

Wisconsin's Part
in the Celebration of the
Half-Century Anniversary
of the . . .
Emancipation
Proclamation



Hon. Daniel Fish - With
kind personal Regards
from

Wm. J. Stansfeldt

Member of the
Wisconsin Commission

3-21-1922

FIFTY YEARS OF FREEDOM

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

REPRESENTING

STATE OF WISCONSIN

*At the Celebration of the Half-Century Anniversary of the
Emancipation Proclamation*

CHICAGO, AUG. 22-SEPT. 16, 1915

To

GOVERNOR EMANUEL L. PHILIPP

THE COMMITTEE

HON. SAMUEL A. COOK, President
HON. GEORGE P. HAMBRECHT, Vice-President
MR. SAMUEL R. BANKS, Secretary

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FOREWORD

The Semi - Centennial Celebration of Negro-Freedom was held in Chicago, Illinois, during the summer of 1915.

It was fitting that Wisconsin should exhibit the industry and progress of the negroes within its borders and to send a representation to such a noteworthy gathering. Governor Emanuel L. Philipp appointed as the commission in charge of Wisconsin's part in this celebration :

Hon. S. A. Cook, Neenah, Wis., President;

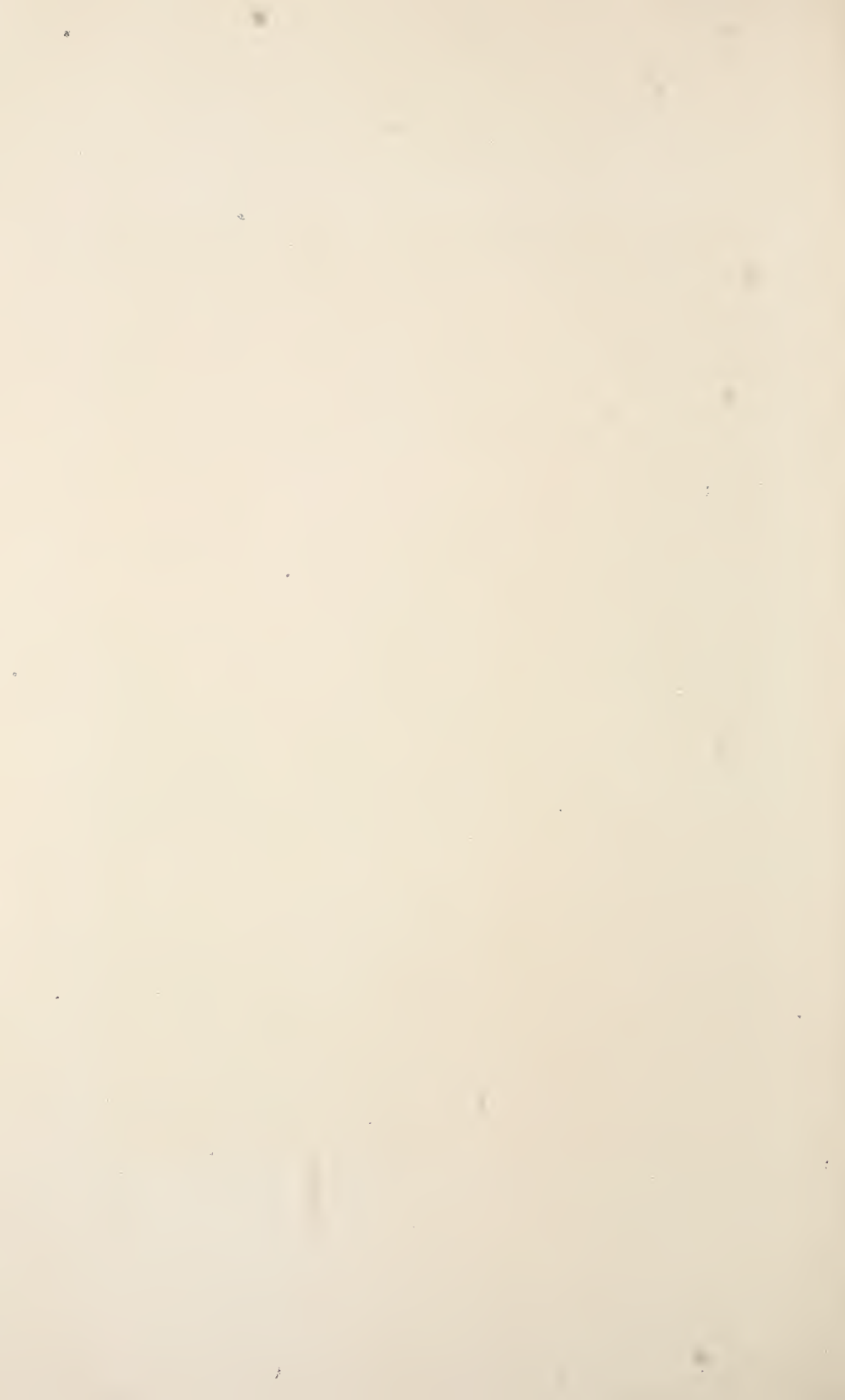
Hon. George P. Hambrecht, Madison, Treasurer.

