



African Methodist Episcopal Church

Review

Volume: 08
Issue Number: 04

April 1892

But in the dark unknown
 Perfect their circles seem,
 Even as a bridge's arch of stone
 Is rounded in the stream."

We could ill afford the loss of so able a member of our race. His life was like the bright ray of light which occasionally flits across the dark pathway of the weary traveler, and gives him hope to labor on to the happy haven which awaits him beyond.

"Were a star quenched on high,
 For ages would its light,
 Still traveling downward from the sky,
 Shine on our mortal sight.

So when a great man dies,
 For years beyond our ken,
 The light he leaves behind him lies
 Upon the paths of men."

Philadelphia, Pa.

II.

SOME AFRO-AMERICAN WOMEN OF MARK.*

BY S. ELIZABETH FRAZIER.

WE have heard and read much of men of mark of our race, but comparatively little is known of able Afro-American women. It is my delight to present brief sketches of the lives of "Some Afro-American Women of Mark," having gained my information concerning them from libraries, public and private, from correspondence and from personal knowledge.

Notwithstanding the obstacles that presented themselves to Afro-American women, some of them, self-prompted, and in some cases self-taught, have removed obstacles, lived down oppression and fought their way nobly on to achieve the accomplishment of their aim.

Slavery was the greatest barrier in the way of progress to the African race. History records the fact that slavery was introduced in America in 1620, in Virginia. The slave trade then began by bringing slaves from Africa. This trade continued to grow, and gradually spread throughout the Middle and New England States, except Vermont. Boston, Mass., held her slave markets in common with other cities. In the year 1761, a time when slavery had reached its zenith, was seen one of the most pitiable sights ever witnessed in the Boston slave market, that of eighty girls, of various ages, brought from Africa, each snatched

* A paper read before the Brooklyn Literary Union, February 16, 1892.

from a mother's fond embrace by hands most cruel, taken to a slave vessel, huddled together like cattle, with but little clothing to cover their nude forms, a dearth of food and nowhere to rest their weary bodies.

The portion assigned them, the hold of the ship, has been described as having been a room thirteen by twenty-five and five feet eight inches high. Can we imagine the trials, the tortures of these poor innocent girls so situated? As soon as the vessel reached the port of Boston, these girls were taken to the market and advertised for sale, to which sale purchasers flocked. Among the many attending this sale was a Mrs. Wheatley, wife of a Boston merchant. She, although in possession of a number of slaves, was desirous of finding a young slave girl with apparent docile qualities, in order that she might train her to be of service to her in her declining years.

Mrs. Wheatley carefully observed the various expressions of countenances, the many physical differences of this group, and was particularly moved by the meek and bright countenance of one half-sick, fatigued little girl about eight years old, who, to her mind, possessed the requisite qualities. She immediately purchased her, took her home, clothed and fed her, and gave her the name of Phillis Wheatley. Kind words, nourishment and warm clothing made such a marked change in the child that she was now a new being. Mrs. Wheatley, perceiving the child's improvement physically, still knew that by nature Phillis was unfit for heavy domestic work, and had her taught that which was lighter. Phillis knew no language save that of her native land, and so Mrs. Wheatley deemed it necessary for her welfare, as well as that of the child, to have her taught to speak the English language, and so requested her only daughter, Miss Mary Wheatley, to teach her to speak the English language and, what was most uncommon, to read it.

This was in opposition to the principles of slavery; but Mrs. Wheatley dared to do contrary to the slave owners of her time, doubtless through the Divine inspiration of the Almighty, for "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." Miss Wheatley kindly consented to teach Phillis. Much to her surprise, she found Phillis very apt and thirsting for knowledge. Daily she progressed, and in less than two years was able to read the most difficult portions of the Bible with accuracy. Most of her knowledge of writing she acquired through her own efforts, scrutinizing good writing and copying with rude materials upon rough surfaces when paper and pencil were beyond reach. Phillis, unlike other children of her years, sought pleasure in close application to study. Mrs. Wheatley and family determined not to curb the child's ambition, but to provide her with books and writing material, which were to Phillis the means to procure the end.

