

Introductory Chapter.

It has seemed best to those who have been most closely connected with the scientist, George W. Carver during his years at Tuskegee, that something should be written of his early life and the steps which led up to his present position as a leader in his chosen work. If, in complying with the request that has come to me to undertake such a work, I can add one mite to the uplift of this down-trodden race, and prove to many how one of their own number has, through great difficulties, risen to eminence in his field of labor, time and strength will have been well spent.

I have ever felt that we owe a debt to the negro race which years cannot repay. Having no choice of their own in coming to this country, going through long years of bondage, it was impossible not to have the blood in their veins poisoned by those long years of cruel servitude. It will take many years before the taint of those prenatal influences can be eradicated.

In a speech made several years ago, Dr. Stagg, a leading divine of the South, said, "Of all the races, the negro is the most abused. Verily God will bring about the proper adjustment of these difficulties in His own good time."

In a letter dated February, 1905, George W. Carver says, "Slavery was a hard and terrible school, but I am sure it has something good about it, despite that fact. We are a young race yet, not by any means perfect, but every day and year means a part or complete milestone upward."

That the negroes are making rapid strides into the larger field of thought and action where they are enabled to behold a life worth while, is very evident when we see the results that emanate from the work done at Tuskegee, Voorhees Normal and Industrial Institute, Utica Institute and kindred schools of the South. While these marks of true excellence are apparent to all who desire to know the progress they are making, yet

there are many who will take as their examples of the race, members of an inferior class, like some of the white race, who have never learned to control their own spirit, that they can be said to be greater than the man who takes a city. Nor do such remember, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." It seems if we study into the heredity and environment of many persons of the slave days, we might find some reason why the character we deem amiss, should be more thoroughly a part of their being, than those who have never known slavery.

Notwithstanding the blight on their lives of those years of servitude, there are those who would banish them from any help or betterment-- will not lend their aid or influence to those who are endeavoring to give them the true freedom of a perfect man. Then we ask how much think you is due those of the colored who have set before us some of the best examples in schools which are continually sending out more helpers in the race for better things. Those men and women are as truly leading their people out of bondage to a victorious life, such as is the privilege of all God's creation-- as Moses led the Children of Israel.

Dr. George W. Carver stands today as one of the greatest helpers, not only in helping his own people to rise to the best life; but he is also adding riches to us as a nation. through his unusual gifts as a scientist. "He is", as a student at Tuskegee expressed it, "Second only to Booker T. Washington in the race for the larger and better things in that Institution, and in his individual talent he stands as a leading scientist."

The chapters which follow, giving something of the life of this man are the kind and helpful sayings of many who desire to see God's kingdom come, and have been glad in this way to aid its advancement. With this purpose uppermost, the compiler has done her best and trust you, one and all, are sending your blessing with the work as it goes out into the world.

Dr. Carver's Early Years.

That the early years of George W. Carver were marked by a gift differing from that of the ordinary boy is very evident., ~~At~~ the hours which most children give to play were taken by him for roaming among nature's stores. We wish we might have the memories which come through the love and pride which cause mothers to repeat the sayings and doings of her child, for in this way much more which would have been of great interest to us, might have been impressed upon his moemory.

Of all the happenings of those slave days, the saddest was the heart rendering separation of loved ones. While never a slave himself, farther than his very earliest years when there was no memory of a master, yet in the loss of his parents, he has reaped during all his years the result of the slave trade.

The year of his birth he does not know. In his own words he tells us. "I was born in Diamond Grove, Missouri, about the close of the great Civil war, in a little one-roomed log shanty, on ~~the~~ plantation of Mr. Moses Carver, a German by birth, and the owner of my mother-- my father being the property of a Mr. Grant, who owned the adjoining plantation.

I am told that my father was killed while hauling logs with an ox team. In some way he fell from the load, under the wagon, both wheels passing over him.

At the close of the war the Ku-Klux was at its height in that section of Missouri. My mother was stolen with ^{me} ~~myself~~, a wee babe in her arms. My brother James was grabbed and spirited away to the woods by Mr. Carver. He tried to get me, but could not. They carried my mother and ^{me} ~~myself~~ down into Arkansas, and sold my mother. At this time I was nearly dead with the whooping cough that I had caught on the way. I was so very frail and sick that they thought of course that I would die within a few days. Mr. Carver immediately sent a very fine race horse and some money to purchase us back. The man (Mr. Bentley by name) returned with the money and myself, having given the horse for me.

Every effort was made to find my mother, but to no avail.