Mr. Samuel R. Banks, Madison, Secretary.

The Negroes in this state were well represented at this celebration and exhibition at Chicago. The exhibit prepared by the commission was given very satisfactory floor space in the Coliseum and was favorably commented on by all observers. It was conceded by the judges that Wisconsin had one of the best exhibits at the Coliseum. To many it was a rather striking exhibit of the industry, inventive genius, and progress of the Wisconsin negroes.

To finance this exhibit and the Wisconsin representation of one hundred negro children who were sent to Chicago, the Wisconsin Legislature appropriated \$2,500. The expenses of the commission for the preparation of the exhibit was \$1,249.90. The balance, the sum of \$1,250.10, was returned to the State Treasurer.

After the money had been returned to the Treasury, a general demand was expressed for a printed copy of the official report of the work of the Wisconsin commission and the exhibit for circulation among the Wisconsin negroes.





GOVERNOR E. L. PHILIPP, WISCONSIN

To His Excellency, Emanuel L. Philipp, Governor of Wisconsin:

Pursuant to Chapter 195, laws of 1915, your commission appointed to represent the State of Wisconsin in the Celebration of the Half-Century Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation at Chicago, have the honor to submit the following report:

The Wisconsin Legislature, at its regular session for the year 1915, created by Chapter 195, laws of 1915, a commission of three members, to be appointed by the Governor, to co-operate with the committee of eleven, previously appointed, in the celebration of the Semi-centennial Anniversary of the Act of Emancipation at Chicago. The duty of said commission was to "direct, supervise, encourage and promote an appropriate exhibit to represent this state at the said celebration". The commission was directed to file with the Governor a full detailed report showing the character of the exhibit made and the moneys expended. The legislature appropriated two thousand and five hundred dollars for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the enactment.

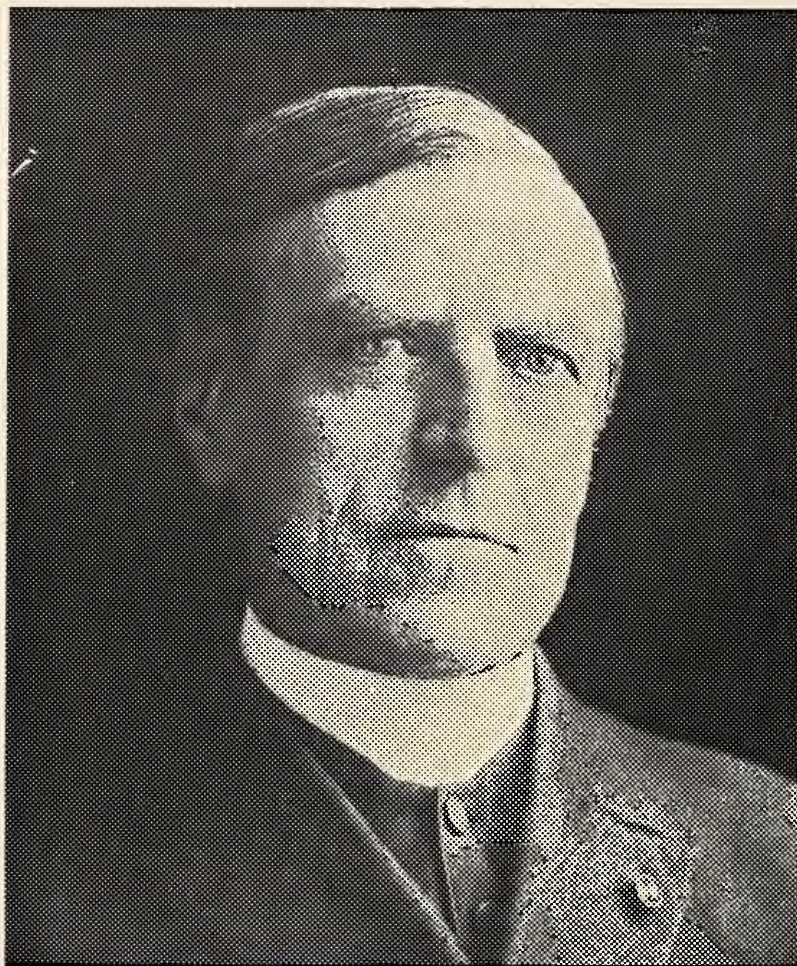
The persons appointed as members of the commission pursuant to said Chapter 195, laws of 1915, were: Honorable Samuel A. Cook, Neenah, a member of the Grand Army of the Republic; Honorable George P. Hambrecht, Grand Rapids, author and sponsor of bill No. 296, A., which, by its enactment, became Chapter 195, laws of 1915; and Samuel R. Banks, Madison, member of the Governor's staff and a representative of the colored race of Wisconsin.

