

CHESTER TIMES – April 19, 1907

INSTITUTE FOR COLORED YOUTH – Institution at Cheyney that is Doing Much for the Education of the Race – Admirable Training School

When the bright June commencement days come, the first class will go from the Institute for Colored Youth that has been graduated since the reorganization of this old and useful institution, located at Cheyney, this county. The reconstruction of methods to suit the times was accomplished about three years ago, under the direction of Prof. Hugh M. Browne, a master mind, a benevolent personality and a bosom friend of Dr. Booker T. Washington.

The Institute is supported by private subscriptions from members in the Society of Friends, who have refrained asking, until this year State aid, for the sole reason that they wanted to have something tangible to exhibit to Legislative committees, who may visit it. That the training school has accomplished its aim, is evident from a glance at the two splendid main structures, located on a section of the 117 acres of rolling land, a short distance from the quaint country station.

There will be nine in the graduating class. The population of the Institute is 67, about one-third of that number being mates. The purpose of the Institute for Colored Youth is to train young men and women to teach others of the colored race, a method that already has done wonders in changing the lives of the indolent Negro of the Southland to one of usefulness among his fellows. Both the academic and manual systems are advocated, there being special instructors in both branches. Booker T. Washington, who may be called rightly one of the pioneer specialists in this sort of work, has visited the Cheyney institution and says of it: "I have followed the work being done in the school at Cheyney, Pennsylvania, from the beginning and I testify that in my opinion every dollar given has been wisely and helpfully used."

"The product is trained minds from the Cheyney School is far less than the demand. We have good positions now for all our graduates," said Professor Browne yesterday to a Times man, "and we could place a hundred more if we had them." At present the work is limited, because of a lack of funds, but everyone who knows of the triumphs under the present management, have no hesitation in saying that it will be one of the leading schools of its kind in the country in time to be given to the actual work belonging to the different subjects. For example, a girl pursuing the Domestic Science Course, who intends to become a cooking teacher, has the full share of the laboratory work, classroom instruction and a year's experience in the school kitchen, where she makes out daily menus, assists in preparing and cooking the food for the school dining room, works in the pantry and puts into practice her classroom knowledge of serving, caring for, and waiting on the pupils' and teachers' tables. It is intended that she shall not only know cooking theoretically, but that she shall know thoroughly how to prepare, cook and serve food.

The school already has developed a daily menu for the year which has received the commendation of hotel managers, stewards of boarding schools and other authorities. This daily menu is commended especially for its variety, wholesomeness, economy and scientific arrangement.

This same emphasis is placed upon the practical side of all the subjects taught. All of the work connected with the Institute is performed by the students. In addition to the usual normal course in Mathematics, Science, History and English, instruction is now given in Cooking, Sewing, and Dressmaking, Millinery, Laundering, Raffia work,

Carpentering and Woodworking, Forging and Steel working, together with Mechanical Drawing necessary to these operations, Lloyd, Cord an Hand Training for Primary School grades.

In this particular work the managers aim not only to strengthen the students for their work as teachers, but they are mindful of the fact that the present condition of the colored people makes it necessary for the school teacher by helpful precept and practice to be able to guide communities along all the lines of every day activity. For many years to come, the colored teacher will find parents' meetings a field for vital usefulness. The developing influence of such meetings lies in the teacher's ability to actually perform after the most approved and economic methods, the everyday activities of the housewife and the husbandman.

The Institute for Colored Youth formerly was located in Philadelphia, where it had an enviable record, but to effect an imperative demand for changed educational ideals, the grounds now occupied were secured. The old Colonial mansion on the property was remodeled for offices of administration and the home of the principal. In tenth month, 1903, the cornerstone of Humphrey's Hall – a large fireproof building with industrial laboratories and recitation rooms – was laid in the presence of many well-known educators. In the spring of 1904 the cornerstone of Emlen Hall – the girl's dormitory – was laid. This new plant with its equipment represents a cost of about \$73,600, all of which has been paid.

In the tenth month of the same year, 1904, the organized Institute for Colored Youth was opened. The number of students was increased each year until there now is a waiting list that far outnumbers the accommodations of the place.

HOME LIFE A FEATURE – The home life of this institute is one of its strongest elements for character building. The future teachers receive there all the benefits of a properly regulated and conducted Christian home, also that individual attention which is impossible in the large schools. It is the only colored school in the country supported by private benevolence given up entirely to teacher training.

Prof. Hugh M. Browne, the principal, upon whom devolves all the responsibility for carrying out the ideals of the institution, worked his way through Howard University and subsequently he graduated from Princeton theological Seminary. While a student in the seminary, he pursued a two years' course under Dr. McCosh in the college, studied one year in the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and enjoyed two years of European travel. He entered the field of education for his life work, and began with a call to the College of Liberia, West Africa.

After studying the condition in Liberia, he recommended the establishment of an industrial school, and mapped out a plan and a course of study for the same. He taught physics in the Colored High School at Washington, D.C. for eleven years, introducing the laboratory method and a department for work in the useful application of electricity and the construction of home-made apparatus by students.

Prof. Browne was called from Washington to Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA., to establish this work there, and to reorganize the summer institute for teachers, which meets annually at Hampton. He was called from Hampton to Baltimore, Md., to reorganize and unite the colored high and colored polytechnic schools and place them under the management of a colored facility.

With the invitation to come to Baltimore, came one also from Dr. Booker T. Washington to become the head teacher at Tuskegee. He was taken from Baltimore to the work at Cheney.

A summer school, conducted in the month of July, has been of lasting benefit to teachers of colored youth in all parts of the country. Last year the enrollment taxed the dormitory capacity of the school and this year a systematic assignment will be resorted to so that no more than can be arranged for conveniently will be summoned to attend. At this summer assembly and taught English, History Pedagogy, Mathematics, Drawing, Primary Methods, Agriculture, Geography, Domestic Science, Domestic Art and Manual Training, which includes paper and cardboard folding, weaving, cord work whittling and wood work.

THE MANAGERS – The board of managers include the following, who either reside or have business affiliations in Philadelphia: Geo. M. Warner, secretary; Walter P. Stokes, treasurer; George Vaux, George Vaux, Jr., Francis B. Gummere, James G. Biddle, Walter Smedley, J. Henry Bartlett, Davis H. Forsythe, George S. Hutton, George B. Mellor, Alfred C. Elkinton, David G. Yarnall, Stanley R. Yarnall, John L. Balderston.

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