In the meantime, my only two sisters died and were buried. My brother James and I grew up together, sharing each other's joys and sorrows on the splendid farm owned by Mr. Carver. When just a mere tot in short dresses my very soul thirsted for an education. I literally lived in the woods. The boys nicknamed me the "Plant Doctor", because I was so fond of plants. I wanted to know every strange stone, flower, insect, bird or beast. No one could tell me. My only book was an old Webster' Elementary Spelling Book I would seek the answer here without satisfaction. I almost knew the book by heart.

At the age of nineteen years my brother left the old home for Fayetteville Arkansas.

Shortly after, at the age of ten years, I left for Neosho, a little town just eight miles from our farm, where I could go to school. Mr. and Mrs. Carver were perfectly willing for us to go where we could be educated the same as white children.

I remained here about two years, got an opportunity to go to Fort Scott, Kansas with a family. They drove through the country.

Every year I went to school, supporting myself by cooking and doing all kinds of house work in private families.

At the age of nineteen years I went back to see my brother and Mr. and Mrs Carver. I had not improved much in stature, as I rode on a half-fare ticket. The conductor thought I was rather small to be travelling alone. I spent the summer here, and returned to Minneapolis, Kansas where I finished my high school work.

The sad news reached me here that James, my only brother, had died with the smallpox. Being conscious as never before that I was left alone, I trusted

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God and pushed ahead. In working for others I had learned the minutia of of laundering. I opened a laundry for myself; got all I could do.

After finishing high school here I made application to enter a certain college in Iowa. I was admitted; went, but when the president saw I was colored he would not receive me. I had spent nearly all my money, and had to open a laundry here. I was liberally patronized by the students. I remained here until spring."

Two facts strongly impress themselves upon my mind as I read this statement: First, the large-heartedness which must have prompted Mr. Carver-- the man who gave his name to the great scientist --to seek the stolen ones and pay three hundred dollars for a wee child with little prospect of its life being prolonged.

We can only hope that he may have lived to know something of the service the scientist today is rendering in preparing new edibles in these days of conservation. We cannot praise too much this love for his fellow man which prompted this man to unite the mother and George with the sisters and brother. What a home was thereby opened which gave to the boy the freedom to roam the woods, pocket the stones and live in league with nature-- a home that so freely opened its doors to permit him to enter school at an early age, and in every way so helped him on to make the most of his life.

The other fact is one of a different character. Of an institution that would prevent the climber from reaching the higher round of the ladder by refusing him entrance, it is enough to say that the spirit of dear old Oberlin had not been breathed into its being. But while this is no credit to an institution, it probably served to strengthen~~d~~ both the mind and purpose of the seeker after knowledge, and there are some today who can be thankful he soon passed another way.

To those who only see in man God's creations, and desire to see the blossoming of life to the extent of each ones possibilities, there is no desire to in any way stint the means by which this enrichment may come, but a great desire to be co-laborers in such results. Somestimes those who can give what seems to them very convincing arguments on "close communion" as they name it, forget the pith of their arguments in their every day dealings with thos whom God would bring into one great company of every tribe and tongue.

Let us not forget as someone has written, "Americans are bent on the preservation of a social order in which men shall be respected not for what they inherit, but for what they achieve."

Hamilton Wright Mabie says, "A free field must be kept for individual for those of industry and ability."

Ex-Secretary James Wilson's thought is, "The treasury of America depends upon the inventions of unknown men, upon the originations of unknown men, upon the ambitions of unknown men. Every country is renewed out of the ranks of unknown men."

A touch of strength of everyone of ability will set the door of opportunity wide in America. This open door has in the case of Prof. Carver as of many others proved a source of great benefit to our nation, and through the individuality of such of his race as Booker T. Washington we have one of the pattern institutions of our land- an institution which people of other countries have sought to copy.

After seeking to enter an Iowa college from which he was turned away because of his color-- a college evidently not so broad as the prairies on which its freedom loving founders had permitted it to be built-- he came to Winterset. It had been the request of a friend that he start a greenhouse at this place-- a business for which he seemed peculiarly adapted, as flower and shrub seemed to respond to his touch by giving of their choicest wealth of leaf and flower. But upon looking over the situation, he decided there was not sufficient demand to make the undertaking profitable; hence the idea was abandoned. He then went into one of the hotels as cook. It took very little time for those with whom he lived to realize that he was superior to his surroundings, in ability of mind to grasp the higher intellectual problems.

Do not for one moment think that I would belittle the one who does the every day duties of life; for these duties, well done, are among our greatest blessings; but we surely have gifts differing, and this man gave his best efforts to whatever he was doing. Always trying by so doing, to increase the world's supply of the best possible. If it was cooking, the viands were most perfectly prepared; was it laundering, none could excel.