On July 31, 1915, your commission met at the Hotel Pfister, Milwaukee, and organized by electing Honorable Samuel A. Cook, President; Honorable George P. Hambrecht, Vice-President, and Samuel R. Banks, Secretary.

Immediately after its organization, the commission called a meeting with the committee of eleven, previously appointed, to ascertain what plans and arrangements had been made and to co-operate with the said committee of eleven in the discussion and formulation of further plans for establishing and conducting an appropriate Wisconsin exhibit.

The members and officers of the committee of eleven appointed in the fall of 1914, were: George H. DeReef, Milwaukee, Chairman; Mrs. R. B. Montgomery, Milwaukee, Secretary; Mrs. P. C. Clark, Milwaukee, Treasurer; Samuel R. Banks, Madison; James D. Cook, Milwaukee; Mr. William M. Miller, Madison; George W. Murphy, Milwaukee; Rev. Jesse S. Woods, Milwaukee; Rev. George J. Fox, Milwaukee; Mrs. Oscar W. Horton, Milwaukee; and Mrs. J. L. Slaughter, Milwaukee.

Each member of the committee of eleven deserves commendation for his diligent and faithful service. Without available funds until the enactment of Chapter 195, laws of 1915, the members of that committee sacrificed considerable time and energy in endeavoring to make Wisconsin a worthy participant in the celebration. Some time after their appointment, the members of the committee of eleven learned that, instead of a convention, the celebration would be in the nature of an exposition to which each state would be asked to send an exhibit, showing the progress and achievements of the negro within its borders. In order to obtain the most beneficial and effective results, the committee organized in December, 1914, by electing George H. DeReef, Milwaukee, Chairman; Mrs. R. B. Montgomery, Milwaukee, Secretary; and Mrs. P. C. Clark, Milwaukee, Treasurer. At a subsequent meeting of the committee, the members decided to make a concerted effort to interest the press of the state in the celebration, and, in order to finance proper publicity, a tax was levied by the committee upon each member thereof. A circular letter was prepared



BISHOP SAMUEL FALLOWS, D. D., L. L. D.
President of the Illinois Commission on Negro Freedom

and sent to the various newspapers of the state and to individuals, requesting that the same be given publicity.

In June, 1915, the bill which became Chapter 195, laws of 1915, was passed by the legislature and was approved by Governor E. L. Philipp. During the consideration of this bill by the Senate, an unusual honor was conferred upon a Wisconsin negro — an honor to the colored race of Wisconsin — when Samuel R. Banks, upon invitation of the Senate, sitting as Committee of the Whole, addressed that body on the merits of the bill. Such a privilege had never before in the history of the Wisconsin legislature been extended to a member of the colored race. Mr. Bank's interesting and able manner in presenting the history of the Wisconsin negro was largely responsible for the concurrence of the Senate in the bill.

The commission of three and the committee of eleven met frequently and devoted much time in properly and economically advertising the celebration, arousing enthusiasm and in reaching and stimulating negro talent, industry and intelligence throughout the state. The members of both the commission and committee endeavored to secure the active co-operation of the colored race of Wisconsin in producing appropriate exhibitions and demonstrations that were typical of negro talent and genius in their different industrial, economic and professional pursuits in this state. The enthusiasm with which the members' solicitous appeals were met promised a highly interesting exhibit.

