BELLEVILLE HOME—A UTOPIA FOR NEEDY

Part of the group of 300 youngsters at the home. They are reared under the supervision of college graduate teachers, who have earned their degrees in special fields of education. The children are under the legal guardianship of Bishop Plummer during their minority.

The famous Belleville Choral Singers. All are orphans except Mrs. Plummer (third from right, in first row) and they sing both spirituals and classics. Their services are in great demand as a group and split into trios and quartets, male and female.

Bishop Plummer Orphaned at 5, Becomes Angel to Hundreds

By CARL BECKWITH

BELLEVILLE, Va. — Down here in Nansemond County, in southern Virginia, is located one of the most unusual communities in these United States, the Belleville Industrial School and Widows' and Orphans' Home, Inc., operated by the Church of God and Saints in Christ.

Here, widows and orphans and indigent aged from everywhere are welcomed for as long as they care to stay, even if that period embraces the remaining years of their lives.

No Questions Askrd

No questions are asked, no money is required — in fact the only thing necessary in the way of admission fees is the need for a home and the means of getting here. Church affiliation is not demanded, and there are no age limits.

Books could be written about some of the folks, old and young, who have found here a haven of rest where the future looked dark and all hope was gone.

Belleville is the culmination of the dreams of a man who was himself orphaned at the age of five years and faced with an uncertain future—William Henry Plummer. Born on a Maryland farm in 1868, his life, as a boy was one of hard work, with each day's end bringing no hope for a remote future.

As a child he absorbed the strict religious training which was a part of the daily life of the household in which he lived. He dreamed of the day when he could practice the things which he read about daily in his Bible. He visioned a refuge for those who were unable to continue the fight for existence without help, and these thoughts and dreams became a part of his daily life.

Joined Boston Church

In his early youth he migrated to Boston, Mass., and became a member of the Church of God and Saints in Christ. In 1917 he was elevated to the leadership of this church, succeeding to this honor on the death of Bishop J. W. Crowdy, whose assistant he had been. One year later, in 1918, he began making his dream of humanitarianism, which had dwelt with him all of his youth and early manhood, come true.

At some time in the past, the church had acquired a small farm in Virginia, approximately nine miles northwest of Portsmouth. Through neglect, it had been lost. Bishop Plummer located the plot and found out it could be repurchased for a nominal sum.

Dream Comes True

Without adequate means himself to finance the project, he appealed to members of the church throughout the country. Arrangements were made for the purchase of the land, volunteers something which would enable him to do much greater things for his people. He wanted to build a haven for many more than this place would accommodate.

So he began, with the help of the churches of the denomination, a program of expansion. Additional farms were purchased as finances would allow, and added to the original plot. Sometimes, it was a comparatively easy task, despite the existing prejudice, but at other times, only the loyalty of his followers and associates saved the option money.

Opportunity Knocks

One instance in particular stands out. A very desirable farm had been offered to Bishop Plummer for $30,000, a price he thought too high. One day, a representative of the owner of the farm informed the Bishop it could be purchased for $35,000, but $5,000 would have to be paid in cash as an option on the place.

Bishop Plummer stated that he could $5,000. The sum of $30,000 was an awful lot of money to raise in the time given him. But there was still one way out.

He appealed to the churches, sending to each a statement of the facts in the case. In a few days money began coming into Belleville in small and large amounts, and on the appointed day, Bishop Plummer, to the surprise and apparent consternation of the selling parties, walked into a lawyer's office and dumped $30,000 in cash, just as it had been received, on the desk. He had bought at other farm.

He continued to buy land, until today, the original plot, with housing facilities for eight people, has grown to more than 850 acres, is composed of eight farms, and shelters more than 300 people of all ages and of both sexes.

A Haven of Peace

In Belleville are persons from almost every walk of life. There are orphans who remember no country other home. There are youths who were saved from reformatories and other State institutions. There are folks in the twilight of life who have found here the peace and quiet necessary to a happy ending.

Its home-like atmosphere encourages people of many faiths. Many are, of course, members of the church denomination which training and nurtures it, but many others are which are taught with the idea of not. Church affiliation, while it is desired, is not compulsory, the for life elsewhere should they prove unsuitable for continued living here. The official order by the founder still remaining in the uppermost in the minds of his successors and his associates.

Provision is made for families. All the buildings were, in a for single adults of both sexes and large measure, erected by men of for children of both sexes. For the institution, including a large the girls and boys without parents there are dormitories, special kitchens and dining rooms.

brick church edifice now in course of construction. Sand, gravel and lumber are all natural resources of the institution's own property, which includes three and a half miles of waterfront along the Nansemond River.

