning the event, he began to envision it as a springboard from which to expose a standing criticism of the nation's treachery toward the African Americans and to present a living exhibition of black accomplishment before an international audience. Douglass knew his acceptance of the position and association with the event opened him to criticism of accepting the half loaf when ideological consistency required rejection of a dubious honor. Nonetheless, the opportunity to demonstrate race achievement proved too attractive to dismiss this chance.

Local clergy led the formidable opposition to the event. Chicago's Quinn Chapel A. M. E. minister, the Rev. John T. Jenifer, despised the rising popularity of the cake walk and feared its possible appearance as part of the world's fair activities. Lecturing in 1892 before a multitude of eager listeners assembled at the church, Jenifer told the huge audience that "there are two ways in which a race may become distinguished. First, through its intelligence, its industry, progress and God-fearing good citizenship; second, through its ignorance, depravity, indolence, and antagonism to the genius of good government and the spirit of progress. I am pained to notice by the newspapers that some of our people are becoming distinguished by the latter method'." As to the cake walk, he referred particularly to this dance craze as a form of "Race luggage" better left behind. "We must abandon all these grotesque features that serve to remind others of our former degraded condition in life, and cherish the best that is at our command. We are in the midst of a journey from a past condition to a better [one]. Improvement has been made, but "race luggage' still hampers some of us, holding back the entire race." The impending fair offered both an opportunity to demonstrate advancement and a pitfall to confirm backwardness, and a curious

America would ask the question which. Jenifer concluded that "we may soon be called upon for the answer in the approaching world's fair."

At Olivet Baptist, the mother church of the city's Baptists, Dr. J. F. Thomas condemned the event. Later, Quinn Chapel's Dr. G.C. Boot, who replaced Rev. Jenifer, along with his fellow A. M. E. colleague, Dr. G.A. Graham at Bethel, opposed the special day. The same situation held true at St. Stephen on the city's West Side. Rev. J.E. Thompson of St. Thomas Episcopal spoke out because "he did not see the fitness of it.' As hundreds of members of their congregations listened, the clergy preached the correctness of a boycott. As an alternative activity for Chicagoans and visitors, they scheduled a massive picnic for the following day far off the fairgrounds in a public park.

So, the refined element legitimately feared that Colored American Day might just as easily deteriorate into a "Jubilee Day," during which the most objectionable features of black folk culture and expression in the eyes of the elite might be exposed to white view. This last factor explained why the chasm between the elite and respectables continued to widen. The latter could never fathom the depth of in-group resentment held by these parvenu African American racial leaders toward what they saw in their own eyes as worthy and legitimate cultural expressions. After all, the respectables had embraced European aesthetics as part of their holistic appreciation of culture from around the entire rim of the Atlantic Complex, both in the spheres of the *beaux arts* and in African-influenced indigenous forms.

Friday, August 25, 1893 was a historic day as African Americans gained the recognition they sought to present their story to the world. Socially prominent whites attended, pleasing Douglass and the others greatly. Their presence confirmed the arrival of blacks as equals in American society, if only for several hours on a solitary afternoon. Isabella Beecher Hooker, sister to Harriet Beecher Stowe and Rev. Henry Beecher accompanied Frederick Douglass to the stage to the thunderous applause of the 2500 persons who filled Festival Hall. Accompanying her were her two nieces, daughters of a Beecher who commanded the first black regiment in Civil War South Carolina. Hooker embodied the abolitionist spirit that historian James M. McPherson described as still vital in liberal circles in the nation.

The more assimilationist-minded among the elite were not the only African Americans who needed the affirmation that the presence of elite whites brought. Others seemed to believe white involvement confirmed the humanity of blacks in a white-dominated world. The attendance of approximately 800 whites, one third of the assemblage, further attested to the possibility of racial harmony. Phoebe Couzins, who had befriended African American interests during the pre-fair period as a member of the Board of Lady Managers, attended. So did Baltimore Catholic priest, the Rev. John R. Slattery, who shared his plans for building a $300,000 facility to train African Americans for the priesthood.

However, some prominent African Americans failed to appear, such as the featured opera singer, coloratura soprano Sissieretta Jones, known as the Black Patti. Ida B. Wells stayed away from the celebration but retroactively reversed her assessment both of the propriety of staging the event and of its value to racial progress. Originally motivated by a whimsical impulse, it appeared she responded to favorable white newspaper accounts to the event, especially in the *Inter Ocean*, by later seeking out Douglass at the Haytian Pavilion. There, she apologized to the "grand old man" for placing her youthful exuberance before the qualities of racial leadership he had displayed in deciding to participate. A. M. E. Bishops Arnett and Turner absented themselves from the event while two of the committees' vice presidents also avoided the event. Former U. S. Representative John Mercer Langston skipped the event after having urged

Chicago audiences previously that they should follow his lead.

First and foremost, the oratory of Frederick Douglass dominated the event and subsequently served as the standard for any evaluation of Colored American Day. Douglass' speech evoked great emotion and mesmerized an audience of the faithful. "Shaking his white mane and trembling with the vehemence of his eloquence the old man for more than half an hour held 2,500 persons under a spell," the *Chicago Tribune* reported. Short addresses by whites comprised another portion of the program. Musical selections of a classical nature represented an important segment. Lastly, musical selections and recitations from established and rising African Americans provided entertainment and enlightenment. So, in one sense, Colored American Day proved a total success as African Americans consummated their newly-acquired absorption of high culture. Their mastery of European musical and literary endeavors could surely impress the white friends of the race who might spread the word that a "New Negro had evolved," one far removed in mental bent from his or her servile days in intellectual and physical shackles.
Dr. J.A. Majors of Chicago, serving as one of several vice presidents on the committee, fondly reflected on the event nearly four decades later as a shining moment for his race. Majors' reflections in 1929 on the eve of planning the 1933 world's fair provided a contrasting version to the tone of earlier African American denunciations of near total racial exclusion.[iv] The white press's treatment presented the celebration as a triumph for African Americans, especially in as far as they showed decorum in their dress and demeanor. The *Chicago Herald* commented that the "better type of Colored people" was present, represented by school teachers and ministers. The tone of the *Tribune's* reporting indicated satisfaction both with the appearance of "prominent colored men" on the stage and with the appearance of the socially prominent Beecher family. The *Inter Ocean* featured the event with page one, column one treatment, led by the headline, "HONOR TO THEIR RACE: Colored American Day at the Exposition a Success." Aware of dissent throughout black ranks, the newspaper aired the facts as they existed and immediately legitimized the staging of the event with its opening paragraph what read: "Colored Americans day at The Fair, and the dignified manner of the observance, did honor to the race. Even in the face of opposition in their own ranks, with which those in charge had to contend, the celebration was everything that grand old statesman and sage, Frederick Douglass, had hoped for."

At an event at which the elite knew had to be pleasing to white eyes and ears, the pages of the black press also carried immense weight. The *Cleveland Gazette* disappointed them by labeling the festivity "a farce." Meanwhile, the *Indianapolis Freeman* reported on Chicago events to Chicagoans and the nation as though it was the voice of Chicago, recently labeled the "Windy City." It assessed the event, apart from the oratorical and musical portions, as a great failure. Relying on misinformation before the event, the *Freeman* incorrectly reported that there would be no event at all. Once the event took place, the paper clumsily reported on it with some enthusiasm, emphasizing the program portion which featured Douglass' memorable, resounding oratory. The *Freeman's* assessment of failure finally relied on the low attendance at the event as well as on the fairgrounds. In its conclusion, the *Freeman* stated" the Negro Jubilee Day' has gone glimmering.'

When the gates of the World's Columbian Exposition closed permanently on October 30, 1893, the world had borne witness to anything but an unsubstantial African American presence at this event. No visitor to the fair could have overlooked the involvement of the African American and continental African. The congregation of the Quinn Chapel A.M.E. Church concluded the black connection to the fair as consumers of the salable goods left on the

fairgrounds. They purchased a beautiful German organ, one of the items of pride of that great nation's exhibit. Significantly, it is still in use to this date.

V.

The Social Fabric of Black Chicago

Segmentation existed within the social fabric of Black Chicago and illustrated life's complexity. An elite as well as an immense body of church-going, respectable working people and the denizens of the netherworld interacted, competed and ignored each other in this city of one million souls. Without clear cut evidence of heightened stratification based on income, education, professional status, cultural affiliation and physiognomy, especially complexion, St. Clair Drake's framework of a complex social world encompassing the refined, the respectables and the riff-raff still seemed relevant. It remained, therefore, usable as an instrument to understand most aspects of life until a normative class system based primarily on economic position appeared.

From a contemporary bird's eye view, A.M.E. minister Rev. Reverdy Ransom's reflections on the social structure were complementary and telling. The well-traveled and college-trained clergy assessed the composition of the leading men in this manner: "Among the Colored men, Theodore Jones was the most prominent in business. He had a fleet of trucks nearly a half mile long. Edward H. Morris stood at the head of the Negro lawyers in the city, while Edward H. Wright, Ferdinand Barnett, and S. Laing Williams were coming into prominence at the Chicago bar and in politics. In the medical profession, Drs. Dan Williams and George C. Hall were the most prominent, and in dentistry Dr. Charles C. Bentley enjoyed a large practice among whites as well as colored people." The later image of the totally inclusive social hierarchy that accommodated domestic and service personnel was rendered mythical.

Overcoming the glass ceiling restricting women's advancement, Chicago had its first (or second) black female physician sometime before 1893 in Dr. Carrie Golden. She had the distinction of performing as a staff member of the "Emergency Hospital at the World's Fair and [also] read a paper on 'Rheumatism' at the Congress of Eclectic [sic] Physicians and Surgeons." In 1896, dentist Ida Gray Nelson opened her practice and Chicago-born Ida Platt, born to free parents in 1863, became the first African American woman admitted into legal practice before the Illinois bar in 1894. (see Figure 51) Platt's admittance evoked a telling, historical response from one of the judges: "We have done today what we have never done before, admitted a Colored woman to the bar, and it may now be *truly* said that persons are now admitted to the Illinois bar without regard to race, sex or color. (emphasis added)"

When Ransom's recollections are contrasted with the well-cited source of E. Franklin Frazier, his anonymous physician, major discrepancies are apparent. The memories of Frazier's new comer to the city recalled a city view as seen from the bottom up: "The leading business among the colored people was railroading. The headwaiters were at the top of society. They almost dictated social customs. A man prided himself that he was Mr. So and So's valet. Next to the headwaiters were the porters and then came the barbers. I have seen that whole thing change. First there were four colored doctors. Very few colored people employed a colored physician, they didn't believe in it. There was great rivalry between the home people and the strangers. I was known as an interloper . . .."

The "home people" that the physician mentioned were maturing in their relationship to being in the city as molders of the dynamics of urban life, whether economic, civic, political, social or recreational. Early in the next decade and century, they would organize the Old Settlers Club. Contemporarily, Rev. Abram T. Hall's son, Charles Edward Hall, formulated his

assessment of high society from his vantage point in the state capital. Editor of the Springfield's *Illinois Record*, he possessed the perfect medium and social background from which to deride Chicago African American society as being comprised of "shams, monte banks, empirics, and clowns," while extolling the virtues of the first generation of ante-bellum days. Conflicting observations notwithstanding, the refined constituted Chicago's elite, its aristocracy, its socially prominent persons who represented black Chicago's version of white New York's privileged "400." In Du Bois' writings after the fair, the refined held the status he ascribed to a "Talented Tenth." As to African American Chicago possessing an aristocracy, or "400," that possibility depended on acceptance of probably little more than several dozen individuals as the equivalent of 400, and their lack of wealth and prominence as inconsequential in modern America. Nonetheless, in the racially-segmented world of Anglo-Saxonism, they did constitute a recognizable cultural and color elite among African Americans and had every right to claim reality to be whatever they wished. In 1896, the *Chicago Daily News* described this group as the city's African "400." In an article entitled "Colored Belles to Come: Chicago's African "400' Agog Over Prospective Visit", the newspaper reported that "the members of Chicago's Colored '400' are getting ready to entertain four young women who are recognized as the leaders of Colored society in the United States. These young women, who have long scoffed at the idea of the existence, among the representatives of their race, of 'society' in Chicago, have sent out an olive branch, and, to emphasize the acknowledgment of their error, will be here about the middle of May."

While remaining socially polite, these visiting maidens could not have found the society to which they were accustomed in Washington, D. C. ("considered the very top of the Negro world"), New Orleans, and Charleston in existence in Chicago in 1896. The young women were described in the following manner: "Miss Summerville is petite, plump, good-looking and shows little trace of the African . . . Miss Pinchback is tall and dignified and has frequently been mistaken for a white woman . . . Miss Griffin is an accomplished young woman of the Creole type. She has expressive eyes and is a clever conversationist."

The views of this elite on racial identity revolved primarily around the question of how closely its members would align with or distance themselves from the sentiments associated with the mass of persons of African descent. The elite eschewed by choice the derivative African- and Southern-based cultural practices and heritage that comprised the *Afro*-American subculture. Like many persons of color in color-conscious America, the elite's concern with skin color bordered on the obsessive. While it was common for white America routinely to denounce a dark complexion as ugly and belonging to an Amazon, from either America or Africa, and to extol the virtues of a fair complexion, the same was true for many Afro-Saxons. While he visited the city for the world's fair, whites could tout Paul Lawrence Dunbar, a favorite of cultured northern whites, as a pure Negro, showing their awareness of the difference. Similarly, they could chide mulatto Frederick Douglass because of his African bloodline and features. Repeated references to Douglass's mane being reminiscent of a lion's is telling since it also carried a connotation as to color.

Whether this tension over skin color existed in Chicago to the extreme, the way it did on the East coast, and in the South in cities such as Charleston, New Orleans, and Washington, D.C. is conjectural. However, awareness of color distinctions pervaded all the corners of Afro-Saxon America and working-class Afro-America. Robert Sengstacke Abbott's early experiences in Chicago after 1897 convinced him that an internal color line existed as he was dissuaded from pursuing a career in law by Edward H. Morris because of his dark complexion. As Chicago

prepared for the next century, continuous demographic increase and occupational differentiation produced a discernible socioeconomic change in previous socio-cultural categories that did result in clear cut class distinctions. If there had been an aristocracy with justifiable numbers in the aggregate, Fannie Barrier Williams would have headed it along with her husband, the Bentleys and the Wheelers.

The foremost historian on the "Negro 400," Willard Gatewood, described the characteristics an aristocracy of color where, consistent with St. Clair Drake's assessment, the attainment and method of attainment of wealth played a limited role in determining "standing." Like New York, it was a class delineated partially by its own self-definition. There, and in Chicago, "unnoticed by the white world, a Negro upper class which lived in the manner of typical middle-class white families had come into being (emphasis added)." As an elite in Chicago, it was expected to participate in the civic sphere open to persons of abundant resources and options, a world of self-sacrifice, as opposed to that world inhabited by ordinary citizenry, which was marked by an emphasis on personal enjoyment and self-aggrandizement. White aristocrats had options but rarely did Chicago's Colored "400" seek additional vestiges of respectability by adoption of the elements of civic virtue. They did display an appreciation of what whites considered high cultural attainment, however. Social skills related to recreation held a lower importance; cultural interests counted more heavily. Sophistication, attainment of cultural traits and preferences and education represented the components making this "class."