The exposition was held in the Coliseum at Chicago from August 22 to Sept. 16, 1915, inclusive. Every state in the Union was represented. Owing to the numerous exhibits a program was arranged and a certain named day was allotted to each state and participant. September 9th was named as Wisconsin Day.

On September 8, your commission and several members of the committee of eleven, went to Chicago and



ABRAHAM LINCOLN
The Great Liberator.

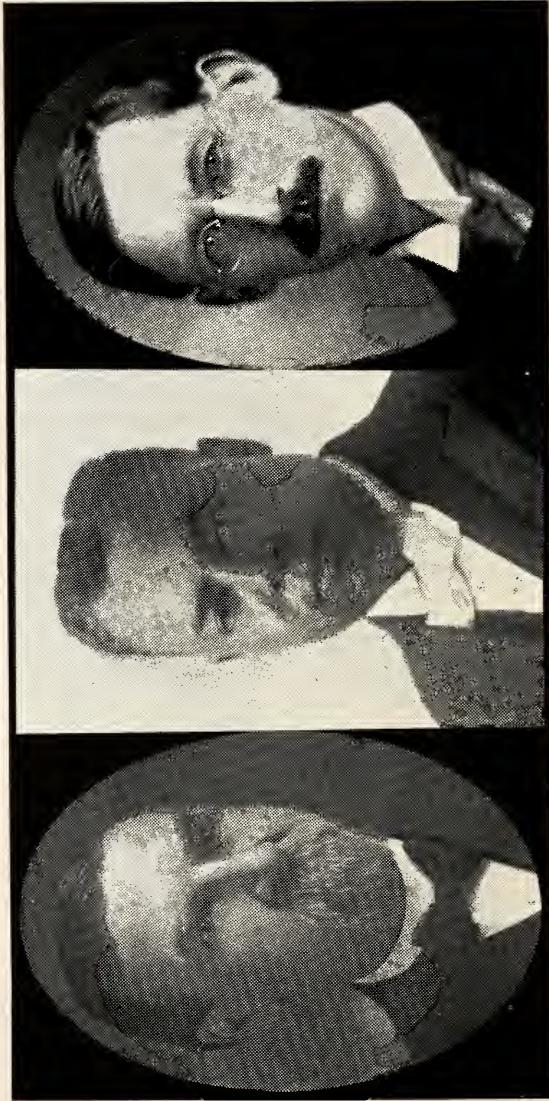
completed the Wisconsin exhibit. The Wisconsin booth, well located in the southeast side of the Coliseum, was about 65 feet long and 10 feet wide. The booth contained several large glass cases wherein were exhibited pieces of fancy sewing by various colored women of Wisconsin. The other exhibits representing this state consisted of specimens of agricultural products and threshed pedigree grains, oil paintings, photographs, examples of skilled foundry work and moulding, demonstrations in mechanical talent in the construction miniature of an electrically equipped house and an aeroplane, and samples of the Wisconsin negro house-wife's accomplishments in canning and preserving. Education was represented in an interesting exhibit by St. Benedict the Moor School, Milwaukee, an institution for the education of the negro children.

An afternoon and an evening program was arranged. The afternoon program consisting of exercises by the children of St. Benedict the Moor School and the evening program consisted of various instrumental and vocal selections. His Excellency, Governor Philipp, who was unable to attend the exhibition in person, conveyed greetings on behalf of the people of Wisconsin. The Governor's message, read by Mr. S. R. Banks of the Wisconsin Commission, was as follows:

"I regret that I cannot attend the Half-century Anniversary Exposition on Wisconsin Day and deliver this message in person. My official duties are such that it has been impossible for me to get away.