For the single folks, much the same arrangements are made. Upon the death of the founder, which has been enlarged by his son and assistant, Bishop Howard Z. Plummer, was named head of the church and the school. Like his father before him, he resides in Belleville, and live in houses on the premises. The Rev. Beale Elliott, one of the boys and men of the home who have no other occupation. If there is no work, there is still nothing to worry about. The dormitories are always open and food can be had by walking to the dining room at meal times. Work is voluntary.

Belleville is, to a large extent, self-supporting. The farms produce, under normal conditions, an abundance of fruit, vegetables, grain — in fact everything necessary in the line of food. Three deep artesian wells furnish the institution with an ample supply of pure water for all purposes.

Besides this, there is a large, never-failing spring from which flows ice-cold water the year round. All the water is highly medicinal, containing seven different minerals. Its curative powers are comparable with the waters of any health resort in the country.

Activities Are Varied

Activities embrace, to some extent, numerous trades — wood-work, brick and stone work, carpentry, milling, auto mechanics, electrical work, painting, printing and of course, farming and stock raising.

For the girls, nurse training, domestic science and business training are available, all of which are taught with the idea of enabling them to fit themselves for life elsewhere, should they choose to leave. The official order of the denomination is practiced here and distributed to members throughout the world over.

All the buildings were, in a large measure, erected by men of the institution, including a large brick church edifice now in course of construction. Sand, gravel and lumber are all natural resources of the institution's own property, which includes three and a half miles of waterfront along the Nansemond River.

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Work Is Voluntary

The farms have tenants who

NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS

— by —

BISHOP H. Z. PLUMMER

— of the —

Church of God and Saints of Christ

January 1940

These are some of the various circumstances by which mercies have been distinguished and accompanied which should be carefully remembered.

The seasonableness of your supply; the tenderness of love and the wisdom of adaptation with which they were brought to your need and suited to your care; the greatness of the evils prevented and of the blessings bestowed; the health and food and raiment which God has provided you with; the friends raised up to you in the hours of difficulty; and the gifts which has arisen upon you in seasons of darkness and perplexity.

One of the Apostles said, "Pray without ceasing." "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." In the ensuing year, try to be eagle-eyed to discern your mercies, rather than your miseries.

Before concluding, let us thank the Lord in prayer for allowing us to breathe the breath of life for another year:

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we bow before Thee as the children of grace and love. Thy mercy has brought us through the year gone by. We thank Thee for the assurance that fills our souls that the New Year will bring new mercies and new opportunities for service. Help us to enter into ITS gates with praise and thanksgiving unto Thee. Forgive the sins of the past. Purify our souls, and make our eyes keen and watchful in order that we may discern Thy purpose at every turning of the way. Help us to hallow all our circumstances, whether they appear friendly, or adverse, and may we subdue them all to Thy holy will. We pray that during the coming year we may obtain new visions of the glory of Christ. May we light lamps on many a dark road. May we give help to many a tired pilgrim who is burdened by the greatness of the way. May we give cups of refreshment to those who are thirsty and faint. Lead us on to the highest and best things; we ask in the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.

May I conclude with a poem:

"Each day finds a hero, each day finds a saint,
Each day brings to someone a Joy without a taint.
Though it may not be my turn, or yours that is near—
Each day is the best day, of somebody's year."

We should not wait for New Year's Day to praise and thank the Lord for his untiring benevolence, but we should often hold our "Jubilee" of entire gladness, recapitulating the gracious acts of the Lord with glowing gratitude. We should enumerate the averting of evils that we feared, the unexpected turning of affairs that revived our hopes, the hair-breadth escapes that surprised and gladdened us, and the answers to prayer that put our unbelief to shame.

Monument to the founder of the Church of God in Christ, Prophet William Saunders Crowdy. Erected in 1935 by the late Bishop Plummer and dedicated in 1936 by the Virginia Masons, its granite shaft rises from the center of a beautiful burial park.

The Tabernacle (above) seating 2,000 persons, is where everyone, young and old, goes for the purpose of religious concentration and to sing the songs of the church. This is only a temporary building, as a new brick edifice of even greater seating capacity is being constructed.

This beautiful residence, decorated within and without with Masonic emblems (until recently the home of Bishop Plummer), is now being altered for use as a dormitory for girls. It is modern in every respect and will serve its new purpose adequately.