Significantly, when a host family offered appropriate lodgings to Frederick Douglass at the time he returned for the formal opening of the fair in spring 1893, the S. Laing Williamses greeted him at their door located far from the Dearborn Corridor to greet him. Home life for the Williamses was "unusually charming and happy. The[ir] choice of pictures and an ample library g[a]ve an air of refinement and culture' to their residence. More often than not, dinner outside the Williamses' home meant that the Lloyd G. Wheelers were the host and hostess." Dr. and Mrs. Charles E. Bentley were not to be overlooked, however, as they hosted W. E. B. Du Bois as an extended guest in August 1899. By this time, the couple was comfortably residing in new housing at 383 East 44th Street in the wealthier Grand Boulevard neighborhood. No doubt it was into this circle that Richard R. Wright, Jr. was invited when he arrived to study at the University of Chicago. As the son of the president of Georgia State Industrial College, located near Savannah, he was "frequently invited to the homes of many colored people in the upper intellectual and economic brackets.

Individual advancement found Fannie Barrier Williams reaching the apogee of civic leadership as she was accepted into membership at the Chicago Woman's Club in 1895. n and of itself, this one notable exception to racist exclusion in social advancement qualified Williams as a member of Chicago's civic establishment. Meanwhile, Mary Richardson Jones was being supplanted as the leader of refined society as Mrs. Fannie Emanuel, the wife of Dr. William Emanuel, moved up. Far South Sider Mrs. Emanuel "had the genius for organizing entertainment on the standard of New York's Fifth Avenue . . .[importantly] under her, lily whiteism vanished. Professional achievement instead was the standard of her circle. The lawyers and doctors flocked to the leadership of the Emanuels." One example of the Emanuels' love of festivity took place in the warmth of a Chicago summer evening as they "entertained a large company on a trolley party" that wound its way from the mid-South Side at Sixty-Third Street and South Park Avenue southward to the outer suburban ring.

As to the accumulation of wealth, its acquisition did not automatically confer elite status as evidenced by the deaths of several persons with high profiles, including politician John W.E.

Thomas, who died extremely wealthy by African American standards with an estate of $100,000. In addition, Daniel "Uncle Dan" Scott amassed a small fortune of $100,000 from saloon keeping and the cartage business at the time of his death in 1895. This assessment proved true within the of the broader social sphere that existed simultaneously with the staid world of imagined civic virtue and cultural refinement inhabited by the refined element. The onus of obscuring this meaning to posterity rested with twentieth century sociologist E. Franklin Frazier who set into motion an acceptance of a skewed view of city's inner social dynamics. He embraced the parochial recollections of a newcomer to the city as an indicator of an extant, general pattern of social mobility and status. The interviewee was a migrant of the 1890s who joined the ranks of the physicians in the early twentieth century but spoke retrospectively of "good times" and a social world dominated by Pullman porters and domestic personnel with close contact to wealthy whites. Within this milieu, social skills in language were important and valet, porter, and waiter was transformed into the raconteur, the conversationalist, the hunter and the "sporting man" at home in the South Dearborn Street Corridor.

In the aftermath of the fair, and with social change apparent, the appearance of a new Ward McAllister from outside the ranks of the refined was not unexpected. One generation removed, Drake and Cayton explained the process in the twentieth century that allowed an Avendorph to emerge: "The upper class admits to its circles many whose incomes are far less than theirs, but who possess other valued attributes, such as advanced education or high standards of public decorum." Julius Avendorph, who was a private messenger to white real estate magnate and civic leader Ferdinand W. Peck, found his niche at this time and supposedly succeeded businessman Lloyd G. Wheeler as black society's chief social arbiter, or standard setter. His bolted dramatically onto the social scene as a social organizer and master of ballroom decorum through the pages of the *Western Appeal* in 1891. While Wheeler was described in 1893 as having "considerable money and [who] increases his opportunities as social dictator by liberal expenditure, "Avendorph could neither match his alleged predecessor in expended income or social prominence. As for the myth, or urban legend, that Pullman porters or other occupational groups who produced leaders, dominated black society, it could have occurred only within their own social domains. Daniel Hale Williams' comments from 1888 rang much truer.

In any event, after 1893, it is reasonable to assume that Avendorph now stood as social master over decorum over many major social functions which featured the same cuisines served and wardrobe styles associated with higher status whites. Avendorph grew in popularity, but he was always careful to avoid involvement in any of the issues of the day, such as the racial strategy that formed an integral part of the world of civic affairs. in 1891, during the major civic dialogue of the day on whether African Americans should found a black hospital and training school for African American, his name was not mentioned. importantly, when influential white Unitarian minister, the Reverend Celia Parker Woolley, established the Frederick Douglass Center early in the new century to afford the refined element an opportunity to mingle with their white counterparts, the name of this social arbiter never appeared. Even more conclusive as to his overall status, he never joined the aristocratic ranks of African Americans comprising one half of the leadership of the Chicago branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) beginning in 1910 as S. Laing Williams, George Cleveland Hall and Charles E. Bentley did. Membership in the latter organization carried the ultimate status attached to Afro-Saxon arrival in the American mainstream and therefore represented a litmus test for civic leadership for generations of blacks.[v]

Comparatively, other northern cities presented a variety of scenarios, showing the

uniqueness at times of African Americans as they adjusted to local conditions and exigent circumstances. The composition of the highest social leadership in Chicago stood in stark contrast to a more inclusive grouping in Philadelphia which included caterers, clerks, teachers, professional men and small merchants." among these Philadelphians were families with lineages that stretched over generations along with those of more recent wealth and educational achievement. Importantly, Philadelphia was home to the ultra-exclusive Boule. In Washington, D. C., the criteria for membership in the elite were stringent: "elite blacks based their social status on their ties with prominent whites, their skin color, and their family backgrounds." Historian Jacqueline M. Moore continued: "They were obsessed with being seen as distinct from the race and therefore acceptable to the white community. Their principle concern was their own assimilation. The situation in Chicago could not have been more different, with the lack of an aristocracy, familial and social ties to socially-positioned whites and an emphasis on complexion. Erstwhile frontier, white Chicago measured status by the successful pursuit of wealth and a supposed upward social movement based on the meritorious acquisition of wealth. This explains why black Chicagoans, as bona fide Chicagoans, entered the race for wealth through the ownership of businesses and professional endeavors. Edward H. Wright and Robert S. Abbott represented notable examples of success in Chicago.

In Cleveland, historian Kenneth M. Kusmer found that its small black populations in 1890 and 1900 of 3,035 (1.2 percent of the city's total) and 5,988 (1.6 percent), respectively, were "dominated by a small upper class composed mostly of merchants and small entrepreneurs, skilled craftsmen, barbers who owned their own shops, headwaiters in exclusive establishments, and a few doctors, lawyers and other professionals." George A. Myers was a barber, but not an ordinary one. "He was a substantial entrepreneur, and his Hollenden House Barbershop was an elaborate establishment with a sizable staff. Its clientele include the most influential white men in Cleveland . . . [and Myers] was also an important political figure in the Republican organization of Senator Marcus A. Hanna." In New York City, Brooklyn and Boston, pedigrees dating back to Dutch settlement as well as the Revolutionary War marked an early standard of acceptability. Employment of white servants also marked their status. Ivy League education and blue veins further substantiated top ten status as black status faded while white standards of status soared.

B. The <u>Respectables</u> Persevere

The ranks of the <u>respectables</u> increased, consistent with the growth of the general population, for they represented the bulk of the African American citizenry. Their positive self-perception that matched the externally-held view of them was based on their hard work, commendable public deportment, church affiliations and voluntarism, and acquisition of property. This was the group that allowed Booker T. Washington to extol the virtues, strengths and successes of African Americans to influential whites in the North as he sought their economic and moral support. His salutary description, in fact, paralleled that made in *Scribner's Magazine's* several years earlier. "When, even in the North, the shop, the factory, the trades have closed against us, have we not patiently, faithfully gone on taking *advantage of our disadvantages*, and through it all have we not continued to rise, to increase in numbers and prosperity? (emphasis added)"

C. Life among the economically and socially depressed

As interesting as the life successes and lifestyles of the more affluent and average residents were, an even larger number of Chicagoans barely eked out a living. Life among the economically depressed found them adrift in a sea of humanity that made a case for the existence of an

underclass. Monroe N. Work's canvasses of the African American community convinced him of a correlation between churches and non-religious populations, a scarcity of work, and an increase in the crimes of larceny, burglary and robbery, he found that the growth of a criminal class conformed to a decrease in economic opportunity as the decade and century ended. He wrote "there [were] a large amount of unemployed Negroes in the city, numbering several hundreds [; however,] could a census of this class be taken, it would no doubt be found into the thousands. From this class the ranks of the criminals are recruited."

D. Interracial Relations

The notion of achieving racial equality in all dimensions of the social sphere still awaited its mature appreciation by a twentieth century, post-World War Two population as a possibility rather than a theory. And there was that other constricted and important component to the dualism of equalitarianism. For Richard R. Wright, Jr. who traveled from his native Georgia to study at the newly-founded University of Chicago, he sought to meet a challenge that even tested the unproven concept of equality of opportunity. "The main thing that intrigued me was that I would go to school with white men and women and have an opportunity to test my ability with theirs. I had faith that I would be equal to the task. had never sat in a class with whites, never debated them, never tested my prowess against them in anything; never even worshipped with them in church. I was most anxious for contact on what I thought would be equal grounds – in the North. The thought of social equality never entered my mind – it was intellectual equality that thrilled me."

While one would assume that members of the elite such as S. Laing and Fannie Barrier Williams, Hale G. Parker, the Lloyd Wheelers, Ferdinand and Ida B. Wells Barnett, and the Charles E. Bentleys would be alone in seeking their earned rights through the channel of equal opportunity, at the other end of the social spectrum among those with so little a stake in society their shared misery became an equalizer. This feature became another variant in racial adjustment. Simply put, impoverishment produced interracial commiseration. Many of the city's poor overcame racial considerations and learned to live together harmoniously.

The ability of so many African Americans among the ranks of the respectables to participate in the same type of activities open to other Chicagoans who shared their economic status brought some satisfaction to their lives. What African Americans wanted though was an unfettered opportunity to pursue happiness as they defined it. The racially condescending utterances of Mayor Carter Harrison at the world's fair only showed how far America and Chicago had to advance in their attitudes. For the racially naive who thought that antebellum attitudes had disappeared with the Union's military victory in 1865, the appearance of the mayor of Chicago, the Hon. Carter G. Harrison, at a black conference on civil rights during the world's fair corrected that misperception. As he welcomed the delegates, he resorted to a combination of his stock political antics mixed with his Southern paternalism to deliver a most unusual address. The liberal, former Kentuckian quickly reminded the delegates that they were wise to remain ambivalent about the nation's abilities to keep its promises of equal protection and opportunity for all as it worked its way to a color-blind solution to national problems. The mayor's racial paternalism emerged just as quickly as he talked of faithful African Americans in his home state who still referred to him as "Massa Cartah." He continued his insults through references to African American women. "I am one who thinks the nut-brown skin capable of higher beauty than that of the Caucasian skin," the *Chicago Evening Post* reported as it whimsically noted that the mayor could not resist such insensitive remarks as "the influence of the blarney stone soon asserted itself." Harrison continued, "I have seen black men whose forms were as handsome as

an Apollo of ebony. But there is a prejudice against you. It will take time to eradicate it. Don't try to do it in a day. Don't try to break down such prejudices. Live with them with honest earnest conduct."

Since no Chicago politician could conclude a meeting without self-congratulation, the mayor's peroration included references to the political progress he had engineered through his African American appointments. Most notably they included police and fire departments' hirees along with a second female employed in the Chicago Public Library. On this occasion, the "grand old man" in the struggle for black dignity, Frederick Douglass, the Sage of Anacostia, the walking Colored Rock of Gibraltar, acted to neutralize the mayor, the embodiment of the Blarney Stone.

Infrequent remainders of racial differences made this a feature a variant in the search for equality in living. The question of whether African Americans saw themselves in this last decade of the century as part of a "problem" as Du Bois was to define racial relations in his *Souls of Black Folk* presents a problem in itself. Hale G. Parker did not, as evidenced by his pursuit of inclusion in the world's fair as an administrator, a position he sought and won. His comments in 1892 clearly illustrated that he saw an American imperfection, but not a black one. The same was position was enunciated by Frederick Douglass during the fair's inaugural ceremonies held in October 1892 and at Colored American Day in August 1893. The nation, not black Americans, had a serious problem, and one that it had to resolve without projecting it onto the backs of a specific group.

The city's downtown jewel, the Loop, attracted all citizens with limited instances of racial discrimination. While access by African Americans to housing in many neighborhoods as well as some downtown theaters and community recreational venues were slowly becoming restricted, many downtown hotels such as the Palmer House, Sherman Hotel and the Auditorium Building complex welcomed them. African Americans who proposed to hold a benefit for orphans in the Loop at Central Hall in February 1893 met no opposition and concluded this charitable event with success. The protocol of race as it was practiced in Chicago under optimum conditions had to be proven to an apprehensive Ida B. Wells by her mentor, Frederick Douglass. What the latter assumed from decades of experience in the racially-fluid North, Barnett had to experience herself. In a world's fair experience at the Boston Oyster House, a popular white restaurant, she grew to appreciate that full privileges of worth, status and service in America could extend to African Americans, if only privileged ones. Although she was "cocked and primed for a fight if necessary," Douglass was relaxed and chided her about her apprehensions.

Once Wells-Barnett established permanent residency in Chicago and began interacting whites, she was made aware of many nuances to the problem of establishing harmonious race relations and cultivating friends among the city's powerful and influential whites. Simply put, notwithstanding the presence of a social "400," African Americans lacked the financial and political power to protect themselves and their rights without outside assistance. When in 1900 the *Chicago Tribune* floated a proposal for racially separate schools in Chicago for the first time in its history, and the Southern-born and -raised editor displayed little interest in social justice in the matter, Wells-Barnett felt compelled to take the matter to a proven racial friend, Jane Addams. Resultant victory over overt racism ensued.

A visitor from England, the Rev. Charles F. Aked, whose acquaintance with her began with her tours in behalf of eliminating the scourge of lynching, showed her the importance "in giving a real lesson in democracy to our [white] American friends." Since northern whites knew so little about African Americans through social contact, he felt that it was imperative that the refined

element seek to inform them about another side of black life. “He thought that when we could do so without sacrificing self-respect, we should make it a point to be seen at lectures, concerts, and other gatherings of public nature and thus accustom white people to seeing another type of the race as well as their waiters and cooks, seamstresses and bootblacks.” This was similar to advice given by Judge Albion Tourgee who admonished Ferdinand L. Barnett to persuade his fellow African Americans to organize in support of the cause of racial justice. “I have never complained of [a] lack of appreciation from your people,” he wrote, “because I saw the reasons of their failure to manifest approval, but I have been forced to take note of it by what I saw was its effect on others. I [have] known many thousands of your people [who] have the same feeling towards me which you express, but I should never guess it from their conduct.” Tourgee would lecture and almost no blacks would attend, leaving the whites who responded wondering as to what their real intentions were. At the University of Chicago, black students were welcomed and fully participated in academic and non-curricular activities.

Among persons of both races who labored with their hands in the vineyards, the artificial boundaries of skin color often broke down quicker than they did elsewhere. The frequency of interracial statutory marriage, common law marriage and casual courtship proved this as did the existence of Chicago’s Manasseh Society, a club consisting of more than 100 mixed race married couples. So, despite the prevalence of tenets of Social Darwinism on race, America avoided a caste system.