"I take pleasure, however, in sending my greetings, and I wish to compliment our colored citizens upon this exhibit of their talent and industry. For a race so recently raised from slavery the advancement of the American negro is in many ways remarkable. Most remarkable is the fact that, while fifty years ago few of the negro race could read or write, the percentage of illiteracy has been decreasing at such a rate that it promises at no distant time to overtake the whites. Certainly they have done enough to merit our heartiest praise and co-operation and to inspire the hope that the problem which confronted the white men when this vast population was given freedom will be solved by the help of the leaders of the race itself. They have a special aptitude for agriculture, and therein lies a great hope for their future complete liberty and self-respecting independence. I say this because it is the black man

WISCONSIN COMMISSIONERS



HON. S. A. COQK

S. R. BANKS

HON. GEO. P. HAMBRECHT

Appointed by Governor E. L. Philipp to represent Wisconsin at the Semi-Centennial Celebration of Negro Freedom

who raises nine-tenths of our supply of cotton and the greater amount of sugar-cane; and in general agriculture he makes a remarkable showing of the results of his long acquaintance with the soil.

“The negro race, on the other hand, is not without talent. In Paul Dunbar it has produced a poet of a genuine stamp who may well be called the Burns of his race. It has produced a great educator, and a great statesman; and the racial love of music is proverbial—and in our Wisconsin exhibit it can be seen that the negro is not without some talent in sculpture.

However, flattering as this may be, it is well for the leaders to remember that for the great mass of the colored people, agriculture is the main hope and dependence. To be successful in agriculture, a man must



MR. GEORGE H. DE REEF
Chairman of Delegation and Chief
Speaker on Wisconsin Day

own land, and to do that he must have formed the habit of saving his money. Being acquainted with the colored man, as I am through several years of active life in the South, I am aware of his carelessness in the matter of saving his earnings. He is not a saver of money. With the best interest of the race at heart, I feel that I ought to take this occasion to impress upon those here assembled—whom I may presume to be among the leaders of their race—that the future welfare of the colored people in general depends almost entirely upon educating them to overcome their carelessness in the use of money. Until a man has property of his own he cannot have the entire respect of others—he cannot be entirely free.

"Our colored citizenry, hard working as it is and not wanting in intelligence, has its future in its own hands. They have in them the making of good citizens and good soldiers and because they have achieved so much in such a remarkably short time they have peculiar claims for the heartiest help and co-operation of their white fellow citizens.

"As this is Wisconsin Day I cannot forbear expressing especial pride in the exhibit our Wisconsin colored people have brought to this exposition. With no great allowance of money and almost entirely by their own enterprise they have gathered from the small negro population in



MRS. MARY BANKS CLARK
Chief Field Agent and Assistant
to the Secretary of the Commission

our state an exhibit that does them credit in almost every line of human endeavor. Again, I send you my greetings and the hope that from this exhibit of what your race has done in the past you may be inspired to keep hopefully onward and never cease in your unflagging efforts for advancement."

(Signed) EMANUEL L. PHILIPP,
Governor of Wisconsin.

Honorable S. A. Cook, on behalf of the Wisconsin Commission, complimented the colored race of Wisconsin for the wonderful display it had made in the Wisconsin exhibit, speaking in part as follows:

“Some of you in this audience are familiar with the condition of the colored people 50 years ago. The improvement and advancement have been truly wonderful as is evidenced here in this Coliseum, by the great display of your handiwork and intelligence. I am glad the State of Wisconsin, through its legislature, made the appropriation they did in recognition of your good work, and to help you carry the slogan ‘Wisconsin to the front in all she undertakes to do’. You surely have made good. Much credit is due the colored people of Wisconsin and especially is credit due S. R. Banks and those who have labored so earnestly and unselfishly for the cause of the colored people and the good name of the state. The display here on the part of the colored people of the nation is truly wonderful and with no discredit to any. My judgment is that Wisconsin leads all, and I am proud to say her displays are genuine, prac-



PROF. WALTER KERELS
Director of Music

tical, homemade, handmade, modernmade by the colored people of Wisconsin. Yet among all these achievements you are on trial before the people of Wisconsin! ‘As you sow, so shall you reap.’ So far all has been conducted in a praiseworthy manner, and it is the earnest hope of the commission, appointed by the Governor, that when this exposition closes it will have been conducted in that high plane which will reflect credit on the colored people and good name of Wisconsin. You can no more tolerate a dishonest man among your number or in public office than you can tolerate a coward in the army.”

