

# "NEW" NEGRO WOMAN

## Congress of Colored Women To Be Held in Atlanta This Week.

### TO DISCUSS MANY QUESTIONS

#### Women from All Over the Stao Will Be Here and Read Papers on Various Topics.

In a few days the Cotton States and International exposition will be no more as an actual running machine, but the results of its running for a hundred or more days will be felt by no people more beneficially than by those of the negro race.

The benificent results accruing to the negro by having two of their race speak so eloquently to the country as did Washington and Bowen, such congresses as the lawyers, doctors, editors, church and the African congress—all backed by a display of the products of negro brain and brawn such as is said to challenge the admiration of everybody, does more for the Afro-American's cause than all the conventions, resolutions and blowouts that could be put on record for the next quarter of a century. For the exhibit that bespeaks such great things for the race the women of the race are largely due the credit. If I were asked to honestly express an opinion as to which class of the race showed more real interest and put forth more effort to install a creditable exhibit in the negro building I should say the women of our race. History, if honestly written, will speak for them in their relation to what is bound to prove of untold blessing to the race. With a knowledge of this fact and a desire that the noble and self-sacrificing women of our race should get together and legislate with a view to lifting up our homes and thus lifting up our people, I suggested to our leading women that a "National Congress of Women" be held in this city during the exposition. If the hand of the "new woman" of the other race (who is but the progressive and aggressive women) is to be seen in the exposition as it is, to the credit of herself and those whom she represents, I have thought that the hand of our women should be seen also in that it be known that she is in evidence on matters concerning her people. Knowing as I do that there are hundreds of them with intelligence, beauty and virtue that would throw about our cause a halo of glory and promise—it was the pleasure of my life to invite a congress of colored women to meet in this city this week to speak for themselves on vital matters concerning our people. Of these women who are arriving in the city by every train no negro in the land is ashamed, and a surprise will await the visitor who shall witness their deliberations even as the exhibit surprises him who does not know what is going on about him. Concerning these women I write and make haste to say that no page in the history of our exhibit will be brighter than that which will tell the story of our woman's congress, nor is the cause of the race when it comes to the do in safer hands than in theirs and those of their kind. The Woman's Auxiliary Board, of Washington, D. C., and the local executive board of Atlanta are responsible for the gathering which is now well nigh on us. The wife of ex-Senator B. K. Bruce is the chairman of the Washington board and Rosetta E. Lawson, the secretary. Into the secretary's hands the work has largely fallen because of a bereavement in the family of Senator Bruce. She is the wife of the chief commissioner of the district exhibit, Jesse Lawson, was graduated from the public and high schools of Washington and a woman of good executive ability. The local executive committee of the woman's congress is made up of some of the brightest and most representative of our colored women in the south, the wives of A. D. Carey, Adrienne Herndon, Howard Pitts, H. H. Proctor, D. T. Howard, A. St. George Richardson, H. R. Butler, J. W. E. Bowen, Lafayette Landrum and Mary Green, Annie Drake; such girls as Jennie Hughes, Marie Hardwick, Josie E. Holmes, A. D. Badger and Lilla Badger. Among the visiting people of the race are many representatives from various sections of the union. There are many leading women from other states here.

These women are in every sense the representative colored women of the country and are themselves lawyers, teachers, physicians, lecturers, newspaper writers, authors, principals and instructors in institutions, or they are the wives of prominent negroes in the various avocations of life. The congress will convene in Bethel African Methodist Episcopal church Friday the 27th instant at 9 a. m. The morning hour will be taken up with a conference of the leaders of the state delegations, a welcome address in behalf of the Atlanta women by H. R. Butler and response by Jesse Lawson, of Washington, D. C. Following the organization and appointment of committees the morning session will adjourn. At the afternoon session at 2:30 the following papers will be read: "How can the Interests of Northern and Southern Colored Women be More Strongly Related"—J. St. Pierre Ruffin, of Boston, Mass., for the north and Professor Mary V. Cook, of Louisville, Ky., for the south. "Christian Patriotism" will be handled by F. E. W. Harper, of Philadelphia, Pa. "Race Enterprise" will be discussed by Mrs. S. E. Shorter of Ohio. At the evening session Mrs. Booker T. Washington will speak on "Education of Negro Girls;" Mrs. Lucy B. Stephens, of Lynchburg, Va., on "Defects in Training of Negro Girls;" Mrs. Henry L. Bailey, of Washington, D. C., on "What Shall We Do for Our Boys and Young Men?" Fannie Barrier Williams, of Chicago, on "Opportunities and Possibilities of Negro Women." Other papers of vital interest to the race will be read by women equally as prominent on the 28th, the programme for the day not being in my hands at this writing. The singing for all the sessions will be the very best and will be furnished by Spelman Seminary, Clark University, Atlanta University and Morris Brown college. A pertinent question to ask at this juncture would be what is the purpose of this women's meeting? To begin with the colored women of the United States have more reason to meet, organize and get close to each other for mutual good than any other class of women on the American continent. Greater possibilities for the real development of the Afro-American is within the grasp of our women. The women of our race, as the women of any race, can make or break us. The home of the Afro-American is to be elevated, greater interest taken in the less fortunate mothers of the race, upon the home training of the children a large proportion of our maternity need the teaching and advice of those of their own race who have had advantages, an impregnable wall of defense needs to be thrown around the girls of our race—such a wall as they themselves can erect if the proper interest is taken by the solid women of the race, and these women of the race supported by the men of the race. Legislation for the home and its occupants cared for, then the Afro-American women should encourage the talented among them to launch out into the field of literature as writers, authors and essayists, in the realm of art, etc., and these make themselves felt in the sphere of their living. The colored women's congress has a fixed purpose and that is to promote intelligence, refinement and morality in the negro home, to encourage the proper and judicious education of our girls in more ways than simply the head. By deliberation they mean to ascertain for themselves all that is before them for the proper uplift of their people, to note the opportunities that are open to them and to prepare the womanhood of the race for the snares that are in wait for them. To see our women thus in conference prophesies a day of better things, a dawn of a new era in our race development. It is a signal to the invader that the true and tried are on watch. It is a warning to the men of the race that they must stand by the home. The colored women's congress can do nothing but good if carried out on the lines indicated, and the race shall be happy because of their meeting. The negro department of the exposition extends to all a hearty and cordial welcome to see some of the best of our womanhood and hear from them our cause.

I. GARLAND PENN.