Egalitarianism suffered in the city during the world’s fair as some of the more unsavory sentiments of white Chicago along with Southern visitors covertly or overtly espoused and practiced racism. Most notable was the spate of bias, misinformation and falsehood produced by the media of the period-journals, magazines, souvenir books, novels and newspapers. Most egregious were the souvenir books and photographic collections numbering over 600. But even with their biases, *Scribner’s*, *Independent, Atlantic Monthly*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly* did inform its readership. *World’s Fair Puck* announced its intention early to ridicule anything or anyone that it found to be silly or weak, so throughout the fair it operated as an equal opportunity offender.

Ferdinand L. Barnett was astutely aware of the depth of the race problem and this affected his view of the World’s Columbian Exposition. Just as Frederick Douglass did, he applied the litmus test of racial justice to the high point of American accomplishment at the end of the century. When he did, what he found left him disappointed. Barnett wrote that “theoretically open to all Americans, the Exposition practically is, literally and figuratively, a ‘White City,’ in the building of which the Colored American was allowed no helping hand, and in its glorious success he has no share.” He made this part of the major, contemporary document on race relations in the twentieth century, *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in The World’s Columbian Exposition*. An exceptional statement of the hopes, the fears, the achievements, the disappointments and significantly, the contemporary grievances of many African Americans at the Chicago World’s Fair, it particularly illustrated the nature of the complications to be overcome as well as the complexities of the historical circumstances to be understood. was. As a protest tome, it was compelling. Polished and detailed, it represented a new level of rejection of American racism. However, as it denounced the nation's failed attempts to keep its promises, it simultaneously presented an impression of the fair as an event that was somewhat skewed by the pamphlet’s early circulation during the fair’s run, rather than after it when African American brilliance had a chance to shine, and black agency the opportunity to achieve a small portion of its racial agenda.

In Chicago, the absence of massive assaults or race riots showed that overt racial antagonism was kept to a minimal level, partially because of the progressive municipal and civic attitude opposing racial violence as well as due to the defiant, rather than passive, character of African Americans that was known to all potential antagonists. In 1896, when striking Italian workers attacked and killed strikebreaking Southern blacks en masse in downstate Spring Valley, the response from Major Buckner of the Ninth Battalion was to organize armed men and proceed southward to protect fellow blacks. He was dissuaded from this militant response by the more determined, conservative elements within the African American community.[vi]Meanwhile, North Side labor agitator Lucy Parsons had previously encouraged the Italian workers in their resistance who, from her anarchist perspective, were the aggrieved parties in this contest between government-backed capital and downtrodden labor.

In the educational sphere, when vigilance and courage were needed the most in 1900, Ida B. Wells-Barnett led a crusade to derail a campaign by the *Chicago Tribune* to determine if white Chicagoans wanted to implement a system of segregation in the schools. They, of course, did not.

VI.
The Cultural Fabric

The major cultural and technological event of the late nineteenth century, the World's Columbian Exposition, introduced the black Chicago population to aesthetic expression's most dynamic element, that of cultural interchange and sharing. Scott Joplin developed the rudiments of ragtime. Paul Laurence Dunbar, Henry Ossawa Tanner ("The First Lesson on The Bagpipe") and George Washington Carver ("Yucca Gloriosa"), Hallie Q. Brown, Sissieretta Jones and Harry Burleigh contributed from the *beaux arts*, respectively, in poetry, painting, elocution (dramatic reading) and music. The Fon people of Dahomey, more than one hundred strong, broadened America's appreciation of syncopated music through drumming and other instrumental playing. Interestingly enough, at the Haytian Pavilion, Frederick Douglass derided Fon drumming which was heard nightly in Hayti as the music of Vodun. The Great Sage threw his lot in completely with the *beaux arts* and thereby continued to demonstrate his disdain for any part of African-based popular culture. His day came on August 25, 1893 with Colored American Day, which featured classical and operatic renderings, including his grandson, Joseph, on the violin, and Paul Lawrence Dunbar reading read an original poem, "The Colored American" as well as his soon to be famous, "Oak and Ivy." Overall, the success of Colored American Day rested primarily with effective presentation of the audible word - read, spoken and sung, along with the musical chord.

Significantly, black interest and support for the arts–both *beaux arts,* or what we know as the fine arts or grand culture, and mass culture – preceded the appearance of a socioeconomic differentiation relegating aesthetic interests to segments within the population. Sociologists have explained that culture is organic and a process and therefore no one's group special preserve. Historian Lawrence W. Levine placed nineteenth century appreciation of the arts beyond the existence of "culture on a vertical plane." This long period of time presented a scenario in America during which a broad-based affinity for Shakespeare and opera developed. Various elements within American society acknowledged their appreciation of the language, moral values and entertainment in the case of the former, and intrinsic beauty of the latter. "It is hard to exaggerate the ubiquity of operatic music in nineteen the century America," Levine wrote. E. Franklin Frazier's amazement at twentieth century washerwomen and maids appreciating classical performances by African American masters of various genres at Chicago's Orchestra

Hall betrayed both his lack of understanding of the traditions of black Chicago and the ability of all forms of cultural expression to inspire admiration for their intrinsic value among all people.

As the century waned and a new one waxed, differences in cultural tastes–from budding and major to only slight–existed between no more than 100 highly assimilated Afro-Saxons and 15,000 less acculturated Afro-Americans. Between the refined element that was highly educated and sufficiently impressed by what passed for white standards of behavior and tastes, an affinity naturally grew. The rank and file, which consisted of few educated persons, had many members who were also willing to savor the white world's refinements while simultaneously cultivating an appreciation of their own race's aesthetic productions in music, dance and literature. Persons of unmixed African descent at the mass level identified themselves primarily by the construct of race and cultural affinity for the perpetuation of their African-based way of life. Not to be overlooked, in their own way, the socially dispossessed contributed to African American mass culture in their haunts of iniquity, exemplified by the rise of jazz and jazz clubs.[vii] Significantly, as time passed, with successive waves of migration bringing more persons intimately associated with the Afro-American subculture as their primary communal focus into the city, the influence of the latter over the once broad aesthetic tastes of the community increased.

Both the elite and ordinary folk came forward late in the nineteenth century to embrace the fine arts in music during the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Years before that event, the expanding South Side community engaged in activities that recurred weekly. The music of choice revealed another dimension of black cultural transformation underway since the Emancipation. Not unexpectedly, when the fund-raising committee of the Masonic Orphans and Old Folks' Home, located at the south end of the Dearborn Corridor at 36th and Armour Streets, planned its first major benefit to aid its building fund, it decided on a venue and program suited to both its purpose and aesthetic tastes in music. African American mezzo soprano, Flora Batson, billed as the "Queen of Song," was scheduled to sing at the Central Music Hall in downtown Chicago on February 15, 1893. The program included Batson along with two of the city's aspiring sopranos and two of its tenors in what promised to be the musical fare of the musically-appreciative. Consistent with the times, the program also included other fare, in this case Miss Octavia Lucas, whose lineage included Irish forebears which she showed as she rendered her presentation in that European dialect.

As a civic venture the Masonic program was consistent with the emerging character of the respectables as they grew to appreciate various genres of music usually assumed too aesthetically advanced for their tastes. Revealingly, Ferdinand L. Barnett's name appeared as the only recognizable member of the refined among its board of directors. So, in reality, it was reflective of the respectables' ability to appreciate the most exemplary of American culture in the *beaux arts* while transcending the worst features of American racism in everyday life. Rather than succumbing to negative aspersions about the African physiognomy, a careful examination of the promotional flyer shows no attempt to hide the singer's racial features as it extols her artistic abilities. So, not unexpectedly, the plethora of summer concerts held during the world's fair were noticeable for their depth of variety, artistic quality, strong popular support and racially-uplifting emphases.

Meanwhile, within the major African American area of settlement, churches along the Dearborn Street Corridor between 26th and 31st Streets continued an African American tradition of providing a salutary venue along with ambience, status and an audience for African American events and cultural development. As to this audience, its potential came from a church population representing perhaps 60 percent of the population. Newspaper accounts highlighted

Bethel A. M. E. as the source of most of these fair-related activities, with collateral events taking place at Quinn Chapel A. M. E., Olivet Baptist and Grace Presbyterian. Intellectual, cultural and social activities revolved around an attempt at status transformation. The secular choices reflected the congregation and pastor's appreciation of the operatic and the classical. Using the instruments, voices and selections associated with these genre, concert performances consummated a summer of both cultural elevation and creative enjoyment. Violins and pianos proved the major instruments of choice. Coloratura and mezzo sopranos joined contraltos to provide range to selections from female artists, euphoniously counterbalancing baritones and tenors. Well-known performers of operatic pieces, with experience in major operatic venues, appeared before appreciative church throngs. Names such as Madames Maria Selika, Deseria Plato, Maggie Porter-Cole and Sissieretta Jones graced the pages of church program brochures. Other concert stage artists included well-known baritone, Harry Burleigh, and tenor, Sidney Woodward, from the National Conservatory of Music. Will Marion Cook and Joseph Douglass, grandson of the Great Sage, delighted audiences with their virtuoso violin performances . . ..

As to an appreciation of the *beaux arts* in the realm of formalized European-influenced painting styles, African American male and female students attended the Art Institute of Chicago in small, but ever significant numbers from the turn of the century on. Musical interest continued to broaden with an appreciation of European classical and operatic productions. To accommodate the needs of young people requiring training in acceptable mainstream dance, a private dance school taught the rules of etiquette, personal presentation and ballroom dance movement.

More mentally engaging activities occurred at the regular Thursday night meetings of Bethel A. M. E.'s Payne Literary Society. Such diverse topics included "Social Distinction," "The Past, Present and Future of The Negro" and "Bravery of The Colored Soldiers in The Wars of The Republic." At the same time, Quinn Chapel's Quinoniam Lyceum League provided nourishment for the mind by presenting its intellectual fare. Leading political and reform figures such as former Virginia congressman John Mercer Langston, Frederick Douglass and Ida B. Wells spoke on issues of national importance. Unlike the former two national spokespersons, she selected this area as her home during the summer 1893, just as she chose Chicago as her permanent place of residence after leaving New York City for a tour of the British Isles to promote her anti-lynching campaign in early 1893. The Men's Sunday Club of the Bethel A. M. E. Church represented perhaps the most significant gathering in which the intellectual matters of the day were discussed with those of greatest importance on the mundane. Speakers, respondents and the audience engaged in long and apparently heated discussions about lynchings, racism, Booker T. Washington and any appropriate national and local responses. The creation of Rev. Reverdy Ransom, up to 500 men sometimes attended its sessions.

Moreover, the scope of black, self-directed charitable efforts expanded in contradiction to later beliefs that a systematic and effective approach to caring was nonexistent. in 1893, the Masonic Orphans and Old Folks' Home raised money for its operations through a fund raiser in the Loop which featured opera, popular music, dramatic readings and Irish dialectic. Two years later in 1895, Amanda Smith purchased property in the Dearborn Street Corridor and opened the Industrial Orphan Home for Colored Children. The Phyllis Wheatley Club was organized in 1896, followed by Rev. George W. Dickey's effort to salvage the lives of young women, new to the city, at the Rescue and Industrial Institute. While the Vina Fields of the world attempted to justify her promoting prostitution through contrived societal need and personal avarice, Rev. Dickey acted out of altruistic motivation "to do something for our young women . . . [who] come

to Chicago in large numbers every year, and drift about in this great city without any guidance or friends." At a cost of $10,500, he purchased a three story structure at 2838 Dearborn which accommodated sleeping facilities on the top floor, and self-supporting skills on the second such as typewriting, stenography, sewing, housekeeping and cooking.

Nationally, African American intellectual progress could be measured by the success of the American Negro Academy. Founded on March 5, 1897 under the leadership of Cambridge-trained Father Alexander Crummell of Washington, D.C.'s St. Luke's Episcopal Church, it strove to "promote the publication of scholarly work; [and] . . . to aid, by publications, the dissemination of the truth and the vindication of the Negro race from vicious assaults" among its five purposes. W.E.B. Du Bois belonged, as did Professor Kelly Miller of Howard University and John Wesley Cromwell of Boston. Black Chicago's recognized male thinkers in residence were Charles E. Bentley and S. Laing Williams. Although Williams was constantly pursued to produce scholarly materials to the Academy, for some unexplained reason he unceasingly failed to generate even one piece of literature, analysis or narrative. Evidently, Bentley also fell into the same category. Professional duties and the nine-hundred-mile distance between Chicago and Washington, D.C. might have prevented any active participation by either man.

The limited information that Williams shared with the Academy, however, is revealing in that he understated the creativity existing around him. Chicago, and it appears, the Midwest, had not produced writers of any note; only George Washington Carver's painting at the 1893 world's fair had caught William's ear and eye as to African American artistic merit; and, scientific inquiry and creation rested solely on the shoulders of William Douglass of Chicago who had invented an improved reaper. The picture in Chicago was not completely bleak because in Williams' estimation, the existence and success of the Sunday Men's Forum at Bethel A.M.E. served as a base for intellectual stimulation, exploration and mental uplift of an entire community. Careless in his replies for whatever reasons, perhaps professional overextension with legal matters, Williams had failed to mention the activities of his own Prudence Crandall Club, along with other important activities with which he was intimately aware.

VII.
Institutional Development

The last few years leading up to the new century seemed to be filled with an accelerated burst of human energy accompanied by increased associational efforts. In a variety of associational and institutional efforts aimed at meeting the varied and growing needs of black Chicagoans, African Americans organized new groups and activities at a furious pace. In the churches, in a contradistinction to the usual Sunday ceremonies that marked so much of the rural and small town Southern experience, a new pattern of worship evolved. or many, emotionalism yielded to the serenity of northern, cosmopolitan African American church life. This shift in emphasis seemed at first aimed at the customary, how to celebrate the greatness of God and the influence of the church's commitment to the Creator. Notably, it also sought to purify the soul while it elevated the African American's intellectual and cultural appreciation to include mainstream America's values found in the high culture associated with higher education and the *beaux arts*. At the same time, other African Americans left the larger, more established churches as they transformed into more sophisticated bodies of worship. Mainly newcomers, they sought the emotional, comforting atmosphere that the mission and storefront churches offered. Churches, most importantly, continued their tradition of providing not only a salutary venue for spiritual salvation, but also ambience, status and an audience for black events and cultural development. Intellectual, cultural and social activities revolved around an attempt at behavioral

and thereby, status transformation . . . The one Catholic church was under the leadership of Father Augustin Tolton, the first African American priest in the nation.

Not to be overlooked, the role of women in the church increased steadily. Historians Hine and Thompson have written about the growing influence of women in the A.M.E. church as they assumed the roles of stewardesses and even traveling evangelists, at least outside Chicago in the latter case. "At Sunday services, women were significantly in the majority, both in the pews and in the choir. The organist, or pianist, and choir director were usually women. Women were the chief fund-raisers for the church and for mission work. They were the church visitors, taking comfort to the sick and sick of heart, as well as food to the hungry. Men stood in the pulpit and sat on the church board; women did everything else."

