

ELOQUENT

Was Dr. Bowen's Lecture on "A New Negro For a New Century."

Rev. J. W. E. Bowen, Ph. D., D. D., professor in Gammon Theological Seminary, at Atlanta, Ga., and one of the most eloquent of his race, delivered a lecture last night under the auspices of the Hartzell Literary Society in the Ninth Street M. E. Church, near Freeman avenue, on the subject, "Wanted, a New Negro For a New Century." Dr. Bowen received the largest vote for Bishop on the first ballot at the late General Conference in Cleveland. He is a man of ordinary height, square frame and sturdy limbed, and his face and head indicate a type of strong intellectuality. He had a fine audience, including several prominent white ministers, such as venerable Dr. R. S. Rust and his son, Dr. R. H. Rust, Presiding Elder of the Cincinnati District.

Dr. Bowen spoke from manuscript, but would occasionally digress from the same, and entering in medias res soar to genuine heights of eloquence.

He began his lecture by speaking at some length of the achievements and progress of the nineteenth century; of the abolition of human slavery, of the birth of constitutional government in the East—Japan—and the discoveries of science, and the developments of electricity in particular. To the American; the universal negro, the close of the nineteenth century was of special significance. A nation reached the zenith of its glory but once, and he believed the negro race was in the upward tendency. He scored eloquently the brutality and barbarism contained in the modern rule of the "survival of the fittest," and advocated the Scriptural doctrine: "The weak shall inherit the earth." The Scriptures taught co-operation and co-ordination of the nations. He did not think that anything depended upon the shape of a man's head, but on the quality of his brain. In the essentials of humanity and divinity, he held, all men are equal—yet each man had his own characteristics and individuality.

Dr. Bowen dwelt eloquently upon the characteristics needed for the new negro of the new century. He said the old negro was a servile creature, the new negro must not only be a freedman, but a free man; he must be a man of intelligence, and a man of personality and individuality.

The new negro is not one who will amalgamate with the other races and destroy his identity in the process, but one who will assert his independence of existence. It was not with him a question of wealth, for the nature of the race cared little for that, but of character. If he would survive, he must honor the skin that God had given him. Over the portals of his future are written the words: "None but free-men can enter here."