It was during the time he was working at this hotel, that some of the people of the town began to suspect something of his true worth. Being very noticeably a true gentleman and a fine singer, he was asked to sing in one of the church choirs. His beautiful tenor voice was heard before it was known to belong to one of the dark-skinned race.

It may explain why race lines were so far forgotten that he was given such an invitation, when I say this was to be a revival meeting and consecrations were at par. Hence with one consent the way was opened for him to come. If any felt differently, the time and place kept them speechless. When he

did not immediately respond to the invitation and his voice was heard another evening in the rear of the congregation, he was urged, and replied, that he would come nearer the front and sing, but it might not be pleasant for some to have him take a conspicuous place. He had so recently come from that college which closed its doors against him; and he had either learned what it really meant to step higher or he was applying the rule of his innate nature to be considerate of others.

His experience in our Iowa town with no higher school of learning was far from what his nature craved. For this reason he very soon started what might be called a private school for himself, and the hours for each branch were as rigidly enforced as in those where there are many students. Being asked by friends why one of his education and talents was working at something which might be done by many another, while he had talents not given to all, his own inclinations were stirred anew to rise above the depressing influences which had come upon him because of race prejudices. So he gave up his position as hotel cook and rented a little cottage, where he could control his own time. Had any one asked him in those days, what his business was, methinks he could have appropriately answered, "Climbing with laundering in the intervening hours to get the wherewithal necessary to a livelihood."

During these days there were many who greatly enjoyed being permitted to see his collection of Nature's stores, and were made to marvel at the beautiful specimens which resulted from his method of polishing. He now has a a very rare cabinet at Tuskegee, the contents of which has been collected through all the years since his boyhood. A former student of Tuskegee says of this cabinet, " From the large collection of what we call common things, stores of information can be gotten."

His gift for placing upon canvas reproductions of the beautiful flowers and plants was a joy, not only to himself, but to those who saw in them the perfect likeness to the study from which they had been taken. This was one of his pastimes on his Kansas claim, we judge from the large number of nature studies which he had when he came to our Iowa town. For want of better material or because he had early learned the benefits of conservation these were made upon large pieces of tin or highly polished wood. At the time he entered Simpsin College these were given to friends in Winterset. There were cactus, yukka, calla lilies and others, which readily showed his natural gift in art. Some one has said there are no artists among the negro race. If this be true, then we may make one exception to the statement.

One of the professors of a college which he attended says, "He had exceptional ability as a student of nature and he was a man of fine artistic talent." While he may have been an énigma to many from his boyhood days, he certainly was such to those who appreciated something of his rare character and abilities in his first days in our state before many in higher positions of learning had marked him as a leading scientist. We early came to the decision as some one has said, "He is a person of great individuality, a modest genius." Even in those days before collegiate doors had opened to him, one of man's greatest faculties, the power of observation, had been very well developed so that he had a wonderful fund of knowledge. Those who expected little or nothing were astonished at the ready answers which came to the most complicated questions, and found it a pleasure to be in his company. He was ever alert to lend from his resourceful powers from his friends, and many were the acts of kindness in the placing of plants, which only those who had learned the secret of plant life could accomplish. No effort seemed too much to obtain for some friend a coveted fern or bulb. To those who appreciated him for his real worth he was truly a friend.

At one time while he was Assistant Botanist in the State College, he was making a tour of the state in search of specimens. While in our locality he visited us, and our little girl, a tiny mite of two years, came running in with no fear of him. We did not think it at all strange at the time, but she went out and got into the buggy with him and he drove the horse around the block, we were quite amused at her audacity. When he came back and lifted her out, he seemed more thoroughly proud of his companion than some might be when they had taken pleasure rides with more mature young ladies. We were quite proud when he said, "This plainly shows the spirit of the home in which she lives." His ideas have ever been worked out along that line, 'As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined'. During all the years that have passed since he went out from our town, we have watched-- never once with a thought of endeavoring to write something of it-- but because my husband and I were interested in the advancement of those who were desiring to make the most of their lives, and to say that we have been doubly repaid by the interesting letters, received during these years, only expresses in part the gratitude we feel if we have been permitted to lend a hand.

Three Years at Simpson College.

Had Winterset friends known of the very slender purse which he carried when starting to Indianola, some of the first days there might have been differently remembered by those who soon became his staunch friends. We say 'might have been', but from his own story in later years, we know he would have ^{taken} ~~received~~ no money as a gift. Some little helps were offered and kindly received, but with his resourcefulness,-- never having seen him want for the necessities of life,-- friends did not dream but what his promises of the college laundrying would readily provide for all his needs.