At Olivet, Reverend J. F. Thomas, pastor of the oldest black Baptist church in the city, ministered to the needs of 2,000 members in a new edifice at Dearborn and Twenty-Sixth Street. Thomas was described as a "pulpit orator of much power." Bethesda was led by Reverend Dr. Birch, who was considered "one of the best educated ministers among the colored people." The A.M.E. Churches shared ministers from a national pool of educated clergy. Quinn Chapel changed pastors in May 1893 as Reverend Townsend who received his degree from Oberlin College replaced Rev. John T. Jennifer. Townsend's resume included a mix of scholarly training, world travel and political office holding in Indiana. Bethel was pastored by Dr. Graham who was in his thirties and an ardent prohibitionist in Michigan. Grace Presbyterian, only five years old in 1893, experienced an increase in membership under the leadership of its pastor, the Rev. Moses H. Jackson. Dr. James E. Thompson still presided over St. Thomas Episcopal Church. Catholics looked to Father Augustin Tolton to lead them at St. Monica's.[viii]
The influence of this enclave extended far beyond this corridor to west of the Chicago River where Providence regularly received trained clergy called through the Wood River Baptist Association and screened at Olivet. Nearby Providence was St. Stephen A.M.E., the other major denominational institution serving African Americans on the city's near West Side. Reverend D. Brown, the son of an A.M.E. bishop, earned the sobriquet of "one of the ablest of the younger men of the church."

The dynamism that marked church life throughout the century continued unabated. During late 1897 and early 1898, Monroe N. Work found 24 churches were in existence of which ten owned both their buildings and the land upon which they rested. The remainder were smaller mission churches, functioning in rented property such as storefronts and other buildings. One, significantly, was Rev. Richard R. Wright, Jr.'s Trinity Mission, located in the area around Eighteenth and Clark in the slum area sometimes referred to as "Darkest Africa." Wright, trained at the University of Chicago, sought to bring Christ to the most economically deprived of the masses.

There were setbacks, as well: St. Monica's Roman Catholic Church, significant because of its analogous position in Protestant black Chicago, suffered a devastating blow in 1897 as Father Tolton died; membership waned, and the church reverted to mission status for the next thirteen years.

Work estimated that combined church membership to be 6,500 and therefore only partially filling an available 10,000 church seats. Including casual attendants who visited for funerals and cultural events, the number reached 12,000. However, this unfortunately left 10,000 non-churchgoers outside the reach of positive organized institutional life in what Work described as "one of the greatest social factors in [African American] social life."

In accordance with A.M.E. policy, Quinn Chapel rotated pastors in May 1893 as Reverend Townsend, who received his degree from Oberlin College, replaced Rev. John T. Jennifer. Townsend's resume included a mix of scholarly training, world travel and political office holding in Indiana. Within four years, Archibald Carey assumed the helm of Quinn Chapel A.M.E. Carey, a Georgian who claimed a birth and upbringing in slavery in the master's house entered Chicago religious and political life with a boom. Pastoring in underdeveloped Florida, he ambitiously had requested an assignment in Chicago. Once he planted his feet on prairie soil, at age twenty-eight he immediately began to build Quinn Chapel into a solid institutional base from which to achieve his personal aspirations. His contemporary, Reverdy Ransom, described him as "intelligent, resourceful, and very ambitious for domination among men." Carey was described as "a stormy preacher. Being light in complexion, when he preached his face became as red as a beet, the veins and arteries of his neck and throat seemed ready to burst, and the people often shouted uproariously." Ransom and Carey quickly became rivals for religious and spiritual leadership over the city's African Methodists, although the former claimed he notified Carey that the city was big enough for both of them to pursue their interests. Nonetheless, the rivalry grew so intense that to insure peace Ransom acquiesced to his fellow African Methodist colleague and allowed President McKinley to speak at Quinn Chapel instead of Bethel. Quinn Chapel easily accommodated at least 900 congregants and usually attracted that number regularly. Still unsatiated in his quest for political power by 1900, Carey aligned himself to a rising white political star in the person of fellow Republican William Thompson who was running for an aldermanic seat.

Rev. Ransom, for his part, had taken charge of Bethel A.M.E. in September 1896 and immediately began to put in place progressive changes that were warranted by changing times and conditions. Significantly, what he did was to launch his excursion into combined church and social work in July 1900 with the formation of Institutional Church and Social Settlement. Acting consistent with the national mood of activist Protestants who provided the impetus behind the Social Gospel movement, Institutional modernistically attempted to meet the needs of the new emerging urban population. This group of migrants faced problems of unemployment, juvenile delinquency, inadequate child care for working mothers, illiteracy, scarcity of wholesome recreation, and proper intellectual stimulation among a myriad of ills and personal challenges. Not unaccustomed to church politics himself, Ransom was able to purchase the former abandoned Railroad Chapel at 3825 Dearborn for $34,000 after he secured financing from the well-organized national A.M.E. church body. The commodious brick building contained an auditorium that accommodated 1200 persons, a gymnasium, a swimming pool, a dining hall, kitchen and enough rooms seemingly for very idea and activity that Rev. Ransom and his wife could conceive.

Initially, Ransom was forbidden from holding morning services on Sundays by the A.M.E. bishops who were influenced by anxious ministers at Quinn and Bethel worried about an attendance drain. Finally, Institutional offered Sunday morning sermons that spellbound enormous crowds every week. Ransom was charismatic and a workaholic, and his reputation built steadily as the community grew to appreciate the results of his social service activism. His approach, which embodied understanding, compassion, and the activist religious enthusiasm of the Social Gospel, obviously proved totally successful over time. White youngsters played with black ones in the gymnasium. white mothers left their children with black ones at the day care center and at the kindergarten. His able ministerial assistant in this venture was Rev. Richard R. Wright, Jr.

In the city's premier house of worship, the membership of the Men's Sunday Club of the Bethel A.M.E. Church engaged in long, heated discussions about lynchings, racism and racial uplift policies of Booker T. Washington. The creation of Rev. Reverdy Ransom, the Men's Sunday Club drew in up to 500 men to its sessions. By the summer of 1899, "owning to intolerable conduct and disorder," a portion of the membership censured those responsible for their untoward demeanor and the latter bolted. They reorganized as the new Men's Sunday Club at Quinn Chapel A.M.E. Church just a mile north. Meanwhile, the rump group at Bethel reconstituted themselves and chose a new name, becoming the Men's Sunday Forum. S. Laing Williams was in the thick of the debates and claimed an active hand in restoring decorous behavior within the Forum. He corresponded frequently with Washington and proudly announced that the Forum embraced within its ranks the men of substance of the community.

The list was impressive and was "composed of men fairly representative of the best life among the colored people of the city." Included were Colonel Charles R. Marshall of the Eighth Infantry Regiment of Spanish American War fame, Attorneys Edward H. Morris, Hale G. Parker, Edward H. Wright and Edward Wilson (who was the group's president), State Representative William L. Martin, Doctors Daniel Hale Williams and George Cleveland Hall and, of course, Williams himself.[212] The Forum claimed its aim was to be "practical in its usefulness," which meant that Washington's pragmatic approach had welcoming ears in Chicago. That is not to say that it was gradualist in a city of known for its power to imbue dynamism. The diversity of its membership in terms of politics, social life and ideology proved otherwise. Nor was it lacking in the intellectual power to contest any public policies and utterances that ran counter to the traditions of assertive, competitive black Chicago.

B. Fraternal Organizations and Activities

The various fraternal orders complemented the organizational needs met in church life. They continued to grow as their appeal proved successful to an expanding community of men and women who sought beneficial and meaningful institutional affiliation. Fannie Barrier Williams described their place thus: "Next to the Negro church in importance, as affecting the social life of the people, are the secret orders, embracing such organizations as the Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, True Reformers, the United Brotherhood, the Ancient Order of Foresters, and the Elks. Nearly all of these secret orders have auxiliary associations composed of women . . . The colored people believe in secret societies."

C. Spheres of Leadership

Responding to a mature, urban market in a complex, modern political economy, Chicago paved a new direction in developing non-congruent circles of leadership to preside over the affairs of its fraternal, ministerial, legal, political, military, and business organizations and establishments. Indisputably, no unilateral, or monolithic, leadership acting with a linear focus ever existed with hegemony over all black Chicago's multifaceted interests and affairs. While disparate for the most part, the various interest groups and their spokesmen often overlapped which in turn increased their strength.

At this historical juncture, no well-defined civic leadership with a clear-cut agenda for civic advancement had developed, only particular members of the elite who occasionally displayed civic righteousness along with their sense of civic duty. For their part, whites basically eschewed black involvement in important civic matters, much to the chagrin of Rev. Reverdy Ransom. He complained that "when any question arises which affects the public good our white fellow-citizens rarely, if ever, call the Colored man into co-operation, but he would gladly unite to sustain civic righteousness. We are never consulted or considered except when something

happens in the Black Belt." The answer was obvious and rested in the civic powerlessness of African Americans. Ida B. Wells-Barnett once wrote regarding another instance that "the Negro had neither numerical nor financial strength which could be used in the race's behalf."

Yet, there was that notable example of entry into the civic world of selflessness and commitment to the public good that included the impressive collective African American effort to organize Provident Hospital. Less notable was Ida B. Wells-Barnett's apparently singlehanded fight against suggested school segregation in 1900 after the *Chicago Tribune* promoted the idea that the races might be better suited through separation of their children during the school day. Wells-Barnett contacted Jane Addams and other influential civic leaders to plead that they pressure the newspaper to end the public debate.

There also existed an important leadership over the sphere of women in which their gender interests predominated. Two names stood prominently in this arena–Fannie Barrier Williams and Ida B. Wells-Barnett. Operating at times in the same domain, but also in separate sub-circles, the two cooperated initially and then drew apart by the turn of the century. This was partially attributable to differences in regional upbringing, educational backgrounds, complexion, personality, spousal ambitions, and finally, race ideology. As their contemporary, Rev. Reverdy Ransom described them, one was "mild-mannered, of a literary turn of mind," while the other was given to "agitation." Both worked with white women of prominence and influence in conformance with women's new self-defining role.

It was Wells-Barnett, however, who made the deepest imprint on the feminist/womanist movement as first, she challenged the dictum that sharing family life and gender duty represented an apostasy. Wells-Barnett valued both her marriage and motherhood deeply while at the same time responding to the pressures of activism. Of the former she wrote, "what I am trying to say now is that I had become a mother before I realized what a wonderful place in the scheme of things the Creator has given woman. She it is upon whom rests the joint share of the work of creation, and I wonder if women who shirk their duties in that respect truly realize that they have not only deprived humanity of their contribution to perpetuity, but that they have robbed themselves of one of the most glorious advantages in the development of their own womanhood. I cannot begin to express how I reveled in having made this wonderful discovery for myself or how glad I was that I had not been swayed [otherwise]. . .." Second, Wells-Barnett personally organized Chicago women among the ranks of the <u>respectables</u> into clubs. Her first was the organization that took her name after she left the city at the end of the world's fair, the Ida B. Wells Club. Influenced by her contacts and observations in the East, she introduced an organizational foundation for greater awareness and activism among African American women in Chicago. In a pleasant display of tact, Wells-Barnett even persuaded Mrs. Mary Richardson Jones to head the club in an honorary capacity. Recognized as the template of organized women's efforts in Illinois, the Ida B. Wells Club grew in numbers and prominence.

Fannie Barrier Williams contributed mightily to black women's thought and their image during this pivotal period of women's liberation from the confines of gender restrictions. Renowned even today as a major essayist, she indeed wrote as a woman for a new era. Her contribution to *A New Negro for A New Era* built on the triumph of her speeches at the world's fair of 1893 as she explained the revolutionary role of newly formed women's clubs nationally and in Chicago. "The club movement . . . reaches in to the sub-social condition of the entire race. Among white women clubs mean the forward movement of the best women in the interest of the best womanhood. Among the Colored women the club is the effort of the few competent in behalf of the many incompetent; that the club is only one of many means for the social uplift of a

race. Among white women the club is the onward movement of the already uplifted." She continued, "The consciousness of being fully free has not yet come to the great masses of the Colored women of this country. The emancipation of the mind and spirit of the race could not be accomplished by legislation. More time, more patience, more suffering and more charity are still needed to complete work of emancipation. The training which first enabled Colored women to organize and successfully carry on club work was originally obtained in church work . . . The meaning of unity of effort for the common good, the development of social sympathies grew into woman's consciousness through the privileges of church work . . . Still another school of preparation for Colored women has been their secret societies." Williams' assessment carried a tone of caring from a distance, indicative of her intellectual inclinations and upbringing that featured limited contact with the rank and file.

Williams has recently been referred to as a "central figure in a small yet vital group of African American women who were 'founding sisters' during the classical era of sociology from 1890 to 1920, when it first emerged as a distinct discipline within the academy and wider world." That inclination placed her frequently in the company of Jane Addams, Sophonisba Breckenridge, Mary McDowell, and Rev Celia Parker Woolley, all of whom had links to the new University of Chicago. Impressive as a women's spokesperson and tactician in her own right, based on her background, with its particularities as to region, culture, education and occupation, Williams could not and did not enjoy the entre into the domain of ordinary women that Wells-Barnett assumed. Women's historian Wanda A. Hendricks has referred to the Ida B. Wells Club as the state's "mother" club, and that was because Wells-Barnett had the ability to positively nurture and embrace all elements of womanhood and women.

VIII.

Ideological Contention: Militants, Conservatives, and Pragmatists

The death of Frederick Douglass in February 1895 stilled more than just a symbol of an age that most Americans hoped had ended with the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in December 1865. Douglass' voice had further served the cause of racial understanding which salutarily affected all Americans during the post-war decades. He calmed whites in the North with his approach and deportment which they found acceptable given the rhetoric of a Bishop Turner which excoriated the flag, the nation and American moral cowardice in racial matters. In opposing emigration to Africa, Douglass reinforced in the American mind the value of the mission of this nation. Whether the mass of African American laborers in the fields, houses, docks, hotels and factories subscribed completely to this call for reason is conjectural. Meanwhile, his partisan efforts in behalf of the Republican party bound blacks and whites together despite diminishing returns accruing to African American from that party's fortunes.

In his wake came a new voice of Southern accommodation and acquiescence to Northern industrial concern for public order throughout the nation. Booker T. Washington pursued his region's interests at the Cotton States' Exposition in September 1895, producing a widely acclaimed alternative to Douglass' more forceful manner in seeking twin acknowledgments of white contrition for slavery and contemporary national accountability for a missing commitment to social justice. s Washington's popularity grew among whites because of his rhetoric and his comforting, non-confrontational deportment around whites, some friends and admirers of Douglass' commitment voiced their opposition to the Tuskegeean's agenda. As they saw it, it fostered an acquiescence to institutionalized racial violence through lynching, a proscribed social status, political subservience and acceptance of disfranchisement, and retrogression toward race relations that fit more into the antebellum period than the Industrial Age. In Chicago, those persons

who subscribed to this position were few in number, but vocal and positioned to be heard by all segments of black and white society.

Beyond the established embodiment of protest, Edward H. Morris, the name and voice in ascendancy by 1895 was that of Ida B. Wells, who now had become Mrs. Ferdinand L. Barnett and a permanent resident of the city. Between 1895 and 1900, she bought a part ownership of the *Conservator* newspaper and wrote as a columnist on the *Chicago Inter Ocean*. Her social persona grew through her affiliation with the new, national women's club movement, presidency of the Ida B. Wells Club, membership at Bethel A.M.E. Church and within the powerful A.M.E. national community, editorship of the *Conservator*, and her easily recognizable identification with plight of the rank and file. Ida B. Wells did not lead a movement in Chicago, but neither did John Jones. It was in the same manner as Jones, nevertheless, that she acquired influence and *power of character* as she moved through her circles of equally influential whites and blacks. As an accomplished publicist and public lecturer, she had access to the major media of communications and used it effectively. Ideologically and personally, she opposed the Southern culture and experience that Booker T. Washington seemed intent on protecting. She had been violently forced from the South and remained *persona non-grata* in that region because of her multifaceted crusade against racial inequality. A determined crusade for legal rights and moral righteousness, much in the model of Joan of Arc, she refused to sit idly by and allow Washington to turn the clock backward on the eve of a new century and when she perceived race relations to be at the apogee of success because of Frederick Douglass' efforts. Referred to as a militant, or radical, the category left was for Washington and anyone who agreed with him to be considered a gradualist or conservative. With a demeanor shaped by her experiences in American perfidy on the issues of lynching, work and basic human recognition of individual worth, at times she exhibited what her opponents, rivals and friends found to be irascible personality with whom to interact.