Four years from the time Phillis was purchased in the slave

market, she was able to write on many subjects that were hardly expected of one double her years. Her correspondence with some friends of Mrs. Wheatley, in England and with Obour Tanner, a fellow-slave, in Newport (supposed to be one of the girls brought from Africa with Phillis, also intelligent), evinced, from her power of expression and originality of thought, a mind of more than ordinary vigor.

Feeling that she had acquired sufficient knowledge of the English language, being then in her seventeenth year, she directed her attention to the study of Latin. In this, as in English, her efforts were crowned with success. In a short time she translated one of Ovid's tales so admirably that the writing attracted the attention of the learned people of Boston and England, who sought her at the home of the Wheatleys, and, conversing with her, found she was indeed a literary prodigy. This production, coming from a member of an enslaved race, gave rise to so many comments that all America, as well as England, was in a ferment, for it should be remembered that this period did not witness general culture among the masses of white people, and certainly no facilities for the education of the Negroes. The learned people of Boston invited her to their homes, loaned her books and papers. It is safe for me to say, that contact with the great minds of the time constituted one of the best parts of her education. Phillis was sensitive, and understood the prejudice existing against her race, and, while enjoying many privileges denied her kind, still maintained that meek manner characteristic of her when first seen in the slave market, and treated her fellow-slaves with the utmost consideration, winning from all affection. The inquisitive mind of Phillis was continually prompting her to seek the best works; from her study of the muses she acquired a taste for poetry, and successfully wrote many poems, which were characterized by a spirit of gratitude, simplicity, chastity, Christianity. Early she devoted herself to the service of the Lord, and was received in the Old South Church, Boston. Thus we find many of her poems manifesting the power of faith and the efficiency of grace. The following poem reveals her sympathetic nature :

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG GIRL.

From dark abodes to fair ethereal light,
 The enraptured soul has winged its flight;
 On the kind bosom of eternal love
 She finds unknown beatitudes above.
 This know, ye parents, nor her love deplore—
 She feels the iron hand of pain no more;
 The dispensations of unerring grace
 Should turn your sorrows into grateful praise.
 Let, then, no tears for her henceforward flow,
 Nor suffer grief in this dark vale below.
 Her morning sun, which was divinely bright,
 Was quickly mantled with the gloom of night.
 But hear, in heaven's best bowers, your child so fair,

And learn to imitate her language there.
 Thou, Lord, whom I behold with glory crowned,
 By what sweet name, and in what tuneful sound
 Wilt thou be praised? Seraphic powers are faint,
 Infinite love and majesty to paint.
 To Thee let all their grateful voices raise,
 And saints and angels join their songs of praise.

Perfect in bliss, now from her heavenly home
 She looks, and, smiling, beckons you to come.
 Why, then, fond parents, why these fruitless groans?
 Restrain your tears and cease your plaintive moans.
 Freed from a world of sin and snares and pain,
 Why would ye wish your fair one back again?
 Nay, bow resigned; let hope your grief control,
 And check the rising tumult of the soul;
 Calm in the prosperous and adverse day,
 Adore the God who gives and takes away.
 See Him in all; His holy name revere;
 Upright your actions, and your heart sincere;
 Till, having sailed through life's tempestuous sea,
 And from its rocks and boisterous billows free,
 Yourselves safe landed on the blissful shore,
 Shall join your happy child, to part no more.

At the age of twenty Phillis was emancipated by her master. It was a source of great delight to her owners to see that, although Phillis had been declared free, she still remained the same, thanking God for His goodness in placing her in such considerate hands:

'Twas mercy brought me from my pagan land,
 Taught my benighted soul to understand
 That there's a God; that there's a Saviour, too.
 Once I redemption neither sought nor knew.

Some view our sable race with scornful eye:
 "Their color is a diabolic dye."
 Remember, Christians, Negroes black as Cain
 May be refined, and join the angelic train.

Signs of precarious health, probably superinduced by too close application to study, became more marked and caused her mistress to become anxious about her. Mrs. Wheatley consulted her physician, who prescribed for Phillis a sea-voyage. Mrs. Wheatley's only son was about to sail for England on mercantile business, and arrangements were made for Phillis to go with him.

Her poem, entitled "A Farewell to America," dated May 7, 1773, is the day on which she is supposed to have sailed. George Williams, in his renowned "History of the Negro Race," says, "She was heartily welcomed by the leaders of the British metropolis and treated with great consideration." Under all the trying circumstances of high social life among the nobility and rarest literary genius of London, this redeemed child of the desert coupled to a beautiful modesty the extraordinary powers of an incomparable conversationalist. She carried London by storm. Thoughtful people praised her, titled people

dined her, and the press extolled the name of Phillis Wheatley, the African poetess.