The National Half-century Anniversary Exposition and the Lincoln Jubilee in which your committee had the honor to participate, was the first celebration of its kind to be given west of the Alleghanies. The object of the recent exposition was to show the material, moral and mental progress of the negro race since the formal day of emancipation in 1865. It was said to be the most representative and pretentious display of the advancement



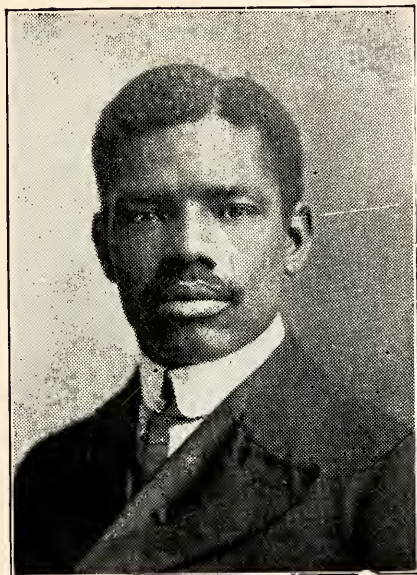
FATHER STEPHEN, O. M. C.
Director of the Colored Catholic
Mission at Milwaukee, Wis.

of the American negro that has ever been held. The numerous exhibits and displays of negro talent and intelligence, ranging from simple but typical displays of industry and business to the most wonderful and technical of profession and art, evidenced the great advancement and improvement of the negro in but fifty years of opportunity.

Much credit is due to the colored people of Wis-

consin for their earnest co-operation and for the attainment of a highly successful Wisconsin exhibit. The Wisconsin displays were genuine and practical and, your committee believes, equalled the displays of any other state. The expense of establishing, maintaining and conducting the Wisconsin exhibit amounted to less than half of the appropriation available for that purpose. The unexpended balance was returned to the State Treasury.

When it is realized how far the negro has advanced



REV. GEORGE J. FOX

in the last fifty years—his first fifty years of freedom—it is not difficult to account for the extent and degree of the growing confidence in his future. The census of 1910 shows that two out of every five persons engaged in gainful occupations in the sixteen southern states are negroes. Of the entire negro population in these states, 63 per cent. are in some form of industrial occupation. Of all the negroes engaged in industrial activities 60 per cent. are agricultural workers. Approximately one mil-

lion negroes have developed in fifty years from agricultural laborers to farmers.

In the half-century since emancipation, the negro population in the United States has more than doubled, the increase from 1863 to 1910 being more than 121 per cent. This increase was with practically no immigration.

The ethnic statistics show marked changes in the character of the race in the past fifty years. At the time the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, mulattoes represented about 13 per cent. of the negro population.



MRS. O. W. HORTON
Superintendent of Exhibits and
Chairman of Program

The percentage in 1910 was nearly 21 per cent. and is now probably higher. Sociologically and economically the changes have been marked also. Illiteracy for instance, has decreased in fifty years from 60 per cent. to 30 per cent. and the proportion of the members of the race owning homes free of incumbrance has increased to more than 16 per cent.

In Wisconsin the negro population aggregates 2,900 persons, 1,476 males and 1,424 females; 39 per cent. of this number are mulattoes. Of the 341 negro children in Wisconsin of school age—between the ages of six and fourteen, inclusive,—303 are attending school.

The following interesting statistics indicate the great advancement of the negro race in the United States during the first half-century of its freedom:

Condition of the Colored Race — 1863.

Population, census 1860; Slaves, 3,953,760, Free 487,970;

	Total.....	4,441,730
Illiteracy		90%
Value of property, estimated at.....		\$1,200,000
Number of colleges and universities.....		1
Number of college graduates, estimated at.....		30
Number of lawyers.....		0
Number of banks operated by negroes.....		0
Number of negro towns.....		0
Number of negro churches, estimated at.....		40,000
Number of newspapers.....		1
Value of church property.....		500,000
Membership of negro churches, estimated at.....		40,000
Number of children in schools, estimated at.....		25,000

Conditions of the Colored People — 1913.

62.2% of all negroes, 10 years of age or over, in the United States, are engaged in gainful occupations.