However, discrete categorization did not fit most black Chicagoans whose residence in a city where practical thinking dominated, and unparalleled competition occasioned anything but an extremist stance. Fannie Barrier and S. Laing Williams, Daniel Hale Williams, Hale G. Parker, Lloyd G. Wheeler and the bulk of Chicago's refined element lived as pragmatists in a white-dominated city in a region which had only begun to tolerate them as part of humanity. The same was true for the rank and file whose numbers dominated the demographics of black Chicago. Significantly, they experienced a security of person unknown in the South. Full equality would have to wait for a more racially just climate of opinion and until both the mass of black Chicagoans and the elite more firmly established themselves economically, politically and socially. A measured move toward equality of opportunity became their goal and their mission was to win as many white friends as possible. These pragmatists shifted positions as frequently on events, episodes and issues as strongly as Wells-Barnett clung to what she conceived as her life's direction.

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Chicago Tribune, Sunday, October 26, 1888, p. 26

"CULTURED NEGRO LADIES"

THE PRUDENCE CRANDALL CLUB OF COLORED PEOPLE

A Glimpse of the Efforts of the Negro in Chicago to Lift Themselves Up Intellectually - A Literary Club with an Earnest Membership and an Admirable Plan of Work – Cruelties of Race Prejudice in the North

INTERVIEWER/REPORTER: Although some interest is occasionally shown in the progress of Negroes in the South, the conditions of those members of the race who live among us excites little, if any, attention. We have given them freedom, the franchise, and opportunities for education, but we are not curious enough in regard to the use they make of those gifts. We forget rather than ignore them. To the mass of whites they are waiters, barbers, merry clowns. And nothing more. All the rest - their hopes, their ambitions, and, their disappointments, their homes, their struggles, and their personal advancement - are buried in the oblivion that shrouds a race apart.

With a desire to learn something more of these people the writer called upon a few of them, saw their homes, talked with them of their interests and plans for improvement, and sought to learn their views concerning their relations with the world. As the race still lingers under the misfortune of being generally represented by its lower elements care was taken to secure a just picture of the brighter side.

The first visit was with Mrs. S. L. Williams, who lives on Calumet Avenue, near the corner of Ray Street. She is a young woman of soft voice and well-bred manner, who received me in a cozy parlor that was spotlessly neat and tastefully furnished. A broad brow and kindly eyes bespoke intelligence, as well as the replies and observations called out by my various questions.

"Can you tell me something about of the colored people's literary club," I asked.

AN ADMIRABLE CLUB

FBW: "Yes, I am a member of it. It was organized about three years ago by Mr. Lloyd G. Wheeler and my husband. Its sole object . . . a mental culture and both sexes are included in its membership. We call it the Prudence Crandall Club in honor of the noble woman who endured persecution because of her efforts to teach colored girls in Connecticut before the war. She is still living, and has written us a kind letter."

INTERVIEWER: "Is the society an outgrowth of any church?" I inquired.

FBW: “No,” said Mrs. Williams smiling. “We are freethinkers, and don’t belong to the church usually.”

INTERVIEWER: “You surprise me. I supposed that all the people of your race were religious.”

FBW: “Most of them are,” she assented, “ but … …. Some of us are interested in science and we no longer accept all the old ideas.”

INTERVIEWER: “Are there many who are interested in these studies?” I inquired.

FBW: “I don’t know how it may be outside our club, for I am a comparative stranger here. I have lived in Chicago only since my marriage, a little over a year ago. It seems to me, though, that the colored people of Washington are more ambitious to learn than those who live here, but I was a teacher there, and perhaps on that account was better acquainted with people of that kind. My acquaintances here belong to the better class and are usually educated.”
“How large is the [Prudence Crandall] club?
FBW: “We have about twenty-five working members, who really form the society, but any friends may attend the meetings who are interested in the work. Some prefer one subject and some another, so the club is divided into sections. Each one has its leader, who directs the work and explains whatever may be …doubtful to the class. We meet at the house of [former Illinois State Representative] Mr. George F. Ecton, Perhaps you know he was a representative in the state Legislature.

PLAN OF THE WEEK

“Will you tell me how often you meet?”
FBW: We have, therefore, a weekly meeting, although each section meets only once a month.

During my visit I learned more of the details of the club, which give a good idea of the intellectual interests of its members.

The first class is devoted to the study of literature. Its leader is Mr. S. L. Williams, who is a lawyer by profession. Taine’s “History of English Literature” has been used as a textbook, and the various writers have studied to some extent in their own works. In addition, a paper is always prepared by the leader. This serves as a connecting link between the meetings, including a resume of the last lesson, with a study of the new subject matter. General discussions follow, and sometimes the reading of extracts from authors under consideration. This is perhaps the most popular section of the club. It has a good attendance, earnest members, and reports increasing interest.

The second class pursues the study of philosophy, using as a groundwork of thought and discussion John Flake’s “Destiny of Man.” Evolution in all its phases receives constant attention. Mr. L. G. Wheeler [a leading businessman as merchant-tailor and the late John Jones and Mary Richardson Jones’ son-in-law] is the leader, from whom a paper is always submitted.

Followed, as in the other case, by a general discussion.

The third class, under Dr. C.E. Bentley, is now taking up the study of chemistry. It is the science section. The course of instruction will include experiments performed and explained before the class by its leader. Dr. Bentley is a young physician [in reality a dentist] in regular practice [in the Loop with a white clientele in the making].

The fourth class devotes itself to music and art, under the guidance of Mr. F.L. Barnett. It has studied the biographies of the famous musicians and the history of art, beginning with that of Egypt. The art and architecture of Greece received particular attention. This winter the class expects to study the different schools of music, all of which are to be illustrated in turn.

The fifth class is composed of women only. It is in charge of Mrs. John Jones. Its object is moral education. Pre-natal influences are studies as a means to the cultivation of a better race; while the diffusion of higher and more just moral sentiments is aimed at. Papers are sometimes read, and several lectures have been given by woman physicians. Miss Florence Kolleck [Univ. of Wisc., M.A.,1882], too, the well-known minister of Englewood, has promised to give them a lecture.

At the conclusion of this account Mrs. Williams continued.

IN THE BONDS OF PREJUDICE

FBW: "The fact that troubles me in all this is its uselessness. We have no place in this country. In Europe colored people are treated like others; there is no prejudice against them. But here we are simply ignored. We are not wanted anywhere. People object to us at the theatre or the opera, and the churches are just the same. That is one reason we stay at home."

INTERVIEWER: But I asked, are you not allowed to all in the churches?

FBW: "O, yes, they will give us a seat, but as far back as possible and where other people need not come near us. We can't help feeling then that we are not wanted, so we naturally do not go often, and learn to doubt the professions of Christians."

INTERVIEWER: It must be hard for cultivated people of your race," I said. I have often wondered how they filled their lives. But they will win a place in time.

FBW: "I don't know. Look at Mme. Selika [an outstanding soprano]. She has a beautiful voice, thoroughly trained. She studied in the conservatory at Cincinnati, her home; afterwards in Boston, and then spent three years in Germany. Her voice is phenomenal. In England she sang in concert with [Italian soprano Adelina] Patti, who treated her kindly. She has traveled through Germany with a white concert troupe, winning much praise. But when she came back to America, hoping for similar recognition, she was simply let alone. White singers did not wish to appear with her; white audiences did not care to hear, and the critics barley mentioned her. They would not even give her a criticism.

INTERVIEWER: The merits of this [? case] were quite unknown to me, but I recognized the hopelessness of the speaker's view.

FBW: "It used to trouble me when I taught school," said Mrs. Williams. "I used to wonder if it did any good to teach children who would have no place in the world."

INTERVIEWER: An elder head might have reflected on the emptiness of worldly place, but the discontent of the patient-looking young woman seemed more natural to her years.

FBW: "Some of the higher schools will not admit colored people," she added. "A young man was lately refused to Rush Medical College. He is nearly white, and they told him there that he might enter as a Spaniard if he would. He refused to make such a pretense, so was forced to remain without. Mr. Williams, too, met opposition from his fellow-students in the Columbian Law School in Washington. They held meetings to protest against his presence. Fortunately, some of the students who had entered with him from Ann Arbor also held meetings in his behalf, and they finally induced the others to leave him in peace. He graduated from that school, and is now practicing law in this city."

A CULTURED COLORED LADY [Mrs. Mary Richardson Jones, John Jones' widow]

INTERVIEWER: As I rose to go she exclaimed, "I would like to show you some of my own work, if you care to see it."

As I was quite willing to follow her upstairs she led the way to a pretty little flat in which she keeps house. It is neat, dainty, and refined in all its appointments. The walls are strewn with pretty pictures, most of them painted by herself. In the little library a well filled book case testifies to the taste for reading, while the sitting-room, with its tasteful adornments and simple comforts, tells of unaffected refinement.

In a few minutes I was inspecting a lovely sofa spread, painted and embroidered by herself; while other dainty hand painted articles that women love were held before me. Then, I looked at the paintings on the walls, admired the cozy rooms, and chatted with my graceful hostess, leaving at the conclusion of my interview with the old reflection that we must meet good people if we would know them.

Just around the corner on Ray Street lives Mrs. Jones, on whom I also called. She received me pleasantly in immaculate sitting room, where she and her daughter [Theodora Lee] were sewing in an old-fashioned leisurely way. The house is like the usual home of well-to-do, refined people – well furnished, and comfortable. The ladies are quiet, well possessed, and intelligent. Mrs. Jones talked earnestly of the work of her section of the club. She also brought out leaflets published by the Moral Educational Society of Chicago to show me what aids were sought in the growing crusade against evil. "We want more justice to women," she said, "and more virtue among men." Too many children are born vicious. Women need to understand the

laws of motherhood.

She is a Prohibitionist, too, who believes that drink is responsible for most of the evil in society.

Do any of the women belong to the W.C.T.U.?" I asked.

MRS. JONES: "I do not know of any," was her reply.

INTERVIEWER: Can it be that these ready allies are forgotten by the women who [live] in nearly every town in the country … united in common cause? Or is it true that we still to learn the changes that time has made in a once enslaved race? Have we realized that the intensity of modern thought has reached them; that a new generation, tasting nearly the full fruits of freedom, has buried a past to which only prejudice would now limit their aspirations? Whatever the Negro has been or may be still by nature, it is certainly true that many intelligent people of mixed blood are worthy of more consideration than they have yet received. M.M.

Charities 15 (October 7, 1905)

Social Bonds in the "Black Belt" of Chicago

NEGRO ORGANIZATIONS AND THE NEW SPIRIT PERVADING THEM

Fannie Barrier Williams
Frederick Douglass Center, Chicago

The last federal census showed the Negro population of Chicago to be about 35,000. The present population is estimated to be over 50,000, an increase of about forty per cent in five years. The colored people who are thus crowding into Chicago come mostly from the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas and Missouri.

The underlying causes are easily traceable and are mainly as follows:

1. Primarily to escape laws of race discrimination that have steadily increased during the last few years.

2. To obtain better school privileges.

3. On account of the good news circulated by the hundreds of young colored men and women who have been educated in the Chicago and Northwestern Universities and the professional schools, that Chicago offers the largest liberty to citizens of all colors and languages of all communities in the North.

4. Because of the many industrial strikes which in the last ten years have brought thousands of colored people to Chicago, either for immediate work as strike breakers, or with the prospect of employment through the opportunities for both skilled and unskilled workers. Whatever the cause, the fact remains that thousands of Negro men and women are now employed in the stockyards and other large industrial plants, where ten years ago this would not have been thought of.

This increase of Negro population has brought with it problems that directly affect the social and economic life of the newcomers. Prevented from mingling easily and generally with the rest of the city's population, according to their needs and deservings, but with no preparation made for segregation, their life in a great city has been irregular and shifting, with the result that they have been subject to more social ills than any other nationality amongst us. Notwithstanding the disadvantages suggested, the colored people of Chicago have shown in their efforts for self-help and self-advancement a determination that is altogether creditable.[1] While it is true that they contribute almost more than their share of the sins of the community, what they contribute in the way of restraining and correcting influences over their own lives, is much more important.

The real problem of the social life of the colored people in Chicago, as in all northern cities, lies in the fact of their segregation. While they do not occupy all the worst streets and live in all the unsanitary houses in Chicago, what is known as the "Black Belt" is altogether forbidding and demoralizing. The huddling together of the good and the bad, compelling the decent element of the colored people to witness the brazen display of vice of all kinds in front of their homes and in the faces of their children, are trying conditions under which to remain socially clean and respectable. There are some who are all the time breaking away from these surroundings and by purchase or otherwise are securing good homes on desirable streets. But the old and unsanitary shacks from which the good and the thrifty escape are immediately occupied by others less fortunate. For there are always too few houses to meet the demands of the newcomers.

The Organizing Faculty a Racial Passion.

As already suggested the colored people themselves are not indifferent to the demoralizing conditions of their environments. The organizations created and maintained by them in

[1] The Negroes of Chicago support some twenty lawyers, as many physicians, about a dozen dentists, about twenty school teachers in the public schools, and an ever-increasing number of them are carrying on successfully many small business enterprises that give employment to scores of educated young colored men and women

Chicago are numerous and touch almost every phase of our social life.

Is this passion for organization peculiar to Negro people? Whether this be answered in the affirmative or not, it is a fact that the Negro individual does not like to be alone in good works. His bent for organization is a sort of racial passion. Suggest to the average man something that ought to be, and he immediately proposes an organization. There is scarcely a thing in religion, in politics, in business, in pleasure, in education, in fighting race prejudice, or anything else desirable that is not the object of organization. A catalogue of the organizations created by colored people in this country would make a very large book, and would contain an interesting story of the many ways by which the Negro seeks to improve his condition. It is a common complaint that the Negroes will not support and protect each other in any united effort; but this is clearly not so. It is true that more of these organizations fail than succeed, but the failure is not due to a lack of the co-operative spirit, which is the most helpful thing in our race character. The failures are mostly due to a lack of comprehension and intelligence in working out the details. The weak point is administration. It is a common thing for men of no training and no experience to start an organization that requires the highest order of executive ability to carry out. They will take as a model the constitution and by-laws of some well-established white organization that is prominently successful. Officers, directors and committees will be made up exactly as in the organization which is its model—this, with the utmost enthusiasm and good faith that their success is assured. The colored man who ventures to suggest to them that they cannot succeed, for various and obvious reasons, is at once branded as a "traitor to his race." The enterprise may be fore-doomed, but the result will be charged up to the failure of the people to support and sustain it.