He says of those days, " I opened a laundry for my support. After all my matriculation fees had been paid, I had ten cents left to live upon. I bought five cents worth of corn meal, and the other five cents I spent for beef suet. I lived off these two things one whole week. It took that long for the people to learn that I wanted clothes to wash. After that week I had many friends and plenty of work. And he adds right here, "I would never allow any one to give me money, no difference how badly I needed it. I wanted literally to earn my own living." It was from this week of extra deprivation that there came impressions of an extended time of actual want. But to the praise of those who were early his friends, this time was brief.

Miss Budd, his art teacher, soon learning to know and appreciate his ability, went to one whom she thought would be interested, Mrs. W.A. Liston, who was then also in the art department, and said, "There is the most wonderful student here you ever saw. He has no money nor friends, and is in great need. I want you to meet him, and find a room and help him get through school. He asked me if I would teach him art and if he could saw wood for me to pay for his art lessons. What do you think of that? I let him come to the room, and he paints beautifully and is very artistic. You will find him down in a shanty."

"This shanty", says Mrs Liston, "had been previously lived in by the woman who washed for me. He got privilege to stay in the back room, from the President of the School. I went down the next day; rapped at the front door; no one answered; walked around to the kitchen door, and there I saw the hero of this story,-- tall, lean, gaunt and black. I rapped and he came and opened the door. I said to him, 'You are a student in Art'?

"Yes", he replied.

"I was looking for you"? I said 'I want some one to helme?' I saw that I had found a very rare character. 'I was looking for some one to paint some tulips for me and if you will come up to the house, I will be so glad to have you assist me in painting them. Being very much occupied with other duties at the time, I stopped only long enough to make my request known.

He came to my house and we talked about the tulips and the flowers, and I saw in him the most wonderful brain of any of the young men in the college. I went to a friend and got a room for him, also got work for him, to pay for his room. He worked for Miss Budd, and paid his tuition in that way. He washed shirts and collars for the boys in the college, and earned his livelihood in that manner. He had been promised when he came to Simpson College, that he could do all the laundry work, so he could make his way through college. The work was done beautifully; as good as any Troy Laundry in Los Angeles. His work could not be told from any of the finest work in the best laundries.

I went to his room. He showed me a trunk half full of samples of the most beautiful laces, embroideries, crochet patterns etc. I looked in amazement, and said, 'What are you going to do with all these patterns?"

He said, "I am going back to my people later on and I'm going to use that in my teaching in the schools of the south."

He also had a wonderful collection of rocks. He had picked them up in his rambles. He knew as much about Geology as most Professors in that time.

He said to me, "The boys used to jokingly call me the "Plant Doctor."
I was always so fond of plants as a little boy."

"I was always so fond of plants as a little boy."

The day came when a few of us began talking about what ought to be done to help a boy like Carver. Miss Budd said "I will take him to Ames to my father." Her father was a teacher of Horticulture and Agriculture. "Carver would fit in under him beautifully." she said.

In later years when he came back from Ames, I invited the faculty of our college to meet Carver, and the all came, delighted to sit at the same table with him. When I had him to dinner a second time, I had a Jap, a Chinaman, a negro and the White all at the same table to a banquet. They were all distinguished boys and very prominent.

He came to see me from Tuskegee. I had the President of Ames College there to a banquet and he was delighted with Carver. When we were sitting on the porch talking and looking around, he looked at my lawn, and said: "When I first went to Tuskegee, we had 200 acres of ground, but not a spear of grass on all that great campus. They said grass would not grow there." He said he went into his Laboratory and fixed some fertilizer and fertilized the ground. "And today," he continued, "It is just as pretty as your lawn. They told me I couldn't raise chickens. I had them build an incubator and put 1000 eggs in it. Today we have thousands of chickens on that Campus; also hogs; cows; etc. My salary is a matter of just how far I can make it go to help others. They need so much money."

During his school years, Carver often came back to visit his Winterset friends at the Christmas time. His abilities were equal to almost any occasion where his great modesty would permit him to have freedom for execution. We asked him to be master of ceremonies in the arranging of presents and in the morning the grotesque figure in our dining room, with

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the gifts artistically arranged, afforded a time of much merriment.

In words of friends, this power of adaptability, was a great factor in the making of friends. We were led to know in these visits to Winterset, how surely he had made friends in Indianola during the time already spent in the college. Mr. Carver stopped with us over the Sabbath when the President of Simpson College preached at the Methodist Church, and through the happy greeting exchanged by President and Student, one could readily recognize the warm friendship that was felt for the student.

He remained in Indianola three years and among the many who became his friends in those days are some who have been most helpful in lending aid, not in money, but in ways most needed in his battle, which was first of all along race lines. All praise to those who prize real worth and do not hesitate to pay homage to a true gentleman without regard to race.

Ames.