The home for the aged, formerly the residence of the late Bishop Plummer, with its spacious verandas, all screened, afford the old folks a place to relax in the sun throughout the day. Its rose garden contains specimens of almost every variety. It is modern, with its own kitchen and dining room.

SUPERANNUATED—They come from all parts of the country to spend their remaining days here without cost of one penny. Sister Alice Baker (second row, extreme right), originally from Philadelphia, is 95 years old. There are 100 persons nearly equally divided between men and women.

Classified Advertising.

IN MEMORIAMS

VIRGINIA F. MURPHY

MURPHY—In memory of beloved daughter and sister, VIRGINIA F., who passed away two years ago, January 4, 1938.

O Christ of God! whose life and death
Our own have reconciled,
Most quietly, most tenderly
Take home Thy star-named child.

Thy grace is in her patient eyes,
Thy words are on her tongue;
The very silence round her seems
As if the angels sung.

Her smile is as a listening child's
Who hears its mother's call;
The lilies of Thy perfect peace
About her pillow fall.

She leans from out our clinging arms
To rest herself in Thine;
Alone to Thee, dear Lord, can we
Our well-beloved resign.

O, less for her than for ourselves
We bow our heads and pray.
Her setting star, like Bethlehem's,
To Thee shall point the way.
—*John Greenleaf Whittier.*

MOTHER, FATHER and SISTERS

THE REV. R. BUTLER

GROSS—In loving memory of my dear husband, JOHN ALEXANDER, who passed away January 10, 1930.

God saw the road was getting rough
The hills were hard to climb
He gently closed his loving eyes
And whispered "Peace be thine."
His weary hours, his days of pain
His weary nights are past;
His ever-patient, worn-out frame
Has found sweet rest at last.

By his devoted wife,
EMMA GROSS.

TAYLOR—In memory of my dear husband, the REV. J. J. TAYLOR, who died one year ago January 5, 1939

"No one knows the silent heartaches
Only those who have lost can tell."

By his wife, ELLA TAYLOR.

BUNDY—In memory of my husband, CAREY, who departed this life eight years ago.

"Gone but not forgotten."

His widow
ADDIE BUNDY

CRITTENTON — In honor of our dear mother, REBECCA A., who died December 31, 1938.

"The memory of our mother, oh
cometh everywhere,
It shineth in the darkness
And it floateth on the air.
It clings to us, it talks to us
Through the livelong day
It meets us in our daily task
Our household work or play
That blessed, blessed memory
That dear familiar tone,
As if her spirit watches still
And communes with her own."

Her devoted children:
LOTTIE GILES, ESTELLE RODGERS

PAYNE—In loving memory of our mother, ANNIE L. PAYNE, who passed away six years ago, January 3, 1934.

"Years of sacrifices, little of play,
Loving and giving, and smoothing the way.
Life is too short, mother, ever to pay"

Strong in adversity, ready to do,
Gentle, unselfish, a friend ever true,
Our proudest possession, mother, was you."

Devoted daughters:
CATHERINE S. MADDEN
and MABEL J. SMITH.

PSSON—In memory of my husband and our father, ALEXANDER W. JENSON, who died January 5th, 1939

God saw the road was getting rough,
The hills were hard to climb;
He gently closed his loving eyes
And whispered: "Peace be thine."
His weary hours, his days of pain
His weary nights are past
His ever-patient, worn-out frame
His found sweet rest at last

By his loving
WIFE AND CHILDREN

PAYNE — In loving memory of our father WILLIAM PAYNE, who died January 9, 1933

Loving and kind in all his ways
Upright and just to the end of his days
Sincere and true in his heart and mind
Beautiful memories he left behind

By his loving DAUGHTERS.

HILSON — In loving memory of my darling daughter, THELMA HILSON, who passed away five years ago, January 7, 1935.

Today our hearts are heavy,
Our thoughts are all of there
Oh, how we miss you, Thelma dear,
None but God in Heaven can see
Some say time heals an aching heart,
But, no, it isn't true
For five long years have passed, dear,
And our hearts still ache for you

Loving MOTHER, DAD and SISTERS.

SWANN—In loving memory of our faithful member, DT. HARRIET SWANN, who passed away one year ago, January 4, 1939.

"Deep in our hearts lies a picture
Of a loved one laid to rest.
In memory's frame we shall keep it,
Because she was one of the best."

Officers and members of the Purple Cross Nurses' Unit of the F. E. W. Harper Temple, 429, I. B. P. O. E. W.
DT. MAMIE McKINNON, Pres.
DT. ANNIE SIMON, Sec.