The pathway of our progress is thickly strewn with such failures, but they do not discourage other and similar attempts. A colored man who has joined and pinned his faith to an organization that has failed, will join another society of the same kind to-morrow. It is at once pathetic and splendid to note how persistent is this faith that emancipation from the ills of poverty and ignorance and race prejudice is through co-operation. Indeed, no race of men and women feel more strongly than we do the force of that maxim that "in union there is strength."

The Negro Church.

First in importance is the Negro church. There are 25 regularly organized colored churches. This number includes 9 Methodist, 8 Baptist, 1 Catholic, 1 Episcopal, 1 Christian and 1 Presbyterian. In addition to these there are numerous missions in various parts of the "Black Belt." These churches are for the most part housed in large and modern stone and brick edifices that cost from $7,000 to $40,000 each, and have a seating capacity of from 300 to 2,000 people. Most of these churches are burdened with oppressive indebtedness, and because of this their usefulness as agents of moral up-lift is seriously handicapped. For example, the members of one of the largest have raised and paid in over $60,000 during the last five years, but the church still carries an indebtedness of over $24,000.

Despite this serious handicap of a slowly diminishing debt, the colored church is the center of the social life and efforts of the people. What the church sanctions and supports is of the first importance and what it fails to support and sanction is more than apt to fail. The Negro church historically, as to numbers and reach of influence and dominion, is the strongest factor in the community life of the colored people. Aside from the ordinary functions of preaching, prayer, class meetings and Sunday-school, the church is regarded by the masses as a sort of tribune of all of their civic and social interests. Thousands of Negroes know and care for no other entertainment than that furnished by the church. Theatres, concert halls, and art galleries mean nothing. What they fail to learn of these things in the churches remains unlearned. Nearly every night the church building

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is open, either for worship, or for concerts, lectures, and entertainments of all kinds. Even political meetings of the most partisan sort, are not barred. The party leaders find it to their advantage, if they want to secure a large audience of colored people, to hold their meetings in the colored church. In a purely social way, the church leads in setting standards of social conduct. Weddings and receptions of all kinds, except those including dancing, are held within its walls and in this respect the church has become progressively liberal. Among other nationalities, there are Young Men's Christian Associations, Young Women's Christian Associations, social clubs, gymnasiums, reading-rooms, university extension lecture courses, etc. The colored people, generally speaking, have none of these liberalizing and elevating influences, except as they are supplied by this single institution.

Within the last six years, the colored churches of Chicago have begun to recognize the larger social needs of the people, and as much as their intense denominationalism will permit, they are endeavoring to enlarge their influence as a factor for betterment. One of the large churches has carried on such activities as a kindergarten, a day nursery, a boys' club and reading-room, a penny savings bank, gymnasium, a kitchen garden, mothers' club and sewing school.

Nearly all of the large churches have literary clubs which have become attractive to hundreds of young colored men of intelligence. The effect has been a wider and more intelligent interest in things that concern the progressive life of the people.

In fine the colored churches must be reckoned with in every movement of a social character that aims to reach and influence life. They might do more and be more to the ever-increasing number who need guidance, social ideals, and higher moral standards, if they were less burdened with debts and an unyielding orthodoxy. The important thing, however, is that the Negro church in Chicago is becoming more and more liberal and intelligently interested and earnest in its endeavors to meet the peculiar requirements of the city Negro.

The Secret Orders.

Next to the Negro church in importance, as affecting the social life of the people, are the secret orders, embracing such organizations as the Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, True Reformers, the United Brotherhood (a fraternal insurance association), the Ancient Order of Foresters, and the Elks. Nearly all of these secret orders have auxiliary associations composed of women. The Masons and Odd Fellows are strongest in point of numbers and influence. There are about fourteen lodges of Odd Fellows and about as many of Masons. Their estimated membership is respectively 2,000 and 1,600.

The colored people believe in secret societies. I believe it is safe to say that fifty per cent of the better class of Negro men are enrolled in some secret order. These affect every phase of their social life and represent the best achievements of the race in the matter of organization. In no other way is the organized Negro so reliably responsive to the requirements of his social obligations. In no other form of organization do the terms brotherhood and mutual obligations mean so much.

Thousands of dollars are paid into the treasuries of these societies every month, and it is very rare that we hear of any charge of dishonest dealings in money matters. They take care of the sick and provide for the dead with a promptness, fidelity and abundance of sympathy that is not to be found in any other form of society amongst us. The lessons of right living, of charity and truthfulness are enforced in these societies more rigidly even than in the churches.

Most of the colored men belong to more than one secret order and many belong to as many as four or five at a time and live up to their obligations in all of them. In nothing does the colored man live such a strenuous life as he does as a lodge man. The lodge, more than any other merely social organization, is a permanent and ever-increasing force.

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Organized activities.

There are other social organizations among the colored people of Chicago that ndicative of a desire for progress and improvement. For example there is one organization that supports an institution known as the "Old Folks' Home," in which some twenty-five old colored men and women are comfortably cared for and saved from eking out their existence in the dreaded almshouse.

There is a Choral Study Club composed of about one hundred young men and women under competent leadership and devoted to the study of music. A business league, composed of colored business men and women, is a part of the National Business League of which Booker T. Washington is founder and president. A physicians' club has undertaken a campaign of education as to the cause of tuberculosis and methods of prevention, together with lessons on domestic sanitation and kindred subjects.

And there are, of course, numbers of purely pleasure clubs. Love of pleasure is in good part a hopeful characteristic of the Negro people. Painfully conscious as we all are of our present position, which tends to exclude us from things that are most prized in human relationships, there is an all-pervading light-heartedness which saves us from the pessimism that must inevitably banish from the soul all hope and joy. Young men's social clubs, young women's social clubs, fellowship clubs, whist clubs and social charity clubs fill nights and holidays with laughter, song and dance.

The Negro in His Relations to the Dominant Race.

From what has been said in describing Negro organizations it might be inferred that the colored people are quite capable of taking care of themselves and of advancing their own condition in every direction. Let us be undeceived in this. In every community the Negro is practically dependent, for nearly everything of importance, upon the dominant race. He must live in places set apart for him, and that often in the worst portions of the city. He must find work below his capabilities and training. He must live on the outer rim of life's advantages and pleasures. His merit, whatever it may be, is more apt to be discredited than recognized. Even though he be educated, public opinion still persists in rating him as ignorant, and treating him as such. His virtues are generally overlooked or reluctantly believed in. He is the victim of more injustice than is meted out to any other class of people. In the matter of employment, the colored people of Chicago have lost in the last ten years nearly every occupation of which they once had almost a monopoly. There is now scarcely a Negro barber left in the business district. Nearly all the janitor work in the large buildings has been taken away from them by the Swedes. White men and women as waiters have supplanted colored men in nearly all the first-class hotels and restaurants. Practically all the shoe polishing is now done by Greeks. Negro coachmen and expressmen and teamsters are seldom seen in the business districts. It scarcely need be stated that colored young men and women are almost never employed as clerks and bookkeepers in business establishments. A race that can be systematically deprived of one occupation after another becomes an easy victim to all kinds of injustice. When they can be reduced to a position to be pitied, they will cease to be respected. It is not surprising then that there has been a marked lowering of that public sentiment that formerly was liberal and more tolerant of the Negro's presence and efforts to rise.

The increase of the Negro population in Chicago, already referred to, has not tended to liberalize public sentiment; in fact hostile sentiment has been considerably intensified by the importation from time to time of colored men as strike-breakers. Then again a marked increase of crime among the Negro population has been noted in recent years. All these things have tended to put us in a bad light, resulting in an appreciable loss of friends and well-wishers.

The Frederick Douglass Center.

Out of these seemingly hopeless conditions a new movement has grown that is destined to have an important bearing on the status of the Chicago Negro. The organization of the Frederick Douglass Center and the Trinity Mission Settlement are in response to these needs of the hour. The Frederick Douglass Center is unlike anything of the kind in the country. It is the outgrowth of a comprehensive study of the situation by some of the best people of the city of both races. The head

and soul of the movement, Mrs. Celia Parker Woolley, is a woman who has given up social pleasures and the pursuits of culture in behalf of a people and of a problem to grapple with which requires more than ordinary patience and intelligence.

The Frederick Douglass Center is intended primarily as a center of influence for the better relationship of the white and colored races along the higher levels of mutual dependence and helpfulness. The society is incorporated under the laws of the state of Illinois. Its by-laws recite its purposes as follows:

1. To promote a just and amicable relationship between the white and colored people.

2. To remove the disabilities from which the latter suffer in their civil, political, and industrial life.

3. To encourage equal opportunity irrespective of race, color, or other arbitrary distinctions.

4. To establish a center of friendly helpfulness and influence in which to gather needful information and for mutual cooperation to the end of right living and higher citizenship.

In order to properly house the movement there has been purchased, at a cost of $5,500, a large three-story gray-stone house on Wabash avenue, near Thirty-first street. The location is adjacent to the "Black Belt" in the rear, and the white belt of aristocracy and wealth on Michigan avenue in the front. This new home for social improvement is fitted up with an attractive assembly room for meetings, a club-room and workshop for boys, a reading-room and offices and living-rooms for the head resident. Arrangements are being made for mothers' meetings in the interest of the home, men's meetings, classes in manual training, cooking and dressmaking, club work for intellectual and moral culture, and domestic employment. Lectures are also being provided for under the departments of sanitation, neighborhood improvement and civics.

Mrs. Woolley has succeeded in interesting in this new work many of the well-known people of Chicago, judges, lawyers, professors, business men and women of wealth and culture. Along with these she has the co-operation of nearly every colored man and woman of standing.

The Trinity Mission.

Another effort toward social betterment is the Trinity Mission. This is the beginning of a more distinct social settlement. It is located in the very heart of the "Black Belt" on Eighteenth street between State and Clark streets, a neighborhood properly called "Darkest Africa." Here there is scarcely a single ray of the light of decency. Neither church, nor school, nor anything else of a helpful character can be found. The head of this enterprise is a young man, Richard R. Wright, son of President Wright, of the State Industrial School, at College, Georgia. A crèche, a reading-room and a home for working girls are being carried on and substantial encouragement has come from people who are in sympathy with the principle of settlement work.

One of the results of these new organizations is the serious view the more intelligent colored people are beginning to take of the responsibilities of city life among their people. The Negro's worth as a citizen is to be tested in the great cities of the North as nowhere else in the world—the use he makes of his opportunities here, and his strength of character in resisting the malign influences of city politics.

To summarize:

1. The colored people themselves have begun to develop a sort of civic consciousness as manifested in the tendency of the Negro church and the Negro lodge to participate more largely in efforts to improve the social condition of their people.

2. The men and women who have organized in various ways to bring about a better Chicago, as well as a larger Chicago, have begun to recognize that if the ever-increasing Negro population is treated and regarded as a reprobate race, the result will be an increase of crime and disorders of all kinds, that will grow more and more difficult to handle and regulate.

3. Recent organizations with the settlement spirit are preparing to do many things in a rational way that have never before been attempted, and to make answer to many false and harmful things that now go unchallenged. In other words, by these new movements the Negro is to be generously included in all efforts to promote civic righteousness among all the people.

THE INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS OF THE COLORED WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES SINCE THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION — AN ADDRESS BY FANNIE BARRIER WILLIAMS OF ILLINOIS.

Less than thirty years ago the term progress as applied to colored women of African descent in the United States would have been an anomaly. The recognition of that term to-day as appropriate is a fact full of interesting significance. That the discussion of progressive womanhood in this great assemblage of the representative women of the world is considered incomplete without some account of the colored women's status is a most noteworthy evidence that we have not failed to impress ourselves on the higher side of American life.

Less is known of our women than of any other class of Americans.

No organization of far-reaching influence for their special advancement, no conventions of women to take note of their progress, and no special literature reciting the incidents, the events, and all things interesting and instructive concerning them are to be found among the agencies directing their career. There has been no special interest in their peculiar condition as native-born American women. Their power to affect the social life of America, either for good or for ill, has excited not even a speculative interest.

Though there is much that is sorrowful, much that is wonderfully heroic, and much that is romantic in a peculiar way in their history, none of it has as yet been told as evidence of what is possible for these women. How few of the happy, prosperous, and eager living Americans can appreciate what it all means to be suddenly changed from irresponsible bondage to the responsibility of freedom and citizenship!

The distress of it all can never be told, and the pain of it all can never be felt except by the victims, and by those

saintly women of the white race who for thirty years have been consecrated to the uplifting of a whole race of women from a long-enforced degradation.

The American people have always been impatient of ignorance and poverty. They believe with Emerson that "America is another word for opportunity," and for that reason success is a virtue and poverty and ignorance are inexcusable. This may account for the fact that our women have excited no general sympathy in the struggle to emancipate themselves from the demoralization of slavery. This new life of freedom, with its far-reaching responsibilities, had to be learned by these children of darkness mostly without a guide, a teacher, or a friend. In the mean vocabulary of slavery there was no definition of any of the virtues of life. The meaning of such precious terms as marriage, wife, family, and home could not be learned in a school-house. The blue-back speller, the arithmetic, and the copy-book contain no magical cures for inherited inaptitudes for the moralities. Yet it must ever be counted as one of the most wonderful things in human history how promptly and eagerly these suddenly liberated women tried to lay hold upon all that there is in human excellence. There is a touching pathos in the eagerness of these millions of new home-makers to taste the blessedness of intelligent womanhood. The path of progress in the picture is enlarged so as to bring to view these trustful and zealous students of freedom and civilization striving to overtake and keep pace with women whose emancipation has been a slow and painful process for a thousand years. The longing to be something better than they were when freedom found them has been the most notable characteristic in the development of these women. This constant striving for equality has given an upward direction to all the activities of colored women.

Freedom at once widened their vision beyond the mean cabin life of their bondage. Their native gentleness, good cheer, and hopefulness made them susceptible to those

teachings that make for intelligence and righteousness. Sullenness of disposition, hatefulness, and revenge against the master class because of two centuries of ill-treatment are not in the nature of our women.

But a better view of what our women are doing and what their present status is may be had by noticing some lines of progress that are easily verifiable.

First it should be noticed that separate facts and figures relative to colored women are not easily obtainable. Among the white women of the country independence, progressive intelligence, and definite interests have done so much that nearly every fact and item illustrative of their progress and status is classified and easily accessible. Our women, on the contrary, have had no advantage of interests peculiar and distinct and separable from those of men that have yet excited public attention and kindly recognition.

In their religious life, however, our women show a progressiveness parallel in every important particular to that of white women in all Christian churches. It has always been a circumstance of the highest satisfaction to the missionary efforts of the Christian church that the colored people are so susceptible to a religion that marks the highest point of blessedness in human history.

Instead of finding witchcraft, sensual fetiches, and the coarse superstitions of savagery possessing our women, Christianity found them with hearts singularly tender, sympathetic, and fit for the reception of its doctrines. Their superstitions were not deeply ingrained, but were of the same sort and nature that characterize the devotees of the Christian faith everywhere.

While there has been but little progress toward the growing rationalism in the Christian creeds, there has been a marked advance toward a greater refinement of conception, good taste, and the proprieties. It is our young women coming out of the schools and academies that have been insisting upon a more godly and cultivated ministry. It is the young women of a new generation and new inspirations

that are making tramps of the ministers who once dominated the colored church, and whose intelligence and piety were mostly in their lungs. In this new and growing religious life the colored people have laid hold of those sweeter influences of the King's Daughters, of the Christian Endeavor and Helping Hand societies, which are doing much to elevate the tone of worship and to magnify all that there is blessed in religion.