Through friends the way opened for him to enter the State College at Ames. Everywhere he went, friends were soon made, who appreciated his abilities and through their efforts he was persuaded to enter an institution where he could receive the best helps along the lines of his special gifts. Through the helpfulness of Miss Budd, who with Mrs Liston, was much interested in Carver's work, it was suggested that he go to Professor Budd, who was then teacher of Horticulture and Agriculture at Ames. Professor J.L.Budd and Ex-Secretary of Agriculture Wilson were his staunch friends during the years in this college.

His first reception, upon reaching the campus of the Iowa State College was not a cheerful welcome. As he came on to the campus, two or three large boys lying on the grass starting shouting at him, calling him names, he rolled up his sleeves and started after the boys, intending to give them a good thrashing, when the thought came to him, " Suppose these should be the sons of the President or some of the teachers, then I would never get a chance to enter this school."

Professor Budd put him in charge of the three greenhouses, and told him to go to the Commissary Department and get his admission into the boarding hall. When he reached this department, he met the man who was the father of the boy he had encountered on the campus. He was told by this man, "No colored boy comes into Ames College. You cannot eat with the white boys". Carver turned away and was without any place to eat. He wrote to Mrs. Liston that he did not know what to do; he said there was a feeling against his color, and his great desire for an education made him so anxious to continue in that school. He asked her what she would suggest for him to do.

She says of this time," I immediately put on my best dress and hat and took the train for Ames. I stayed with Miss Budd, and told her what he had written to me.

She said "Stand by him." My father is going to keep him where he is." The custom there is to buy a meal ticket and eat with the students. I asked Mr. Carver to buy me a ticket. He said,"I cannot buy you a ticket. I have to eat with the working hands."

I said, "You get me a ticket, and I'll eat with the working hands too."
(The working hands ate in the basement.)

Carver said "I have made a friend of the head carpenter's wife, who is a graduate of a college in the east. She is a very remarkable woman and if you don't mind, I'll introduce you to her and you can eat dinner with her."

I met this lady, a very gracious woman, and she was so nice. I went to dinner with her and the boys sat at the table next to us. After dinner I walked out all over the campus with Carver, and stayed with him until evening. He said, " The next day every thing was different, the ice was broken, and from that on, things went very much easier."

He graduated and then took the Post-graduate course. Four girls who were art students with him at Indianola had agreed that, if he could stand the persecutions of those earliest days at Ames, they would come to see him graduate and bring him flowers. The graduation day came and Mrs Liston says, "I was the only girl out of the four who was able to go-- the other three sent a large bouquet and a letter. The only flowers I could buy were some red carnations, which just happened to be the class color. He also received a big bunch of carnations from the art class. He read a beautiful class poem that he had composed and outdid them all. After the exercises, he came to me and said, "I would like to take you to dinner with me, I have the tickets. "

I went to dinner with him and we ate up in the highest room where the students all board, and he sat at the Professor's table and poured tea for them. I was one of the guests."

"He was so much esteemed by the students and had made friends with everybody, so they decided to show their appreciation by making him a present. They bought him a fifty dollar fawn colored suit, hat, gloves and shoes-- the boys knew his taste for colors. He came to meet me with this fawn colored suit on, and he was so proud of it,

He was very happy when he graduated-- taking two degrees, Bachelor and Master."

After graduation, he was elected a member of the faculty, and given charge of the bacteriological laboratory and the laboratory work in systematic botany.

C.F.Curtis, Dean and Director, says of him, "He had exceptional ability as a student of nature, and he was a man of fine artistic talent, a great favorite among the faculty and students, on account of his earnestness and devotion as a student, and the high purpose which actuated all his work."

There was a time when some persons doubted George Carver's marked ability along research lines. While he was taking post-graduate work at Ames, a southern professor of botany was visiting there. He did not seem to have much faith in Carver's ability, and one morning Mr. Carver and this Professor went out for a stroll. Carver found a sweet Ostilage or Oxalis which was new for the state. The Southern prpfessor had nothing more to say about Carver's botanical knowledge.

Professor Pammel says, "I never knew a person who could discriminate as well as Carver. It was certainly a pleasure for me to have had him in my classes, and to have been associated intimately with him in all his work."

The Alumnas of Iowa State College June 1917 says, "If any one doubted whether it pays to give colored people the higher education, such doubts might have been set at rest by the lecture given before the faculty and students of Tougaloo late in January by Professor G.W. Carver of Tuskegee Institute." The whole lecture was really an appeal to southern colored people and white people too, to open their eyes to the possibilities of what they themselves can produce, if they will only train themselves in knowledge and skill.

First Days at Tuskegee.