In England, her book of poems was republished through the earnest solicitation of her friends, and dedicated to the Countess of Huntington, with a picture of Phillis, and a letter of recommendation from her master, signed by many of the leading citizens of Boston. This letter was to repress all doubts that might arise concerning the authorship of the poems. Before she had regained her strength she received a letter from home, telling of the illness of Mrs. Wheatley and requesting her to return. As soon as possible, she was at the bedside of her loved one. Mrs. Wheatley expressed her relief at the presence of Phillis, and seemed perfectly satisfied. Day by day Mrs. Wheatley grew worse; finally the end came, March 3, 1774. This was, indeed, a sad hour for Phillis, for she realized that her best, her dearest friend was gone. Phillis remained in the Wheatley household and resumed her literary work.

When George Washington was appointed by the grand Continental Congress, in 1775, to be Generalissimo of the Armies of North America, Phillis sent him a letter extolling his merits, and also a poem written in his honor, which brought forth the following reply from Washington:

CAMBRIDGE, February 28, 1776.

MISS PHILLIS:

I thank you most sincerely for your polite notice of me in the elegant lines you inclosed, and however undeserving I may be of such encomium and panegyric, the style and manner exhibit a striking proof of your poetical talents.

If you should ever come to Cambridge, or near headquarters, I shall be happy to see a person so favored by the muses, and to whom nature has been so liberal and beneficent in her dispensations.

I am,

With great respect,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Another beautiful production of her pen is a poem "On the Capture of General Charles Lee by the British." In 1778 Phillis was again prostrated by the death of Mr. Wheatley. Some say she was compelled, after the death of Mr. Wheatley, to depend on her own resources for support. Be that as it may, Phillis had an offer of marriage, and decided to accept rather than be thrown at the mercy of the world. Phillis married John Peters, of Boston, a colored gentleman of considerable intelligence. This marriage was not a happy one. Reverses came. Phillis had never endured hardship, but she knew that the little ones born to them had to be cared for, so she took up the cross and bore it with Christian fortitude. Disease laid its heavy hand upon her, and she sank beneath its weight at the age of thirty-one, a flower in her prime, when the promises of her youth were on the verge of their full accomplishment.

No woman of the race, since the death of Phillis Wheatley,

Temperance Union for nearly seven years, and has lectured and written many poems on temperance, exerting a widespread influence.

None felt more keenly the death of John Brown, the noble hero who planned and died for the cause of emancipation, than Mrs. Harper. Tenderly she expressed her sympathy for Mrs. Brown in her bereavement, beseeching God to sustain her in the hour of affliction.

Mrs. Harper was married to Fenton Harper in Cincinnati, November, 1860. She still labored in the literary field, never giving up unless compelled to do so by other duties. On May 23, 1864, occurred the death of Mr. Harper. Some of her best productions are "The Slave Mother," "To the Union Savers of Cleveland," "Fifteenth Amendment," "Moses," a story of the Nile, deals with the story of the Hebrew Moses, beautifully portrayed by her from his infancy, when exposed on the Nile, found and adopted by Pharaoh's daughter; his gratitude to the princess; his flight into Midian and his return into Egypt; his nomadic life, by means of which God prepared him to be the means of deliverance to His people; to his death on Mount Nebo, and his burial in an unknown grave, following closely the account of the Scriptures. Most pathetically are the death and burial of Moses penned in the following lines:

His work was done; his blessing lay
 Like precious ointment on his people's head,
 And God's great peace was resting on his soul.
 His life had been a lengthened sacrifice,
 A thing of deep devotion to his race,
 Since first he turned his eyes on Egypt's gild
 And glow, and clasped their fortunes in his hands,
 And held them with a firm and constant grasp.
 But now his work was done; his charge was laid
 In Joshua's hand, and men of younger blood
 Were destined to possess the land and pass
 Through Jordan to the other side. He, too,
 Had hoped to enter there—to tread the soil
 Made sacred by the memories of his kindred dead,
 And rest till life's calm close beneath
 The sheltering vines and stately palms of that
 Fair land; that hope had colored all his life's
 Young dreams and sent its mellow flushes o'er
 His later years; but God's decree was otherwise,
 And so he bowed his meekened soul in calm
 Submission to the word, which bade him climb
 To Nebo's highest peak, and view the pleasant land
 From Jordan's swells unto the calmer ripples
 Of the tideless sea, then die with all its
 Loveliness in sight.