Total negro population (United States).....	9,828,294
Homes owned by negroes.....	500,000
Churches owned by negroes.....	30,449
Church Membership	3,207,305
Sunday Schools	24,380
Sunday School Scholars	1,448,570
Illiteracy, census of 1910.....	30.5%
Value of property, estimated at.....	\$1,000,000,000
Number of farms owned.....	250,000
Value of church property.....	\$65,000,000
Professional men	75,000
Number of practicing physicians, estimated at.....	3,500
Number of practicing lawyers.....	1,500
Number of business men, estimated at.....	50,000
Number of children in schools.....	2,000,000
Number of negro teachers.....	30,000

Number of college and university graduates.....	8,000
Number of negro towns.....	50
Land owned by negroes (acres).....	20,000,000
Drug stores.....	300
General stores and other industrial enterprises.....	20,000
Newspapers and periodicals.....	398
Hospital and nurse training schools.....	60
Banks owned by negroes.....	72
Insurance companies	100
Property owned by negro secret societies.....	\$8,000,000
Capital stock negro banks.....	\$2,000,000
Annual business done by negro banks.....	\$20,000,000



MRS. R. B. MONTGOMERY
 Chief Inspector of Exhibits and
 Assistant Superintendent

Financial Report.

The total expenditures for establishing, conducting and maintaining the Wisconsin exhibit are as follows:

Traveling and Incidental expenses of members of the committee	\$ 689.28
Storage, Drayage and Express.....	56.37
Damage to Articles on Exhibit.....	16.00
Labor and Professional Service for Wisconsin Exhibit.....	88.90
Printing, Stationery, Postage, Badges, etc.....	57.35
Rental of Space in Coliseum, Chicago, Illinois.....	150.00
Rental of Show Cases.....	60.00
Miscellaneous Articles purchased for exhibit.....	18.00
Clerical expense	125.00
	<hr/>
Total	\$1,249.90
Unexpended Balance returned to General Fund, State Treasury	1,250.10
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	\$2,500.00
Appropriation, Chapter 195, Laws of 1915.....	\$2,500.00

Respectfully submitted,

SAMUEL A. COOK, President;
GEO. P. HAMBRECHT, Treasurer;
SAMUEL R. BANKS, Secretary;
Commissioners.

The Following With Liberal Donations Make This Report Possible

The printing and distribution of this report will cost in the neighborhood of one hundred dollars. An appeal was made to some prominent citizens of the state interested in the welfare of the negro to contribute the necessary funds for the printing and distribution of this report.

These men gladly contributed the amount of eighty-five dollars. Their names are given below:

J. B. Winslow.....	Chief Justice, Supreme Court.
R. D. Marshall.....	Justice, Supreme Court.
J. C. Kerwin.....	Justice, Supreme Court.
M. B. Rosenberry.....	Justice, Supreme Court.
Merlin Hull.....	Secretary of State.
Henry Johnson	State Treasurer.
C. P. Cary.....	State Superintendent of Schools.
Wm. M. Bray	State Senator.
George Staudenmeyer	State Senator.
Platt Whitman.....	State Senator.
Byron Barwig.....	State Senator.
W. W. Albers.....	State Senator.
David V. Jennings.....	State Senator.
J. Henry Bennett.....	State Senator.
Lawrence C. Whittet.....	Speaker of Assembly.
John Gamper	Assemblyman.
J. O. Davidson	President, Board of Control.
John G. D. Mack.....	Chief State Engineer.
George P. Hambrecht..	Chairman, Industrial Commission.
Thos. E. Lyons.....	Tax Commission.
C. P. Norgord. ...	Department of Agriculture, Commissioner.
George J. Weigle.....	Dairy and Food Commission.
Michael Laffey.....	State Treasury Agent.
M. F. Blumenfeld... ..	Superintendent of Public Property.
Magnus Swenson.....	Chairman, State Council of Defense.
Orlando Holway.....	Adjutant General.
Edward A. Fitzpatrick.	Major U. S. Infantry, O. R. C.
C. R. Van Hise.....	President, University of Wisconsin.

Charles H. Vilas.. Board of Regents, University of Wisconsin.
 H. J. Thorkelson .Business Manager, University of Wisconsin.
 F. W. Oakley.....Chief Clerk, U. S. District Court.
 O. E. Remey.....Secretary, State Fair Association.
 Harold L. Geisse.....Secretary, Railroad Commission.
 R. S. Scheibel.....Secretary, Conservation Commission.
 B. R. BuckinghamStatistician, State Board of Education.
 William Kittle.....Secretary, Normal Regents.
 B. A. Kiekhofer.....Secretary, Board of Public Affairs.
 A. W. Ovitt.....Secretary, Oil Inspector.
 Tim Murphy.....Notarial Clerk.
 Wm. H. Austin.....Lawyer, Milwaukee.
 C. C. RogersPublisher.
 M. S. Rausch... ..Claim Agent, Milwaukee Street Railway.