Shortly previous to Professor Carver's being called to Tuskegee, he had several telegrams offering him positions. One of these was from the proprietor of a greenhouse, who wanted him to make floral designs. His answer was, "I did not educate myself to make funeral designs. I am going back to my people." This was ever his desire to educate himself in a way that would be of most use in helping his own race, and when sometimes asked why he did not put more time on his art work, he replied that he felt another line of work would be more needed among his people.

One of the international secretaries visited Tuskegee at a time when Booker T. Washington was looking for a man like Carver and was, to use his own words, "in despair of finding a colored man capable of the place" and thought he would have to get a white man. The secretary, who knew of Carver's answer to the greenhouse proprietor, told the incident and then said to Washington, "There is the man you want."

Dr. Washington wired to Carver, "Don't let anyone engage you. Money is no object. I will take you in this school."

Professor Carver went and was received with open arms. It was very soon evident that no mistake had been made in calling him to this position. He was promoted from one place to another until he had enough work for five or six assistants.

We often hear the remark, "The ground must first be prepared." As George Carver had ever been thorough in all he did, it was only in keeping with the systematic principles of the man that he early began to seek the cause of any unnatural condition. When he found that there was not a spear of grass on the 200 acre campus, and they said it could not grow there, he went into his laboratory and prepared a fertilizer for the ground. Very soon he had a beautiful lawn.

Seeing large quantities of acorns lying over the campus, he set the students to gathering them, and then to make flour for bread from them. They also fed their stock on the acorns, and made that a great source of income for the poor boys there. He has ever, during all the years been devising ways and means by which the people, living on the poor farms, might plan for the accumulation of things needful.

One day while passing by one of these farms, where the man and the farm both seemed in need of encouragement, he stopped to visit. He took some of the soil from this farm and analyzed it, found it to be one of the most remarkable compositions of paint. There lay on his own farm a fortune for that poor farmer.

It was in Professor Carver's early year at Tuskegee that I first heard his name mentioned in connection with sweet potato culture, although I feel sure he had long before this stowed away many for the future development of the scientist. In one of our leading journals, there was at that time something in regard to the fertilization of soil. On two acres of ground set apart for sweet potato culture, he had used a fertilizer, prepared by himself, on one acre, leaving the other in its natural state. On the fertilized acre there was a yield of 266 bu. and on the unfertilized one a yield of 40 bu. This was only the beginning of what led up to the large increase of supplies made by him from the sweet potato.

Professor Holtzlaw, in speaking of his early days in this institution, says, "I was first impressed with him while attending his agriculture class. His accuracy in every thing he did, impressed us all as students, and especially his accurate observations.

Among the students in these days, it was ever a great mystery as to how he came to know so much of people and things. He understood boys as few men do.

For instance once upon a time when we doubted his wisdom which was being constantly advertised by others, never by himself, we determined to test it, and so we brought to him a bug, which we had made up by taking the head of one beetle, the wings of another and the body of still another, when we took it to him and asked him to tell us what kind of a bug it was he examined it casually and immediately replied, "It looks to me like a humbug." We never doubted his wisdom any more after that. It was always difficult for us to understand how he carried all that wisdom in his small head. We could not find a blade of grass, a leaf of a tree, a kind of soil, or anything from nature that he could not explain or analyze."

Charles H Albert of the State Normal School Bloomfield, Pennsylvania, says of him, "I have known teachers, but I know none who are more earnest and honest, nor who endeavor as he does to first find the practical phase of every subject or problem or that possess as he does, the rare power of leading every student to become just as earnest as he is." He certainly deserves the esteem and confidence of all good teachers of all climes and races."

No word can better express the work of those early years and the appreciation of students, than a letter from one who was associated with him at that time.

"One of the secrets of the wonderful success of the Tuskegee Institute is the fact that the founder the late Dr. Booker T. Washington had such a keen insight into human nature, was such a good judge of character and knew so well how to hold to a valuable helper when he had found one."

During the thirty four years that he was at the head of the institution he employed a great many persons as teachers and for other help. Their terms of service were varying lengths-- some very short, others like

Tennyson's Brook could say: "Men may come and men may go, but I go on forever." From the men and women who remained and worked out the ideas of the principal with him, the school took on its character. They became, as it were, its life blood.

One of these stayers-on was George W. Carver, who came in the autumn of 1896, when the school was only fifteen years old, and worked on nineteen years with the first principal to the end of his life in 1915 and still remains. He has not stayed on because circumstances and conditions have always been pleasant, or because there have not been flattering calls to other fields, but the opportunity to be, perhaps, of the greatest service to the greatest number has been found there. With the enthusiasm of a young college graduate he came and began at once to please the principal with his ideas of "higher education" because Mr. Washington said that the highest education is that which can best adapt itself to the needs and conditions of the people. The same idea has been so well expressed by the biographer of Sir Humphrey Davy and is so fitting to this subject that I must quote it. 'The truth is that no man is adequately educated who cannot translate the results of his knowledge into the language of the community, or who is so exclusively informed in the matters of his own special department as to find little interest in common affairs, and no desire to mix the facts of his science with the great stock that is the property of all.' He was not a chemist mere but a man presenting the rich and splendid fruits of his professional labor in a form which could fill the hearts even of poets with delight and render the lecture room almost as attractive to rank and luxury as the ball room or the theatre.

