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Ellen Tarry

January 6, 1938.

Mary McLeod Bethune

It was at Los Angeles on September 21, 1926. The delegation from the fifteenth biennial convention of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, held at Oakland, California, had come on to the "City of Angels". The citizens had gathered to pay homage to Mary McLeod Bethune, president of Bethune-Cookman College (Daytona, Fla) and chief executive of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs. Mrs. Bethune had been re-elected, after two successful years as president of this organization.

The stage of the auditorium was crowded with people who stood high in the civic life of the country, as well as the community. Sitting next to Mrs. Bethune was a shy little white woman. No one seemed to know who she was or why she was seated next to the guest of honor.

A huge bouquet of flowers was presented to the president of the Association. The audience was puzzled when she heaped the flowers they had given her, into the lap of the unknown white woman. But when Mary McLeod Bethune faced the gathering, tears glistened on her black satin cheeks. The story that followed, revealed the identity of the woman who sat next to her.

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More than thirty years ago, the speaker related, there lived a little colored girl, on a cotton and rice plantation near Mayesville, S.C. Born on this plantation December 10, 1875, this girl, named Mary, was one of the seventeen children of Sam and Patsy McLeod.

When Mary was eleven years old a school for colored children was opened, five miles away from the plantation. Year after year, the girl trudged to school and back home. Then there came a day when the teacher had taught this pupil all that she could, but the girl wanted to learn more.

It was impossible for Mary's parents to send her away to some school where she might finish her education. They were barely able to feed and clothe their children. Then one day as Patsy and Mary sat in their cabin, discussing this problem, they had a visitor. It was Mary's teacher and she had good news for them.

White people in the North, East and West often gave scholarships to Negroes in the South. Mary's teacher had been trying, for some time, to obtain such aid for her. These efforts had been rewarded and that was the reason for this visit. The girl was to go to Scotia Seminary at Concord, N. C.

This avenue of education had been opened to Mary through the generosity of a young Quaker woman. She was Mary Crissman, who lived in Denver, Col. at that time. From childhood, Miss Crissman

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had saved one tenth of her possessions to apply toward some charitable purpose. As a young school teacher she continued to save. This fund provided the scholarship that sent the little colored girl, down in Mayesville, S.C. away to school.

After the girl was graduated from Scotia Seminary she went to Moody Bible Institute at Chicago, Ill. Miss Crissman supplied the money for this training, also.

The shy little white woman on the stage, that night, was Mary Crissman. She had just seen, for the first time, the colored girl from Mayesville, S.C. whom she had helped to educate. That girl had become Mary McLeod Bethune, founder of Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School, president of Bethune-Cookman College, chief executive of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs and founder of Negro War Relief. She was to become director of Negro Affairs in the National Youth Administration and the foremost Negro woman in the country.

After Mary completed her studies at Moody Institute, she was appointed to teach at Haines Normal and Industrial Institute, Augusta, Ga., under Miss Lucy Laney. Later she taught at Sumter, S.C. where she met and married a fellow teacher, Albert Bethune. To this union one son, Albert McLeod Bethune, was born. Then followed several years of teaching at Savannah, Ga. and Palatka, Florida.

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Mary McLeod Bethune--4

Mary McLeod Bethune arrived in Daytona with \$1.50 in her purse, "but a wealth of faith in my heart." With this small sum of money and her faith she launched Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School, on October 4, 1904.

The cabin that housed the school was rented "on time". From neighboring merchants, empty boxes were begged. These served as seats for the five little girls who were Mrs. Bethune's first pupils, in her new venture. Corn shucks and ticking were combined and of such make were the beds on which the girls and their teacher slept.

Mrs. Bethune trained these first students to sing. During the "season" they sang at clubs and hotels. Concerts and festivals also helped to raise the money that purchased the present site. When possible, Mrs. Bethune always accompanied the students to the places where they were to sing, even though she and the students had to go through the kitchen or enter by the back door.

By having "Inspection Days" Mary Bethune interested many of the wealthy people of Florida, in the school. She'd invite them to sit on the crude, uncomfortable seats and listen as she plead the cause of Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School.

In 1907 Faith Hall was erected. It was so named because it "was the first building given us by our Father in answer to our prayers, our faith, our works," Mrs. Bethune said.

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Mary McLeod Bethune---5

During the year of 1923 Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School was merged with Cookman Institute (founded at Jacksonville, Fla. in 1872, by Rev. S. B. Darrell). The new school was called Bethune-Cookman College and Mary McLeod Bethune was made president of the institution.

Located a mile and a half from the Atlantic Ocean, in Volusia County, Bethune-Cookman is considered one of the beauty spots of Florida. Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois once said, "Bethune-Cookman is an institution one does not easily forget. It is on exhibition and numbers of tourists pour in to see it of a Sunday..... But this institution has been built and planned by the indomitable energy of one black woman and her ~~enthusiastic~~ ^{enthusiastic} spirit inspires it and makes it live."

In conclusion Mrs. Bethune said, to the Los Angeles audience gathered in her honor, on September 21, 1926, "Invest in a human soul. Who knows it might be a diamond in the rough."

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After leaving Haines Mary taught in Sumter, S. C. It was here that she met and married Albert Bethune. Mr. Bethune was also a teacher. The couple left Sumter to live in Savannah, Ga. where their first and only son was born. He was named Albert McLeod Bethune.

Mrs. Bethune went to Palatka, Fla. from Savannah. She taught at a mission school at Palatka. From there she went to Daytona. When Mary McLeod arrived in Daytona, she had \$1.50 in her purse. On Oct. 4, 1904 she launched Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School.