As he passed from Moab's grassy vale to climb
 The rugged mount, the people stood in mournful groups,
 Some with quivering lips and tearful eyes,
 Reaching out unconscious hands as if to stay
 His steps and keep him ever at their side, while
 Others gazed with reverent awe upon
 The calm and solemn beauty on his aged brow,

The look of loving trust and lofty faith
 Still beaming from an eye that neither care
 Nor time had dimmed. As he passed upward, tender
 Blessings, earnest prayers and sad farewells rose
 On each wave of air, then died in one sweet
 Murmur of regretful love; and Moses stood
 Alone on Nebo's mount.

Alone! Not one
 Of all that mighty throng who had trod with him
 In triumph through the parted flood was there.
 Aaron had died in Hor, with son and brother
 By his side. And Miriam, too, was gone.
 But kindred hands had made her grave, and Kadesh
 Held her dust. But he was all alone; nor wife
 Nor child was there to clasp in death his hand,
 And bind around their bleeding hearts the precious
 Parting words. And yet he was not all alone,
 For God's great presence flowed around his path,
 And stayed him in that solemn hour.

He stood upon the highest peak of Nebo,
 And saw the Jordan chafing through its gorges,
 Its banks made bright by scarlet blooms
 And purple blossoms. The placid lakes
 And emerald meadows, the snowy crest
 Of distant mountains, the ancient rocks
 That dripped with honey, the hills all bathed
 In light and beauty, the shady groves
 And peaceful vistas, the vines oppress'd
 With purple riches, the fig trees fruit-crowned,
 Green and golden, the pomegranates with crimson
 Blushes, the olives with their darker clusters,
 Rose before him like a vision, full of beauty
 And delight. Gazed he on the lovely landscape
 Till it faded from his view, and the wing
 Of death's sweet angel hovered o'er the mountain's
 Crest, and he heard his garments rustle through
 The watches of the night.

Then another, fairer vision
 Broke upon his longing gaze; 'twas the land
 Of crystal fountains, love and beauty, joy
 And light, for the pearly gates flew open,
 And his ransomed soul went in. And when morning
 O'er that mountain fringed each crag and peak with light,
 Cold and lifeless lay the leader. God had touched
 His eyes with slumber, giving his beloved sleep.

Oh! never on that mountain
 Was seen a lovelier sight
 Than the troupe of fair young angels
 That gathered round the dead.
 With gentle hands they bore him,
 That bright and shining train,
 From Nebo's lonely mountain
 To sleep in Moab's vale.
 But they sang no mournful dirges,
 No solemn requiems said,
 And the soft wave of their pinions
 Made music as they trod.
 But no one heard them passing,
 None saw their chosen grave.
 It was the angels' secret
 Where Moses should be laid.

And when the grave was finished
 They trod with golden sandals
 Above the sacred spot;
 And the brightest, fairest flowers
 Sprang up beneath their tread.
 Nor broken turf nor hillock
 Did e'er reveal that grave,
 And truthful lips have never told,
 We know where he is laid.

Mrs. Harper is now engaged in writing a book called "Iola," which is a work on the racial question. May we not hope that the rising generation, at least, will take encouragement by her example and find an argument of race force in favor of mental and moral equality, and, above all, be awakened to see how prejudice and difficulties may be surmounted by continual struggles, intelligence and a virtuous character.

We also find in the lecture field, working for the best interest of her race, *Mary Ann Shadd Carey*, also an able writer and teacher. Mary Ann Shadd Carey was born in Delaware, and received a better education than was usually obtained by free colored people. As a speaker she ranks deservedly high; as a debater she is quick to take advantage of the weak points of her opponents, forcible in her illustrations, biting in her sarcasm.

