

one disease. Dr. Turner, teacher of biology, is conducting field and pot experiments to determine the resistance of different varieties to this disease, and this work was shown to the members of the conference. Soil building is one of the fundamental necessities of the South. Some reclamation work in wet parts of the farm with legumes and rye, which has made fertile some very poor pieces of land, furnished an excellent object lesson and was made the basis for a profitable discussion of soil fertility.

Many of the topics of the conference were of interest to the women as well as the men. One of these was the problem of ornamental planting around the home and the farm buildings. Many valuable suggestions were made and a sand table with models of houses, trees, and shrubs was used to make the lesson concrete. The care of children, especially in summer, was discussed at the women's session, and they were given lessons in the use of dye materials and the selection of colors for home decoration and clothing.

The Institutes invites each year two or three speakers of outstanding ability to address the conference on economic, social, and spiritual aspects of country life. Mr. William J. Baird of Berea, Kentucky, under the title "Increasing Our Chances of Success," pointed out how the powers of man's hand, foot, ear, and eye had been increased by modern inventions and urged the farmers to make use of these for increased profits; to be always on the alert for new ideas; to plan for the future; and to have that "divine discontent" which does not take the form of grouchiness but is expressed in a determination to strive for better things. Another speaker was Dr. Carl C. Taylor of the State College of North Carolina, who gave extremely helpful addresses on "The Human Factor on the Farm," and "Co-operative Marketing as an Economic and Social Program."

The Farmers' Standard of Living In an address before the annual Hampton Farmers' Conference, Dr. Carl C. Taylor, of the State College of North Carolina, Raleigh, used as a measure of values in our rural civilization the farmers' standard of living. The facts he gave showed that country people by this measure have been slowly writing their own epitaphs in thousands of rural communities, which, in housing, education, religion, recreation, and social life are almost hopelessly inadequate when compared with urban conditions.

In spite of this discouraging truth, the two hundred delegates took back with them a striking note of human evaluation to the forty thousand farm people they represented.

If the great values in rural life are the human values, as opposed to the value of the corn crop or the cotton crop, the balancing of the program for rural improvement must come through an understanding of how to convert hogs into education, cattle into better homes, and corn into culture. Better methods of production are now so widely known that overproduction of raw material is not uncommon, and the probability of good prices will at any time bring out the capacity of the farmer as a producer, hanging the millstone of a surplus about his neck. Wealth is being produced in the rural districts but the inability there to translate it into a satisfying life warns leadership that training to save dividends from crop and livestock wealth sufficient to provide adequate facilities and institutions, and good example in the consumption of those dividends, must be a part of a balanced program. Measured by the yardstick of the farmers' standard of living, increased production alone has built no outstanding rural culture. Wherever an outstanding rural culture is found the social factors, weigh heavily, but are slow to be recognized by an agricultural leadership obsessed with the economic situation. The task of leading in the struggle for a higher standard of living for farmers is all too slowly being taken up by those with a social slant to their thinking.

The gains of agriculture which have been slipping out of rural communities over the route of inefficient marketing are now being reached for in the great commodity marketing movement, and this process has been showing up the need for consideration of some of the truisms of rural social science. The cold, hard approach of the banker and the economist has not, for instance, succeeded with the little groups of human beings growing tobacco so far out of hearing of the directors' meetings of the great tobacco growers' associations. Recognition of human values and qualities will be a part of the successful marketing organization, which will help save for rural homes and community groups the means by which to develop a civilization.

Rural people must, of course, build their own civilization, but the knowledge of what higher standards are, and a taste of them too, here and there, for example's sake, must now be brought to them by those trained to do so. Studies of the farmers' standard of living, and the unsentimental truth about his living they revealed after the relentless way of science, are contributions fundamental in building a balanced program of

rural improvement. That agricultural colleges now have courses which consider the production of a rural civilization and better human beings as well as of better field crops and better hogs, is encouraging. The human values in rural life are beginning to be recognized as the ultimate values. The farmers' standard of living reveals many gaps in the means for developing human potentialities.

**The
Ministers'
Conference**

For thirteen years the Ministers' Conference has met at Hampton Institute for its annual gathering. From the original group of twenty-three men called together by Rev. Laurence Fenninger, Hampton's chaplain and executive secretary of the conference, who was urged on in the enterprise by Dr. Frissell, the conference has grown to a total membership of 761. Of these, 328 attended this year. The total attendance has risen to 2108. While the majority of the members are from Virginia and North Carolina, and most of these from the various Baptist and Methodist bodies, the breadth of the conference may be measured somewhat by the fact that the membership has representatives of fifteen different denominations from twenty-one different States. These members show their loyalty by continually sending in the names of others who will be interested. The mailing list of over two thousand testifies to this.

Another sign of interest is the continual return to the conference of the older members. While this the thirteenth conference holds the largest attendance record, it is significant that there were fewer new members than were registered last year. Two hundred and sixty-six of those attending this year had attended previous meetings, and many have come for all of them. Such records are but outward signs of something vital within that draws ministers to leave their pressing work to refresh the vision of their calling. The program this year was up to the usual standard and held the members continuously in each session. Each speaker had something to give that came from broad study of the subject upon which he had been speaking.

On the rural church Major T. J. Howard, professor of Rural Church Work at Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Georgia, spoke from successful, practical experience in developing work in country churches. Although he was critical of many of the failures of the churches his talks were

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THE SOUTHERN WORKMAN was founded by Samuel Chapman Armstrong in 1872, and is a monthly magazine devoted to the interests of undeveloped races.

It contains reports from Negro and Indian populations, with pictures of reservation and plantation life, as well as information concerning Hampton graduates and ex-students. It also provides a forum for the discussion of race problems. Dr. Francis G. Peabody, Plummer Professor of Christian Morals, Emeritus, of Harvard University, says: "The Southern Workman is admirable, both in its report of news and in its literary form. It should have a real influence in the education of public opinion."

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EDITORIAL STAFF

JAMES E. GREGG WM. ANTHONY AERY
JANE E. DAVIS W. T. B. WILLIAMS
ALLEN B. DOGGETT, JR.

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

THOMAS W. TURNER is a graduate of Howard University, 1901, a graduate student of biology at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., and received the degree of Ph.D. from Cornell University. He was a teacher for a number of years at Howard University and is at present teacher of biology in the Teachers College, Hampton Institute. Dr. Turner has done valuable research work in co-operation with the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

JANIE PORTER BARRETT, Hampton '84, has been superintendent of the Virginia Industrial School for Colored Girls at Peake, Va., since its founding. Mrs. Barrett has been very prominent in woman's club and social service work in the State of Virginia and throughout the South.

MABEL CARNEY, professor of rural education at Teachers College, Columbia University, is studying conditions in Africa under the auspices of the International Institute of Teachers College. Extracts from her journal appeared in the July issue of the *Southern Workman* and are continued in this number.

TOSSIE P. F. WHITING, Ph.B. Chicago University, is dean of women at the Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute, Petersburg, Va.

LAURA T. WILKINSON of Phoebus, Va., graduated from the Academy, Hampton Institute, in June 1926.

SARAH COLLINS FERNANDIS, Hampton, '82 author of a small volumes of poems recently published by Richard Badger of the Gorham Press, has frequently contributed poems to the *Southern Workman*. Mrs. Fernandis is a social worker in Baltimore.

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