Mrs. Bethune rented the site and cabin "on time". From neighboring merchants, she begged empty boxes. These served as seats for the five little girls who were her first pupils. The teacher's desk was a box, also. Corn shucks and ticking were combined and made the first beds for the five little girls and their teacher.

Mary Bethune trained her first students, at Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School, to sing. Much of the money that purchased the present site (then a dumping ground) was raised by means of concerts and festivals. They also sang at Hotels and Clubs during the Florida "season".

In 1907 Faith Hall was erected. Mrs. Bethune said, "Faith Hall was the first building given us by our Father in answer to our prayers, our faith, our works. Many homeless girls have been sheltered there and trained physically, mentally and spiritually. They have been helped and sent out to serve, to pass their blessings on to other needy children".

In 1928 the first brick building was erected. It was called

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White Hall. This building houses offices, recitation rooms and an auditorium with a seating capacity of six hundred.

The Woman's Dormitory, Curtis Hall, was built in 1922.

Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School merged with Cookman Institute (Jacksonville, Fla.) in 1923. The new school was called Bethune-Cookman College. Mrs. Bethune was retained, as president.

Daniels says, "The Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church holds the institution as a sacred trust, safeguarding it's funds, insuring to it's donors the proper distribution of the same, guaranteeing it's continuance when the present head is no longer able to go forward with it's program."

After the two schools merged, a men's dormitory was erected. It is called Cookman Hall.

Bethune
~~Daytona~~-Cookman is divided into two classes as regards curricula, the Cultural and Vocational.

The Cultural, consists of High School, Junior College and the School of Music. During the year of 1931, the High School Department was placed on the list of accredited schools on a basis of standardization by the Florida State Department of Education. In 1928 only two colored schools in the state were so rated.

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In 1929 a quartet from the Bethune School of Music ^{-Cookman} toured the North Atlantic States and raised \$15,000 for the College, in two months.

Under the Vocational come the Commercial and Industrial Departments. For the past few years the Commercial Department of Bethune-Cookman has used as a yard stick, those standards prescribed by the Underwood Typewriter Co., the Pittman Shorthand System and New York State Board of Regents.

Among the trades taught in the Industrial Department are, tailoring, agriculture, poultry raising and manual training. The school farm is used as a laboratory for testing principles of raising crops and livestock.

Many days, all the foods served on the dining room table at Bethune-Cookman College, with the exception of bread and staples, have been raised on the school farm, in the "piggery" or the "poultry yard".

McLeod Hospital and Training School for Nurses was erected in 1911 and functioned as such until 1930. When this hospital was built there was no other such institution for Negroes in this vicinity. As the years passed, as expenses increased, the maintenance of this plant became so involved as to present a serious problem. Then in 1930 the Halifax Hospital Commission made provisions for the hospitalization of Negroes in this section of Florida.

Facts on Mary McLeod Bethune-----5.

I In 1935 Bethune-Cookman College was valued at more than a half million dollars. There were 30 teachers on the staff, 250 students enrolled, 14 buildings and 32 acres, 12 of these acres developed.

Mary McLeod Bethune was founder of Negro War Relief during the World War. She served as president of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs from 1924 to 1928 and a National Home was purchased by the organization, at Washington, D. C. while Mrs. Bethune was chief executive.

August 7, 1927 the "Citizens Committee" gave a dinner in the Laurel Gardens at New York City, in honor of Mary McLeod Bethune, upon her return from an extensive European trip. She had visited England, Scotland, France, Belgium, Germany, Italy Holland and Switzerland.

In London, the Lord Mayor and Mayoress had received her. The Lord Provost of Edinburgh extended courtesies when she visited that city and she was also received by Lady McLeod of Scotland. When in Rome, Mrs. Bethune had been granted an audience with the Pope and had received a special blessing from the Pontiff.

Wilberforce University conferred the degree of Master of Arts upon "Our Mary", in 1928.

In 1936 she was appointed Director of Negro Affairs in the National Youth Administration.

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Dr. w. E. B. DuBois, once said, "Bethune Cookman College is an institution one does not easily forget. It is on exhibition and numbers of tourists pour in to see it of a Sunday. ^{I was distressed} ~~It was~~ distressed to find my student audience behind me singing, instead of in front of me listening. I think next time I shall turn my back to the audience. But this institution has been built and planned by the indomitable energy of one black woman and her enthusiastic spirit inspires it and makes it live."

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Ellen Tarry

January 6, 1938.

Factual Material on Mary McLeod Bethune

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Ellen Tarry

Facts on Mary McLeod Bethune-----I

Mary McLeod Bethune was born December 10, 1875, in a cabin on a cotton and rice plantation, near Mayesville, S. C. She was one of the seventeen children of Sam and Patsy McLeod.

When Mary was eleven years old a school was opened for colored children, five miles from her home. It was then that her education began. After finishing this school Mary entered Scotia Seminary at Concord, N. C. This was made possible by a scholarship furnished by a Miss Mary Crissman, a Quaker, of Denver, Col.

Miss Crissman had, from early childhood, set aside one tenth of her possessions, to apply to some worthy purpose. It was this fund that supplied the necessary money for the little Negro girl from Mayesville, S. C. to attend Scotia. Then after being graduated from the mentioned institution, Mary entered Moody Bible at Chicago, Ill. and Miss Crissman supplied the scholarship for this course of study, also.

After Mary McLeod had completed her studies at Moody Bible Institute, she applied to the Presbyterian Board of Missions for a post in Africa as a missionary. Her request was denied, but she was sent to teach at Haines Normal & Industrial Institute (Augusta, Ga.) under Miss Lucy Laney.

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