The name of Charlotte L. Grimké, *nee* Forten, appears before me. A woman of rare intellectual gifts, a moral nature full of sympathy and benevolence for her race. Charlotte L. Grimké was born in Philadelphia. Like her predecessors, obstacles in the way of progress presented themselves to her. In her native city, then the most bitterly prejudiced of Northern cities, she was refused admission to institutions of learning, and was sent to school in New England—to Salem, Massachusetts. Here prejudice existed, but not so much as in Philadelphia. She was received into the grammar school at Salem. She was the only colored pupil in the school, and won the esteem of her teachers and fellow-pupils. A short time before graduation from this school, the principal requested each student of the graduating class, of which she was a member, to write a poem to be sung at the closing exercises, the successful competitor to be known only on that day. This proved a stimulus in drawing out the poetic genius of the young aspirants. The manuscripts were collected, each bearing a fictitious name. One of the many was selected and printed on the programme. This was the poem, entitled

A PARTING HYMN.

When winter's royal robes of white
 From hill and vale are gone,
 And the glad voices of the spring
 Upon the air are borne,
 Friends, who have met with us before,
 Within these walls shall meet no more.

Forth to a noble work they go,
 Oh ! may their hearts keep pure ;
 And hopeful zeal and strength be thine
 To labor and endure ;
 That they an earnest faith may prove
 By words of truth and deeds of love.

May those whose holy task it is
 To guide impulsive youth,
 Fail not to cherish in their souls
 A reverence for truth ;
 For teachings which the lips impart
 Must have their source within the heart.

May all who suffer share their love—
 The poor and the oppressed—
 So shall the blessings of our God
 Upon their labors rest ;
 And may we meet again, when all
 Are blest and freed from every thrall.

To the surprise of all, this beautiful hymn was written by Charlotte L. Forten, the only colored pupil of her class, the only one of the school, convincing the prejudiced minds of the possibilities of her race.

She next entered the Normal School, from which she graduated, and was offered a position to teach in one of the schools, which offer she accepted, being the first colored woman to teach in a white school. She continued to teach until her health became impaired, and was advised, by her physician, to go South. After recuperating in Philadelphia for a time, she went farther South to teach the freedmen at Port Royal, on the coast of South Carolina, a deeply interesting work to her, and the years spent in that work the most delightful of her life; and while here, at the suggestion of her beloved and life-long friend, Mr. Whittier, she wrote some articles about life there. She afterward resided in Boston and Cambridge, where she became assistant secretary of the Teacher's Committee of the New England Freedmen's Aid Society. When this society disbanded, she went to Washington to reside, and there married Rev. Francis J. Grimké, who is well known to us as an eloquent divine. To him she has been a true minister's wife, and has done much to make his ministerial career successful. She has contributed to the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, *Boston Commonwealth*, *Boston Christian Register*. She has made some translations from the French, among them one of the Eickmann Châtrien Novels, entitled "Madame Thérèse," which was published by Scribner some years ago. Of late years Mrs. Grimké has been able to write but little, owing to her continued ill-health, which is the source of deep regret not only to herself, but to her many friends. One of her more recent writings, "A June Song," was read at the closing exercises of the "Monday Night Literary," at Cedar Hill, the residence of the Hon. Frederick Douglass :

We would sing a song to the fair young June,
 To the rare and radiant June,
 The lovely, laughing, fragrant June.
 How shall her praise be sung or said ?
 Her cheek has caught the roses hue,
 Her eye the heaven's serenest blue.

And the gold of sunset crowns her head,
 And her smile—ah! there's never a sweeter, I ween,
 Than the smile of this fair young summer queen.
 What life, what hope her coming brings !
 What joy anew in the sad heart springs
 As her robe of beauty o'er all she flings.

Old earth grows young in her presence sweet,
 And thrills at the touch of her gentle feet,
 As the flowers spring forth her face to greet.
 Hark, how the birds are singing her praise
 In their gladdest, sweetest roundelays !
 O'er the lovely, peaceful river
 The golden lights of sunset quiver.

The trees on the hillside have caught the glow,
 And heaven smiles down on the earth below.
 And our radiant June,
 Our lovely, joyous June,
 Our summer queen
 Smiles, too, as she stands
 With folded hands,
 And brow serene.

How shall we crown her bright young head ?
 Crown it with roses, rare and red ;
 Crown it with roses, creamy white,
 As the lotus bloom that sweetens the night.
 Crown it with roses pink as the shell
 In which the voices of ocean dwell.
 And a fairer queen
 Shall ne'er be seen
 Than our lovely, laughing June.