Another evidence of growing intelligence is a sense of religious discrimination among our women. Like the nineteenth century woman generally, our women find congeniality in all the creeds, from the Catholic creed to the no-creed of Emerson. There is a constant increase of this interesting variety in the religious life of our women.

Closely allied to this religious development is their progress in the work of education in schools and colleges. For thirty years education has been the magic word among the colored people of this country. That their greatest need was education in its broadest sense was understood by these people more strongly than it could be taught to them. It is the unvarying testimony of every teacher in the South that the mental development of the colored women as well as men has been little less than phenomenal. In twenty-five years, and under conditions discouraging in the extreme, thousands of our women have been educated as teachers. They have adapted themselves to the work of mentally lifting a whole race of people so eagerly and readily that they afford an apt illustration of the power of self-help. Not only have these women become good teachers in less than twenty-five years, but many of them are the prize teachers in the mixed schools of nearly every Northern city.

These women have also so fired the hearts of the race for education that colleges, normal schools, industrial schools, and universities have been reared by a generous public to meet the requirements of these eager students of intelligent citizenship. As American women generally are fighting against the nineteenth century narrowness that still keeps

women out of the higher institutions of learning, so our women are eagerly demanding the best of education open to their race. They continually verify what President Rankin of Howard University recently said, "Any theory of educating the Afro-American that does not throw open the golden gates of the highest culture will fail on the ethical and spiritual side."

It is thus seen that our women have the same spirit and mettle that characterize the best of American women. Everywhere they are following in the tracks of those women who are swiftest in the race for higher knowledge.

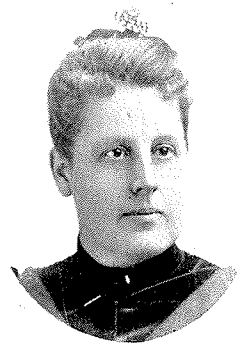
To-day they feel strong enough to ask for but one thing, and that is the same opportunity for the acquisition of all kinds of knowledge that may be accorded to other women. This granted, in the next generation these progressive women will be found successfully occupying every field where the highest intelligence alone is admissible. In less than another generation American literature, American art, and American music will be enriched by productions having new and peculiar features of interest and excellence.

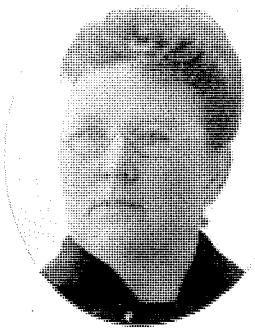
The exceptional career of our women will yet stamp itself indelibly upon the thought of this country.

American literature needs for its greater variety and its deeper soundings that which will be written into it out of the hearts of these self-emancipating women.

The great problems of social reform that are now so engaging the highest intelligence of American women will soon need for their solution the reinforcement of that new intelligence which our women are developing. In short, our women are ambitious to be contributors to all the great moral and intellectual forces that make for the greater weal of our common country.

If this hope seems too extravagant to those of you who know these women only in their humbler capacities, I would remind you that all that we hope for and will certainly achieve in authorship and practical intelligence is more than prophesied by what has already been done, and more





Mary McDonnel.

Octavia Williams Bates.

Sigrid Storckenfeldt.

that can be done, by hundreds of Afro-American women whose talents are now being expended in the struggle against race resistance.

The power of organized womanhood is one of the most interesting studies of modern sociology. Formerly women knew so little of each other mentally, their common interests were so sentimental and gossipy, and their knowledge of all the larger affairs of human society was so meager that organization among them, in the modern sense, was impossible. Now their liberal intelligence, their contact in all the great interests of education, and their increasing influence for good in all the great reformatory movements of the age has created in them a greater respect for each other, and furnished the elements of organization for large and splendid purposes. The highest ascendancy of woman's development has been reached when they have become mentally strong enough to find bonds of association interwoven with sympathy, loyalty, and mutual trustfulness. To-day union is the watchword of woman's onward march.

If it be a fact that this spirit of organization among women generally is the distinguishing mark of the nineteenth century woman, dare we ask if the colored women of the United States have made any progress in this respect?

For peculiar and painful reasons the great lessons of fraternity and altruism are hard for the colored women to learn. Emancipation found the colored Americans of the South with no sentiments of association. It will be admitted that race misfortune could scarcely go further when the terms fraternity, friendship, and unity had no meaning for its men and women.

If within thirty years they have begun to recognize the blessed significance of these vital terms of human society, confidence in their social development should be strengthened. In this important work of bringing the race together to know itself and to unite in work for a common destiny, the women have taken a leading part.

Benevolence is the essence of most of the colored

women's organizations. The humane side of their natures has been cultivated to recognize the duties they owe to the sick, the indigent and ill-fortuned. No church, school, or charitable institution for the special use of colored people has been allowed to languish or fail when the associated efforts of the women could save it.

It is highly significant and interesting to note that these women, whose hearts have been wrung by all kinds of sorrows, are abundantly manifesting those gracious qualities of heart that characterize women of the best type. These kinder sentiments arising from mutual interests that are lifting our women into purer and tenderer relationship to each other, and are making the meager joys and larger griefs of our conditions known to each other, have been a large part of their education.

The hearts of Afro-American women are too warm and too large for race hatred. Long suffering has so chastened them that they are developing a special sense of sympathy for all who suffer and fail of justice. All the associated interests of church, temperance, and social reform in which American women are winning distinction can be wonderfully advanced when our women shall be welcomed as co-workers, and estimated solely by what they are worth to the moral elevation of all the people.

I regret the necessity of speaking to the question of the moral progress of our women, because the morality of our home life has been commented upon so disparagingly and meanly that we are placed in the unfortunate position of being defenders of our name.

It is proper to state, with as much emphasis as possible, that all questions relative to the moral progress of the colored women of America are impertinent and unjustly suggestive when they relate to the thousands of colored women in the North who were free from the vicious influences of slavery. They are also meanly suggestive as regards thousands of our women in the South whose force of character enabled them to escape the slavery taints of

immorality. The question of the moral progress of colored women in the United States has force and meaning in this discussion only so far as it tells the story of how the once-enslaved women have been struggling for twenty-five years to emancipate themselves from the demoralization of their enslavement.

While I duly appreciate the offensiveness of all references to American slavery, it is unavoidable to charge to that system every moral imperfection that mars the character of the colored American. The whole life and power of slavery depended upon an enforced degradation of everything human in the slaves. The slave code recognized only animal distinctions between the sexes, and ruthlessly ignored those ordinary separations that belong to the social state.

It is a great wonder that two centuries of such demoralization did not work a complete extinction of all the moral instincts. But the recuperative power of these women to regain their moral instincts and to establish a respectable relationship to American womanhood is among the earlier evidences of their moral ability to rise above their conditions. In spite of a cursed heredity that bound them to the lowest social level, in spite of everything that is unfortunate and unfavorable, these women have continually shown an increasing degree of teachableness as to the meaning of woman's relationship to man.

Out of this social purification and moral uplift have come a chivalric sentiment and regard from the young men of the race that give to the young women a new sense of protection. I do not wish to disturb the serenity of this conference by suggesting why this protection is needed and the kind of men against whom it is needed.

It is sufficient for us to know that the daughters of women who thirty years ago were not allowed to be modest, not allowed to follow the instincts of moral rectitude, who could cry for protection to no living man, have so elevated the moral tone of their social life that new and purer

standards of personal worth have been created, and new ideals of womanhood, instinct with grace and delicacy, are everywhere recognized and emulated.

This moral regeneration of a whole race of women is no idle sentiment — it is a serious business; and everywhere there is witnessed a feverish anxiety to be free from the mean suspicions that have so long underestimated the character strength of our women.

These women are not satisfied with the unmistakable fact that moral progress has been made, but they are fervently impatient and stirred by a sense of outrage under the vile imputations of a diseased public opinion.

Loves that are free from the dross of coarseness, affections that are unsullied, and a proper sense of all the sanctities of human intercourse felt by thousands of these women all over the land plead for the recognition of their fitness to be judged, not by the standards of slavery, but by the higher standards of freedom and of twenty-five years of education, culture, and moral contact.

The moral aptitudes of our women are just as strong and just as weak as those of any other American women with like advantages of intelligence and environment.

It may now perhaps be fittingly asked, What mean all these evidences of mental, social, and moral progress of a class of American women of whom you know so little? Certainly you can not be indifferent to the growing needs and importance of women who are demonstrating their intelligence and capacity for the highest privileges of freedom.

The most important thing to be noted is the fact that the colored people of America have reached a distinctly new era in their career so quickly that the American mind has scarcely had time to recognize the fact, and adjust itself to the new requirements of the people in all things that pertain to citizenship.

Thirty years ago public opinion recognized no differences in the colored race. To our great misfortune public opinion has changed but slightly. History is full of examples of

the great injustice resulting from the perversity of public opinion, and its tardiness in recognizing new conditions.

It seems to daze the understanding of the ordinary citizen that there are thousands of men and women everywhere among us who in twenty-five years have progressed as far away from the non-progressive peasants of the "black belt" of the South as the highest social life in New England is above the lowest levels of American civilization.

This general failure of the American people to know the new generation of colored people, and to recognize this important change in them, is the cause of more injustice to our women than can well be estimated. Further progress is everywhere seriously hindered by this ignoring of their improvement.

Our exclusion from the benefits of the fair play sentiment of the country is little less than a crime against the ambitions and aspirations of a whole race of women. The American people are but repeating the common folly of history in thus attempting to repress the yearnings of progressive humanity.

In the item of employment colored women bear a distressing burden of mean and unreasonable discrimination. A Southern teacher of thirty years' experience in the South writes that "one million possibilities of good through black womanhood all depend upon an opportunity to make a living."

It is almost literally true that, except teaching in colored schools and menial work, colored women can find no employment in this free America. They are the only women in the country for whom real ability, virtue, and special talents count for nothing when they become applicants for respectable employment. Taught everywhere in ethics and social economy that merit always wins, colored women carefully prepare themselves for all kinds of occupation only to meet with stern refusal, rebuff, and disappointment. One of countless instances will show how the best as well as the meanest of American society are responsible for the special injustice to our women.

Not long ago I presented the case of a bright young woman to a well-known bank president of Chicago, who was in need of a thoroughly competent stenographer and typewriter. The president was fully satisfied with the young woman as exceptionally qualified for the position, and manifested much pleasure in commending her to the directors for appointment, and at the same time disclaimed that there could be any opposition on account of the slight tinge of African blood that identified her as a colored woman. Yet, when the matter was brought before the directors for action, these mighty men of money and business, these men whose prominence in all the great interests of the city would seem to lift them above all narrowness and foolishness, scented the African taint, and at once bravely came to the rescue of the bank and of society by dashing the hopes of this capable yet helpless young woman. No other question but that of color determined the action of these men, many of whom are probably foremost members of the humane society and heavy contributors to foreign missions and church extension work.

This question of employment for the trained talents of our women is a most serious one. Refusal of such employment because of color belies every maxim of justice and fair play. Such refusal takes the blessed meaning out of all the teachings of our civilization, and sadly confuses our conceptions of what is just, humane, and moral.

Can the people of this country afford to single out the women of a whole race of people as objects of their special contempt? Do these women not belong to a race that has never faltered in its support of the country's flag in every war since Attucks fell in Boston's streets?

Are they not the daughters of men who have always been true as steel against treason to everything fundamental and splendid in the republic? In short, are these women not as thoroughly American in all the circumstances of citizenship as the best citizens of our country?

If it be so, are we not justified in a feeling of desperation

against that peculiar form of Americanism that shows respect for our women as servants and contempt for them when they become women of culture? We have never been taught to understand why the unwritten law of chivalry, protection, and fair play that are everywhere the conservators of women's welfare must exclude every woman of a dark complexion.

We believe that the world always needs the influence of every good and capable woman, and this rule recognizes no exceptions based on complexion. In their complaint against hindrances to their employment colored women ask for no special favors.

They are even willing to bring to every position fifty per cent more of ability than is required of any other class of women. They plead for opportunities untrammeled by prejudice. They plead for the right of the individual to be judged, not by tradition and race estimate, but by the present evidences of individual worth. We believe this country is large enough and the opportunities for all kinds of success are great enough to afford our women a fair chance to earn a respectable living, and to win every prize within the reach of their capabilities.

Another, and perhaps more serious, hindrance to our women is that nightmare known as "social equality." The term equality is the most inspiring word in the vocabulary of citizenship. It expresses the leveling quality in all the splendid possibilities of American life. It is this idea of equality that has made room in this country for all kinds and conditions of men, and made personal merit the supreme requisite for all kinds of achievement.

When the colored people became citizens, and found it written deep in the organic law of the land that they too had the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, they were at once suspected of wishing to interpret this maxim of equality as meaning social equality.

Everywhere the public mind has been filled with constant alarm lest in some way our women shall approach the social

sphere of the dominant race in this country. Men and women, wise and perfectly sane in all things else, become instantly unwise and foolish at the remotest suggestion of social contact with colored men and women. At every turn in our lives we meet this fear, and are humiliated by its aggressiveness and meanness. If we seek the sanctities of religion, the enlightenment of the university, the honors of politics, and the natural recreations of our common country, the social equality alarm is instantly given, and our aspirations are insulted. "Beware of social equality with the colored American" is thus written on all places, sacred or profane, in this blessed land of liberty. The most discouraging and demoralizing effect of this false sentiment concerning us is that it utterly ignores individual merit and discredits the sensibilities of intelligent womanhood. The sorrows and heartaches of a whole race of women seem to be matters of no concern to the people who so dread the social possibilities of these colored women.

On the other hand, our women have been wonderfully indifferent and unconcerned about the matter. The dread inspired by the growing intelligence of colored women has interested us almost to the point of amusement. It has given to colored women a new sense of importance to witness how easily their emancipation and steady advancement is disturbing all classes of American people. It may not be a discouraging circumstance that colored women can command some sort of attention, even though they be misunderstood. We believe in the law of reaction, and it is reasonably certain that the forces of intelligence and character being developed in our women will yet change mistrustfulness into confidence and contempt into sympathy and respect. It will soon appear to those who are not hopelessly monomaniacs on the subject that the colored people are in no way responsible for the social equality nonsense. We shall yet be credited with knowing better than our enemies that social equality can neither be enforced by law nor prevented by oppression. Though

not philosophers, we long since learned that equality before the law, equality in the best sense of that term under our institutions, is totally different from social equality.

We know, without being exceptional students of history, that the social relationship of the two races will be adjusted equitably in spite of all fear and injustice, and that there is a social gravitation in human affairs that eventually overwhelms and crushes into nothingness all resistance based on prejudice and selfishness.

Our chief concern in this false social sentiment is that it attempts to hinder our further progress toward the higher spheres of womanhood. On account of it, young colored women of ambition and means are compelled in many instances to leave the country for training and education in the salons and studios of Europe. On many of the railroads of this country women of refinement and culture are driven like cattle into human cattle-cars lest the occupying of an individual seat paid for in a first-class car may result in social equality. This social quarantine on all means of travel in certain parts of the country is guarded and enforced more rigidly against us than the quarantine regulations against cholera.

Without further particularizing as to how this social question opposes our advancement, it may be stated that the contentions of colored women are in kind like those of other American women for greater freedom of development. Liberty to be all that we can be, without artificial hindrances, is a thing no less precious to us than to women generally.

We come before this assemblage of women feeling confident that our progress has been along high levels and rooted deeply in the essentials of intelligent humanity. We are so essentially American in speech, in instincts, in sentiments and destiny that the things that interest you equally interest us.