From the beginning, in addition to his regular classes in scientific knowledge, he roamed the fields and wood there about, to learn what Nature had done for the section so that he might teach man how he could most profitably co-operate in the work. It was not very long before he had the situation pretty thoroughly in hand and was able to advise, Soon farmers from every section began sending for him or coming in to him for miles around with samples of their soil for his analysis. He was in constant demand at County Fairs, Summer Institutes, Church Meetings and all sorts of gatherings where the rural folk flocked for he could preach to them in a language which they well understood.

After serving as the head of the Agricultural Department of the school a Government Experiment Station was established there and he was placed in charge of it. In this connection he has made some helpful demonstrations and of the value of the pamphlets published and suggestions made to the Food Administration the reading public already knows. The man whose ideas can help feed the hungry world in these strenuous time is a real benefactor.

Shortly after the war started and the high cost of living began to be felt many many community meetings were held in the evenings on the school lawns , in the churches and school houses and this man was able to make helpful demonstrations to the house wives on the uses and preparations of food stuff s that were not expensive-- with his knowledge of chemistry to teach them combinations that were just as nourishing as the old ones that they were accustomed to make at higher cost, and to tell them not only about good edible plants that grew near, but in just what fields and ravines they could be found.

Since he was beyond the required age for supporting the colors on the

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field, how could he better show his patriotism than by making the fields at home 'bring forth food and bud to give seed to the sower and bread to the eater.'

His class room and his living rooms are full of instructive things, every window filled with beautiful plants that seem to flower at all seasons and no one can enter either without coming out wiser.

His mind and eye are open to every form of life and beauty, and to see him standing as I have so often seen him, with a plant in his hand looking it through and through is truly suggestive of Tennyson's little reflective poem,

"Flower in the crannied wall,

I pluck you out of the crannies;

Hold you here- root and all in my hand,

Little flower, but if I could understand

What you are - root and all - and all in all

I should know what God and man is."

Once when I had found a - to me - new flower and thought because of its pretty fringe that it was a gentian, I took it to him. He was ready, as usual to spurt out its botanical name which always amused many of us, because we could seldom say them and never remember them. He told me that but few gentians grew about there, but that he would get me some when they came and so, "When the quiet light succeeds the keen and frosty night" he came with a

Blossom bright, with autumn dew
And colored with the heaven's own blue."

And in other ways so much like our nature poet has described it that I knew the gentian through these two nature lovers.

Plants are not all that the Tuskegee soil has produced for him, From the common red, yellow and brown clays of the roadside cliffs he has

compounded paints and stains decorative and beautiful. When the members of the little new Episcopal Church of the town wanted something out of the ordinary for its finishing, he was called in to try them. The result was most satisfactory, both interior and exterior walls were most artistically treated.

With this same common "dirt" as you or I would call it, spread on canvas with the finger tip, the flower he so loves and knows have been reproduced with the most pleasing skill and art. Other paintings he has made also, most of them of flowers, that rank high by competent judges, as works of art. Occasionally they are exhibited.

If it has ever happened at all, not doubt the number of times could be easily counted, when he did not have a flower pinned on his coat as he quietly passed the collection plate in church. It is not always the bright colored, showy part of the plant that most of us would call the blossom but such as only the botanist would know to be that part. It seems to be a sort of a trade mark and though he may not mean it so, to say for him, "I am the botanist."

Equally able to hold helpful conversation with the man of simplest mind, innocent of books or the one of highest culture and deepest learning; cheerful and affable; artist, chemist, botanist, teacher, friend- like Leigh Hunt's "Abou Ben Adhem, may his tribe increase."

This would not be a complete record of Professor Carver's life were the great central truth of his success left out. He was always, first, last and all the time, a sincere Christian. Believing in God as the Supreme Ruler, he has ever looked to Him as the only safe guide for one who runs the race for the uplift of his brother man. To this end he ever sought the help of the All Powerful.

His letters to friends contain such sentences as the following; "I am confident that God in His own good time will bring the right things to pass".

Relative to the importance of spiritual things over temporal he says, "That are not only of supreme importance here, but will add to our crown in the world to come."