We have crowned her now, but she will not stay,
 The vision of beauty will steal away
 And fade, as faded the fair young May.
 Ah, loveliest maiden, linger awhile !
 Pour into our hearts the warmth of thy smile,
 The gloom of the winter will come too soon.
 Stay with us, gladden us, beautiful June !
 Thou glidest away from our eager grasp,
 But our hearts will hold thee close in their clasp.
 They will hold thee fast ; and the days to be
 Will be brighter and sweeter for thoughts of thee.
 Our song shall not be a song of farewell,
 As with words of love the chorus we swell
 In praise of the fair young June,
 Of the rare and radiant June,
 The lovely, laughing, fragrant June.

H. Cordelia Ray, daughter of the late Rev. Chas. B. Ray, is a woman full of *savoir-faire*, and stands among our able women writers, not only in poetry, but in prose, excelling in poetry in the sonnet, in prose critical literature. Miss Ray was born and educated in New York City, and began to weave verses at the

age of ten years. Among her poems are "The Mist-maiden," "The Hermit of the Soul," "Dante," "Antigone and Epidus," "Reverie," "Hour's Glory," "Lincoln" (written by request and recited for the unveiling of the Freedmen's monument at Washington in memory of Abraham Lincoln). This poem was quite widely copied in the papers.

Among the group of illustrative sonnets are, "Shakespeare, the Poet," "Raphael, the Artist," "Beethoven, the Musician," "Emerson, the Philosopher," "Sumner, the Statesman," "Tous-saint L'Overture, the Patriot," "Wendell Phillips, the Philanthropist." Miss H. Cordelia Ray teaches in Grammar School No. 80, New York City, of which Professor Charles L. Reason is principal.

In June, 1891, the University of the City of New York held their commencement exercises. At this commencement, first in the history of education, university pedagogical degrees were conferred. An event of historic interest. Fourteen members of the University School of Pedagogy received the degree of Doctor of Pedagogy, and twelve the degree of Master of Pedagogy. Of the twelve, I am proud to say, three were colored—Miss H. Cordelia Ray, of whom I have just spoken, Miss Florence T. Ray and Miss Mary Eato. Miss J. Imogen Howard now attends the university, and will be the next to receive the degree of Master of Pedagogy.

Mrs. Sarah J. S. Garnet has proved herself the pioneer for the maintenance of colored schools, and an advocate of the higher education of women. Mrs. Garnet is a teacher of varied experience. She has filled the positions from the lowest primary grades. She was an assistant in Grammar School No. 1, Mulberry Street, New York, principal of Primary Department No. 3, Brooklyn, and afterward appointed principal of Grammar School No. 81, Seventeenth Street, New York, where she has served faithfully twenty-six years. Being a member of the National Teachers' Association for many years, and many times the only colored representative from this section of the country, she has enjoyed extensive travel over our own country and is well up in points of interest and information as regards the educational system and general development of our own country. As a philanthropist, nothing of interest to the race within her power and ability to be achieved has been lost. All opportunities are carefully watched and treasured for opportune development.

In Philadelphia, we find *Mrs. Fannie Jackson Coppin*, principal of the Philadelphia Institute for Colored Youth, an acute thinker, an eloquent speaker, a benefactress to her race. Mrs. Coppin was born in the District of Columbia about the year 1837, and was left an orphan when quite young. She was brought up by her aunt, Mrs. Clark. In Washington the opportunities for education were limited, that is to say for the race. Anxious to gain knowledge, she left and went to New Bedford, in her sixteenth year, where she began the studies of the higher branches. She

entered Oberlin College and graduated with honor. Through her untiring efforts, the Philadelphia Institute for Colored Youth was founded for the purpose of giving Negro children an industrial as well as an intellectual education. This institution is a success. Says John Durham, now minister to Hayti, of Mrs. Coppin and her work: "Long before the industrial-training idea threatened to become a fad, she had introduced it into this institute for boys and girls. Had she been other than an American colored woman, or had she not had to struggle against the characteristic conservatism of the Society of Friends, she would have been one of the most famous of America's school reform instructors. As it is she works on modestly, indeed, too self-deprecating; eminent, but without notoriety."