We believe that social evils are dangerously contagious. The fixed policy of persecution and injustice against a class

of women who are weak and defenseless will be necessarily hurtful to the cause of all women. Colored women are becoming more and more a part of the social forces that must help to determine the questions that so concern women generally. In this Congress we ask to be known and recognized for what we are worth. If it be the high purpose of these deliberations to lessen the resistance to woman's progress, you can not fail to be interested in our struggles against the many oppositions that harass us.

Women who are tender enough in heart to be active in humane societies, to be foremost in all charitable activities, who are loving enough to unite Christian womanhood everywhere against the sin of intemperance, ought to be instantly concerned in the plea of colored women for justice and humane treatment. Women of the dominant race can not afford to be responsible for the wrongs we suffer, since those who do injustice can not escape a certain penalty.

But there is no wish to overstate the obstacles to colored women or to picture their status as hopeless. There is no disposition to take our place in this Congress as faultfinders or suppliants for mercy. As women of a common country, with common interests, and a destiny that will certainly bring us closer to each other, we come to this altar with our contribution of hopefulness as well as with our complaints.

When you learn that womanhood everywhere among us is blossoming out into greater fullness of everything that is sweet, beautiful, and good in woman; when you learn that the bitterness of our experience as citizen-women has not hardened our finer feelings of love and pity for our enemies; when you learn that fierce opposition to the widening spheres of our employment has not abated the aspirations of our women to enter successfully into all the professions and arts open only to intelligence, and that everywhere in the wake of enlightened womanhood our women are seen and felt for the good they diffuse, this Congress will at once see the fullness of our fellowship, and

help us to avert the arrows of prejudice that pierce the soul because of the color of our bodies.

If the love of humanity more than the love of races and sex shall pulsate throughout all the grand results that shall issue to the world from this parliament of women, women of African descent in the United States will for the first time begin to feel the sweet release from the blighting thrall of prejudice.

The colored women, as well as all women, will realize that the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is a maxim that will become more blessed in its significance when the hand of woman shall take it from its sepulture in books and make it the gospel of every-day life and the unerring guide in the relations of all men, women, and children.

DISCUSSION OF THE SAME SUBJECT BY MRS. A. J. COOPER OF WASHINGTON, D. C.

The higher fruits of civilization can not be extemporized, neither can they be developed normally, in the brief space of thirty years. It requires the long and painful growth of generations. Yet all through the darkest period of the colored women's oppression in this country her yet unwritten history is full of heroic struggle, a struggle against fearful and overwhelming odds, that often ended in a horrible death, to maintain and protect that which woman holds dearer than life. The painful, patient, and silent toil of mothers to gain a fee simple title to the bodies of their daughters, the despairing fight, as of an entrapped tigress, to keep hallowed their own persons, would furnish material for epics. That more went down under the flood than stemmed the current is not extraordinary. The majority of our women are not heroines — but I do not know that a majority of any race of women are heroines. It is enough for me to know that while in the eyes of the highest tribu-

nal in America she was deemed no more than a chattel, an irresponsible thing, a dull block, to be drawn hither or thither at the volition of an owner, the Afro-American woman maintained ideals of womanhood unshamed by any ever conceived. Resting or fermenting in untutored minds, such ideals could not claim a hearing at the bar of the nation. The white woman could at least plead for her own emancipation; the black woman, doubly enslaved, could but suffer and struggle and be silent. I speak for the colored women of the South, because it is there that the millions of blacks in this country have watered the soil with blood and tears, and it is there too that the colored woman of America has made her characteristic history, and there her destiny is evolving. Since emancipation the movement has been at times confused and stormy, so that we could not always tell whether we were going forward or groping in a circle. We hardly knew what we ought to emphasize, whether education or wealth, or civil freedom and recognition. We were utterly destitute. Possessing no homes nor the knowledge of how to make them, no money nor the habit of acquiring it, no education, no political status, no influence, what could we do? But as Frederick Douglass had said in darker days than those, "One with God is a majority," and our ignorance had hedged us in from the fine-spun theories of agnostics. We had remaining at least a simple faith that a just God is on the throne of the universe, and that somehow — we could not see, nor did we bother our heads to try to tell how — he would in his own good time make all right that seemed most wrong.

Schools were established, not merely public day-schools, but home training and industrial schools, at Hampton, at Fiske, Atlanta, Raleigh, and other central stations, and later, through the energy of the colored people themselves, such schools as the Wilberforce, the Livingstone, the Allen, and the Paul Quinn were opened. These schools were almost without exception co-educational. Funds were too limited to be divided on sex lines, even had it been ideally

desirable; but our girls as well as our boys flocked in and battled for an education. Not even then was that patient, untrumpeted heroine, the slave-mother, released from self-sacrifice, and many an unbuttered crust was eaten in silent content that she might eke out enough from her poverty to send her young folks off to school. She "never had the chance," she would tell you, with tears on her withered cheek, so she wanted them to get all they could. The work in these schools, and in such as these, has been like the little leaven hid in the measure of meal, permeating life throughout the length and breadth of the Southland, lifting up ideals of home and of womanhood; diffusing a contagious longing for higher living and purer thinking, inspiring woman herself with a new sense of her dignity in the eternal purposes of nature. To-day there are twenty-five thousand five hundred and thirty colored schools in the United States with one million three hundred and fifty-three thousand three hundred and fifty-two pupils of both sexes. This is not quite the thirtieth year since their emancipation, and the colored people hold in landed property for churches and schools twenty-five million dollars. Two and one-half million colored children have learned to read and write, and twenty-two thousand nine hundred and fifty-six colored men and women (mostly women) are teaching in these schools. According to Doctor Rankin, President of Howard University, there are two hundred and forty-seven colored students (a large percentage of whom are women) now preparing themselves in the universities of Europe. Of other colleges which give the B. A. course to women, and are broad enough not to erect barriers against colored applicants, Oberlin, the first to open its doors to both woman and the negro, has given classical degrees to six colored women, one of whom, the first and most eminent, Fannie Jackson Coppin, we shall listen to to-night. Ann Arbor and Wellesley have each graduated three of our women; Cornell University one, who is now professor of sciences in a Washington high school. A

former pupil of my own from the Washington High School, who was snubbed by Vassar, has since carried off honors in a competitive examination in Chicago University. The medical and law colleges of the country are likewise bombarded by colored women, and every year some sister of the darker race claims their professional award of "well done." Eminent in their profession are Doctor Dillon and Doctor Jones, and there sailed to Africa last month a demure little brown woman who had just outstripped a whole class of men in a medical college in Tennessee.

In organized efforts for self-help and benevolence also our women have been active. The Colored Women's League, of which I am at present corresponding secretary, has active, energetic branches in the South and West. The branch in Kansas City, with a membership of upward of one hundred and fifty, already has begun under their vigorous president, Mrs. Yates, the erection of a building for friendless girls. Mrs. Coppin will, I hope, herself tell you something of her own magnificent creation of an industrial society in Philadelphia. The women of the Washington branch of the league have subscribed to a fund of about five thousand dollars to erect a woman's building for educational and industrial work, which is also to serve as headquarters for gathering and disseminating general information relating to the efforts of our women. This is just a glimpse of what we are doing.

Now, I think if I could crystallize the sentiment of my constituency, and deliver it as a message to this congress of women, it would be something like this: Let woman's claim be as broad in the concrete as in the abstract. We take our stand on the solidarity of humanity, the oneness of life, and the unnaturalness and injustice of all special favoritisms, whether of sex, race, country, or condition. If one link of the chain be broken, the chain is broken. A bridge is no stronger than its weakest part, and a cause is not worthier than its weakest element. Least of all can woman's cause afford to decry the weak. We want, then,

as toilers for the universal triumph of justice and human rights, to go to our homes from this Congress, demanding an entrance not through a gateway for ourselves, our race, our sex, or our sect, but a grand highway for humanity. The colored woman feels that woman's cause is one and universal; and that not till the image of God, whether in parian or ebony, is sacred and inviolable; not till race, color, sex, and condition are seen as the accidents, and not the substance of life; not till the universal title of humanity to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is conceded to be inalienable to all; not till then is woman's lesson taught and woman's cause won — not the white woman's, nor the black woman's, nor the red woman's, but the cause of every man and of every woman who has writhed silently under a mighty wrong. Woman's wrongs are thus indissolubly linked with all undefended woe, and the acquirement of her "rights" will mean the final triumph of all right over might, the supremacy of the moral forces of reason, and justice, and love in the government of the nations of earth.

DISCUSSION CONTINUED BY FANNIE JACKSON COPPIN OF PENNSYLVANIA.

This conference can not be indifferent to the history of the colored women of America, for if we have been able to accomplish anything whatever in what are considered the higher studies, or if we have been able to achieve anything by heroic living and thinking, all the more can you achieve it. It is an unanswerable argument for every woman's claim. If we fight the battle, all the more can you win it. Therefore you know this is not simply a side issue in which you feel that out of consideration for a certain class of people you ask them to give the history of their life. I have often thought of you when the battle went hard with me, and when it was impossible for me to gain the encouragement I might have gained by looking upon the faces of

the best people of America; for whatever may be said of what we have had to suffer in this country, we have never had to suffer from the best people. The opposition, and the trials, and the oppression and depression and suppression have always come from the middle and lower classes, and that has grown out of their very poor education. And now what is the hope for the future? Every hope.

I wish by no means to be among that class of people that counsel words without knowledge. We, as a people, have suffered greatly from what may be termed the "sizing up," and the regulation "putting down," and setting forth of what it was possible for us to do.

Our idea of getting an education did not come out of wanting to imitate any one whatever. It grew out of the uneasiness and the restlessness of the desires we felt within us; the desire to know, not just a little, but a great deal. We wanted to know how to calculate an eclipse, to know what Hesiod and Livy thought; we wished to know the best thoughts of the best minds that lived with us; not merely to gain an honest livelihood, but from a God-given love of all that is beautiful and best, and because we thought we could do it.

If black girls can calculate equations and logarithms as I saw them doing yesterday, how much more could you with your higher inheritance do? Do you consider that you owe us an obligation for that?

There was a single word used in the address that I heard this evening that I can not hear without having permission to reply. What is that word? We, as you know, are classed among the working people, and so when the days of slavery were over, and we wanted an education, people said, "What are you going to do with an education?" You know yourselves you have been met with a great many arguments of that kind. Why educate the woman—what will she do with it? An impertinent question, and an unwise one. Rather ask, "What will she be with it?" We are getting a better education all through America. I can not think that the

selfishness, the discourtesy that would push down a poor, weak, innocent creature because it could not protect itself will long remain in America. It is bound to succumb to the better education that is everywhere being given, till people will call it after awhile by its right name, viz.: very bad manners. Nobody can be considered well-bred who would cause an inoffensive traveler to leave the table to himself.

At the close of Mrs. Coppin's remarks the audience insisted upon hearing from Hon. Frederick Douglass, who was present upon the platform. Mr. Douglass spoke as follows: *

I have heard to night what I hardly expected ever to live to hear. I have heard refined, educated colored ladies addressing — and addressing successfully — one of the most intelligent white audiences that I ever looked upon. It is the new thing under the sun, and my heart is too full to speak; my mind is too much illuminated with hope and with expectation for the race in seeing this sign.

Fifty years ago and more I was alone in the wilderness, telling my story of the wrongs of slavery, and imploring the justice, the humanity, the sympathy, the patriotism, and every other good quality of the American heart to do away with slavery; and you can easily see that when I hear such speeches as I have heard this evening from our women — our women — I feel a sense of gratitude to Almighty God that I have lived to see what I now see. It seems to me that we are not living in the old world I was born into, but in the one seen by John in the apocalyptic vision. A new heaven is dawning upon us, and a new earth is ours, in which all discriminations against men and women on account of color and sex is passing away, and will pass away; and as John said there

* Mr. Douglass was the only man who, after the opening session, spoke in the General Congress. The occasion was of such historical significance that the editor feels justified in reproducing Mr. Douglass' address here, notwithstanding the published declaration that no one would be permitted to speak in the congress whose name did not appear on the programme.

would be no more sea after they had been surrounded on that desolate island so long, so I say there is a time coming when prejudices, discriminations, proscriptions, and persecutions on account of what is accidental will all pass away, and this great country of ours will be possessed by a composite nation of the grandest possible character, made up of all races, kindreds, tongues, and peoples.

Dear friends, I am full and you are full. You have heard more to-night than you will remember, perhaps, but the grand spirit which has proceeded from this platform will live in your memory and work in your lives always.

The Organized Efforts of the Colored Women of the South to Improve Their Condition — An Address by Sarah J. Early of Tennessee.

In this age of development and advancement all the forces which have been accumulating for centuries past seem to be concentrated in one grand effort to raise mankind to that degree of intellectual and moral excellence which a wise and beneficent Creator designed that he should enjoy. No class of persons is exempt from this great impulse. The most unlettered, the most remote and obscure, as well as the most refined and erudite seem to have felt the touch of an unseen power, and to have heard a mysterious voice calling them to ascend higher in the scale of being. It is not a strange coincidence, then, that in this period of restlessness and activity the women of all lands should simultaneously see the necessity of taking a more exalted position, and of seeking a more effective way of ascending to the same plane, and assuming the more responsible duties of life with her favored brother.

In organization is found all the elements of success in any enterprise, and by this method alone are developed the force and ability that have reared the grand structure of human society. God intended that man should be a social

being, for he has given to no one individual the genius to construct by his efforts alone the complex edifice.

Step by step, as the dark cloud of ignorance and superstition is dispelled by the penetrating rays of the light of eternal truth, men begin to think, and thought brings revolution, and revolution changes the condition of men and leads them into a happier and brighter existence. So have the great revolutions of the age affected the condition of the colored people of the Southern States, and brought them into a more hopeful relation to the world. When they emerged from the long night of oppression, which shrouded their minds in darkness, crushed the energies of their soul, robbed them of every inheritance save their trust in God, they found themselves penniless, homeless, destitute, with thousands of aged and infirm and helpless left on their hands to support, and poverty and inexperience prevailing everywhere. To improve their social condition was the first impulse of their nature. For this purpose they began immediately to organize themselves into mutual aid societies, the object of which was to assist the more destitute, to provide for the sick, to bury the dead, to provide a fund for orphans and widows. These societies were the beginning of their strength, the groundwork of their future advancement and permanent elevation. They were constructed with admirable skill and harmony. Excellent charters were secured, and the constitution and by-laws were adhered to with remarkable fidelity. The membership increased rapidly, and the funds in the treasuries grew daily. The women, being organized separately, conducted their societies with wonderful wisdom and forethought. Their influence for good was felt in every community, and they found themselves drawn together by a friendly interest which greatly enhanced the blessings of life. Their sick and dead and orphans have been properly cared for. Thus our people have shown a self-dependence scarcely equaled by any other people, a refined sensibility in denying themselves the necessities of life to save thousands of children from want

THE WORLD'S CONGRESS

OF

REPRESENTATIVE WOMEN

A HISTORICAL RÉSUMÉ FOR POPULAR CIRCULATION OF THE WORLD'S CONGRESS OF REPRESENTATIVE WOMEN, CONVENED IN CHICAGO ON MAY 15, AND ADJOURNED ON MAY 22, 1893, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE WOMAN'S BRANCH OF

THE WORLD'S CONGRESS AUXILIARY

MRS. POTTER PALMER, PRESIDENT.
MRS. CHARLES HENROTIN, VICE-PRESIDENT.

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