During war time he said, "This awful war seems almost more than the bravest hearts can stand, yet there is consolation in the feeling God's plan is in it and that all will come out right in the end, even though now we are unable to see the wisdom of it all."

In his contemplations in regard to entering college he says, "I did not see any way to do it because of financial difficulties, but when I decided to go, every thing seemed to clear away." This decision came to him while ironing a shirt bosom. "I was feeling much depressed, when a voice seemed to say to me, 'Why don't you decide to go to college?' I began to argue, 'I have no money, am now in debt. It is only two months before school opens, and I cannot do it.' The uneasiness was not lessened by this answer, and finally the voice again was heard: 'George, why don't you go ~~the~~ to college?' I left the iron sitting on the shirt bosom, forgetting what I was doing, turned entirely around and said to this voice, 'I will' After having made this decision I was perfectly at rest about the matter."

While he was not exclusively sectarian in his views, but held a breadth of thought akin to his insight into nature's world, he was faithful to his church relations. While broad enough in thought to recognize a Christian of whatever denomination and enjoy their fellowship, yet he was ever found in attendance at the regular services of the church of his choice-- the great Methodist Episcopal.

His efforts during his college life were marked by Christian services. Prayer meetings were held in different rooms under his leadership. His ability as a musician was very helpful in these meetings and his room became the Mecca for all boys in trouble.

He was twice sent by the Y.M.C.A. of Iowa State College as their representative to Lake Geneva summer school. During these days he writes "The Lord is wonderfully blessing me, and has for these many years. The many good things He has entrusted to my care are too numerous to mention." These expressions of thankfulness for what God has permitted him to accomplish are enough to show what he considers the only true foundation.

Professor James Wilson writes. "A great work was accomplished at Ames during those years- and now that college is famous for the firm stand taken by its students along christian lines. Carver and I would sit down and plan how to get boys who were Christians to go to the depot to meet new students, come up with them, help them get registered and find rooms and all that would establish acquaintance with them and enable young men of christian leanings to get them into prayer meeting. Along these lines George Carver was my greatest help.

While at Ames he was President of the students' Volunteer Missionary Band of the college which held meetings every Sunday afternoon at four o'clock.

This band had been organized as a reading circle with three members, but it soon increased and at the time their first program was published, they had twenty-nine members, with two volunteers for the mission field.

In a letter from one with whom he was associated at Tuskegee, we glean this, "Like a true scientist, Professor Carver is deeply religious and his Sunday School and Sunday evening Bible classes are among his chief pleasures in the work for the young people there."

How much greater influence for good his life has been to the spiritual side of thousands of young lives that he has touched and influenced, than if his teachings had been only cold facts. In all these years about the only Sabbath days that he has failed to attend the morning worship in the school chapel, or to meet and teach his Sunday School class have been when he was away on one of his lecture tours- and his volunteer Sunday evening Bible class for the young people has been very popular.

In regard to his spirit of helpfulness^{*} she adds, "If a number of the most successful and useful young men who have graduated from Tuskegee were asked how they managed to get through school, no doubt they would tell you, 'I never could have done it but for Professor Carver's help.' unless he has told them never to mention it, for of his charities like many of his other virtues, he is very modest."

It seems that people fenerally think that the negro race to a man, is of that high-strung emotional temperament that carries them into the grotesque fanatacisms which we so often find pictured in the songs and religious fervor of the old slave days. I am glad they were so imaginative as to be able to create, if necessary, some sort of a sacred picture show to relieve the strain of those days; and methinks those songs and recitations have often since then been helpful in relieving strains which came to many self made slaves. Those with high strung temperaments surely had their cause for th thankfulness; but certainly time and place with attending circumstances, must have radically changed some if they were ever aught but conservative

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well-poised, rock implanted Christians. I do not say - with no comprehension of Eolian harps - for surely the subject of this sketch, being of the finer aesthetic nature, is capable of rising to heights where the unseen make music for those who will rise above earthly things, that they may gain new strength to run the race; but even at such times he does not forget his calling to be temperate in all things; and the most refined cultured New Englander of Cambridge type need not fear, were such as he to seek membership in their body, that he would not keep well appointed time in the service, everywhere remembering the courteous admonition, "When in Rome do as Rome does."

In his work at Tuskegee, the firm stand he has taken in christian work has made lasting impressions upon the students. His Bible classes and social meetings are sources of great enjoyment and blessing to the large audiences that gather to hear the man who lives so close to nature that he can reveal much of the unknown and tell of the wonderful things Nature's God is ready to solve for all. Thus he causes the music of God's creations in the natural world to lead on and up to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

One who has visited Tuskegee many times in these years Professor Carver has been there says that after more than twenty years he finds George Carver as much a splendid seeker after God and his truth in his work as he ever was.