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# Schools in the District of Columbia for Negroes Before November 1864

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## The founding of Howard University

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missionary to Africa, a Creek Indian, a young man who was a slave in the South at the breaking out of the war, now a promising young man, and our University treasurer, J. B. Johnson, were received into this infant church. A large audience was present to witness the interesting ceremonies, and manifested deep interest in the exercises of the hour.

As the writer looked upon this scene, the words of the Saviour came forcibly to mind: "And they shall come from the East, and the West and the North, and the South, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God."

The friends of the Missionary Association have great reason for gratitude for the success which has thus far attended their labors. The past success should be the occasion of a new impulse in the work of the world's evangelization. (American Missionary, Vol. 17, No. 1. January, 1873, p. 1. D. B. Nichols.)

#### III

# SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR NEGROES BEFORE NOVEMBER, 1864.

We apprehend that few of our citizens are aware of the laudable efforts which during the year past have been made toward a general and permanent system of education and moral training for the colored population of the District of Columbia. A few evenings since, a very interesting semi-annual meeting of the Association of Volunteer Teachers was held, from the report of which we glean the following particulars:

About a year ago, the Freedmen's Relief Association of the District opened its first free day school for colored children, which was followed in the course of the ensuing winter and spring by four other day schools for the same class of learners in different sections of the city and under the same auspices of the same society. But day schools, though all important, did not meet the want. The need was scarcely less urgent for evening schools, in which adults just escaped from bondage, and such children as were at services during the day could secure the great treasures of knowledge.

The first evening school was opened on the 25th of November, 1863, under the charge of a gentleman who volunteered to teach gratuitously. This has been followed by ladies and gentlemen abundantly qualified who devote much valuable time and talent to this great work of philanthropy. Besides these evening schools there is a Sunday school at Old Camp Barker Chapel with about 175 scholars. Another Sunday School is situated in 23rd Street, with from fifty to a hundred pupils, and a third Sunday School at the Soldiers' Free Library. Notwithstanding various discouragements the trustees provided by Congress for colored schools opened the first free school for colored children on the 1st of May, 1864. It was and continues to be held in the venerable Ebenezer Church, on the corner of 4th and D Streets, Southeast, Capitol Hill. It had upwards of 100 pupils the first week, with two teachers, one being sustained by the New England Educational Commission at Boston and proved in every way a success.

The Freedmen's Relief Association of this city opened 5 day schools in the early part of the year. It is understood that 4 of these schools, with eight teachers, are now in operation, and that the National Freedmen's Association of New York is co-operating with the first-named society in sustaining them.

The Pennsylvania Freedmen's Relief Association entered upon the field in May,

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and has now 5 day schools, with 14 teachers under its care. It is nearly ready for occupation, on I Street near 20th, a school house with two rooms, capable of accommodating 100 pupils, with which is to be connected, in an adjoining building, an industrial school for teaching sewing; also a store house and kitchen for the purpose of dispensing clothing and food to the needy.

The Philadelphia Friends Freedmen's Association commenced at the same time and has two schools with five teachers. This Association has just completed a fine large school edifice with living rooms for 12 or more teachers at a cost of \$6,000, a most valuable acquisition to our city. It is located on 19th Street west, near the northern part of the city.

The Scotch Covenanters have one day school with two teachers.

The African Civilization Society maintains one school. And the American Baptist Missionary Association has one school.

The American Missionary Association has recently established four day schools with ten teachers, having in their day and evening sessions over 1,000 pupils. These make a total of 20 day schools and 44 teachers. At an average of 150 each they will accommodate the 3,000 children between the ages of 6 and 17 which were enumerated in 1860; but it is believed that not more than one-third of them are now accommodated. There are 5 evening schools besides those of the Volunteer Teachers' Association. In this enumeration the school at Mason's Island (now Analostan), Arlington and Geisboro are not included. (Washington Chronicle, November 12, 1864.)

IV

# EXTRACTS FROM THE OFFICIAL REPORT ON PUBLIC EDUCA-TION IN THE UNITED STATES TO THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION OF FRANCE BY M. HIPPEAU.

#### Ecoles Pour Les Enfants De Couleur (Colored Schools).

Nothing, in my opinion, reflects more honor on the United States than the zeal which the government and private associations displayed during the most terrible periods of the great war of secession to assure to the negroes of the South the means of existence and to create schools for them and their children.

The extraordinary events which resulted so unexpectedly in the emancipation of the slaves of the South, and which have subsequently led to the acquisition by them of the title and civil and political rights of citizens, caused also the creation in every State of a freedmen's bureau, and these bureaus, organized with that promptitude and marvelous spirit which characterize all enterprises in which a great national interest is taken, immediately began to organize all over the South schools for people of color. Before the attention of Congress was called to this point a great number of private associations had been formed in the different States for aiding the freedmen. Multitudes of men, women, and chrdren, flying from slavery, followed in the wake of the northern armies, imploring aid from the soldiers and offering their services.

It was the women who responded with the most alacrity to the call made for