It is said that the science of medicine has been regarded as ranking among the most intricate and delicate pursuits man could follow. Not long ago, woman began to feel that the science of medicine was not too intricate, not too delicate for her to follow, and so set herself to work to gain admission to some of the schools of medicine, that she, too, might become equipped with the necessary medical training, that would enable her to relieve the wants of suffering humanity. Nowhere was greater opposition to be found than in the profession and in the community.

It was doubted as to whether she was physically able to endure the hardships necessarily implied in an active practice. Slowly the portals of medicine opened to her, and earnestly she pursued her study. Afro-American women, best fitted by nature and education, have, like their white sisters, labored, although in the presence of more opposition, and met with success in the science of medicine. Those of mark are: Dr. Consuello Clark, Cincinnati; Dr. Caroline Anderson, Philadelphia; Dr. Hall Tanner and Dr. Susan McKinney. Dr. Susan McKinney leads the van in opening a sphere of usefulness. Dr. Susan McKinney, *nee* Smith, was born in Brooklyn, her father being the late Sylvanus Smith. The *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, in mentioning and giving accounts of some able and noted colored people in Brooklyn, gave this interesting account of Dr. Susan McKinney:

"Dr. McKinney is a striking instance of force of character, conquering extraordinary, almost obdurate obstacles, and achieving success in the midst of difficulties that would dismay a giant. She not only had to overcome the prejudice against female practitioners, but those against her race. Her spirit was equal to the task, however, and at this moment her reputation is such that any woman, irrespective of color, might be proud of it. Dr. McKinney was a student in the Woman's Medical College, New York, under Dr. Clement Lozier, a professional woman of liberal ideas, a strong battler against the prejudice of caste, who first advocated the admission of colored women into the college. Shortly after Dr. McKinney's graduation she commenced to practice, an uphill course. Patients were slow in coming; her own race apparently mistrusted the skill of a colored medical woman.

While she belongs to a class, that of Homeopathy, at that time discountenanced by the masses, she persevered and is now well established."

In former years she had sustained herself as a teacher in a public school, this city, out of the earnings of which position she defrayed her college expenses. That experience nerved her to struggle desperately for a standing in the medical profession at a juncture when to be courageous appeared foolish, so hopeless seemed the future. Dr. McKinney is one of the doctors on the medical staff of the Woman's Dispensary, on Classon Avenue, a member of the King's County and the New York Staff and City Society of Homeopathy, and a member of the Alumni Society. She has lectured on subjects bearing on her profession in several cities. One of the faculty of the college from which she graduated took the pains to look her up and engage her to attend a female member of his family, giving as his reason for so doing that she was, he thought, the brightest member of the class from which she was graduated. This was a high authority, and, therefore, complimentary to Dr. Susan McKinney.

The race points with pride to *Edmonia Lewis*, the greatest of her race in the art of sculpture. Her latent genius was stirred at the sight of a statue of Benjamin Franklin, in Boston. "I, too, can make a stone man," she said. She expressed her desire in this direction to William Lloyd Garrison, "that great Apostle of Human Liberty," and begged his advice. William Lloyd Garrison encouraged her and gave her a letter to the greatest sculptor of Boston, who, after reading the note, gave her a model of a human foot and some clay, and said, "Go home and make that; if there is anything in you it will come out." Delighted, she went, and worked out a copy. As soon as it was finished she returned to the sculptor. He was not pleased with it and broke it up, telling her to try again. She was not discouraged, for she was determined to achieve success in this art. Again she tried and obtained victory. "She has won a position as an artist, a studio in Rome, and a place in the admiration of lovers of art on two continents." Her studio in Rome is an object of interest to all European travelers. The most prominent of her works are, "Hagar in the Wilderness," a group of "Madonna with the Infant Christ and two adoring Angels," "Forever Free," "Hiawatha's Wooing," a bust of Longfellow the poet, a bust of John Brown, and a medallion portrait of Wendell Phillips. There are other Afro-American women of mark, brief accounts of whose lives I would be pleased to give, but the limited space will not permit.

We young women of the race have a great work to do. We have noble and brilliant examples of women, who, under all trying circumstances, have labored earnestly for the elevation of their race, their sex. Let us strive, with the advantages of a higher education, to carry out the aim of our noble predecessors—the success of the futurity of the race.