Rev. J. R. Butler Heads Baptists

The Rev. J. R. Butler, pastor of Union Baptist Church, No. 2, was elected president of the Baptist Ministers' Conference, this week.

The candidacy of the Rev. Mr. Butler was supported by the Rev. Junius Gray, pastor of Psalmist Baptist Church. The officers were installed by the Rev. V. K. Stokes of Trinity Church.

Other officers are:

The Revs. T. D. Mead, vice-president; L. L. Price, second vice-president; Ward D. Yerby, secretary; Paul Pallard, assistant secretary; A. W. Taylor, treasurer; G. R. Waller, critic, and E. W. White, reporter.

Woolsey Hall Speaks Sunday at Forum

WASHINGTON

"Awakening Civic Pride and Interest" will be subject of a speech to be given Sunday at the Civic Social National Forum by Woolsey W. Hall.

Mr. Hall was at one time president of the Washington Civic Associations. L. C. Farrar heads the group at present. Sunday's forum will be held at the Whitelow Hotel, at 4 p.m.

Cards of Thanks

Universal Spiritual Church of Christ wishes to thank its members and friends for their splendid co-operation in our annual Charity Dinner.

Contributions were given by the following.

Rev. Nettie Finney, Rev. S. A. Brown, Rev. Lana Steward, Rev. M. Andrews, Rev. Dyson of Gospel Mission, Rev. M. Johnson, Janet Jackson, Mrs. Caroline Jones, Western Maryland Dairy, and Koester's Bakery.

REV. MIRA McNEIL, Pastor.

Thanking friends for their kindness during illness and death of our friend and wife, Minnie Hicks, died December 23, 1939.

GLADYS GREEN,
Husband.
CAMPBELL HICKS.

I wish to take this method of thanking the Rev. Beale Elliott, my family, and all my friends, who gave blood and who assisted me during my illness while at Johns Hopkins Hospital. God's blessings on all.

(Mrs.) LOUISE R. WINSTON
1401 Madison Ave., Apt. 6.

YWCA Entertaining for Former Members

The committee of management of the Druid Hill Avenue Branch of the YWCA will be hostess to those who have served as members of the committee of management of the branch since 1925 at a Dessert Luncheon on Saturday, January 6, at 1 p.m.

Guests will be:

Mrs. Hilda Anderson Hill, Mrs. Garland Cornwell, Miss Frances Murphy, Miss Mattie White, Mrs. G. H. Buchanan, Mrs. John Cousey, Mrs. Annie Hitchens, Mrs. John Thomas, Mrs. Sarah C. Fernando, Mrs. Lucille Clark, Mrs. Minnie L. Gaines;

Mrs. William H. Proctor, Mrs. Jean Hurst, Mrs. Jeanette Hall, Mrs. Grace McCard, Mrs. Harry O. Wilson, Mrs. Louise Braxton, Mrs. John Haywood, Mrs. Julia D. Gibson, Mrs. Bertha Winston, Mrs. Nelle B. Callis, Miss Mabel L. Whiting

Hostesses

The hostesses are Mrs. Carrington L. Davis, Mrs. Daniel Brown, Mrs. Thomas I. Brown, Mrs. William Buckner, Mrs. W. Tyler Coleman, Mrs. John T. Colbert, Mrs. William Fitzgerald, Mrs. Marie Francis, Mrs. Leo Harrison.

Mrs. Mason A. Hawkins, Mrs. George M. Mechlen, Mrs. Samuel Mussell, Mrs. Theodore Randolph, Mrs. Barnett M. Rhetta, Mrs. Thomas J. Smith, Mrs. John Woodhouse and Mrs. Alice B. Arrington, executive secretary.

Rev. Mattie Baker

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AFRO Visitors

Miss Laure A. Hall, Chicago, Ill.; Mrs. Evelyn A. Fears, Edward Allor, Baltimore; Mrs. J. Pearl Cochran, William F. Cochran, Rowland, N.C.

Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Clement, Charleston, S.C.; Charles A. Lawson, Sumter, S.C.; Paul J. Lawson.

Y Secretary in Illinois Attending Conference

Miss Lillian Hervey, Girl Reserve Secretary of the Druid Hill Avenue Branch of the YWCA is in Lake Forrest, Ill., attending a special nation-wide conference of the professional secretaries of the YWCA working with school-age girls. She will return January 8.

4 QUESTIONS ANSWERED
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2400 Blk. Francis Street
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OF CALL: MADISON 3144-3145

APTS. for RENT

1304 EDMONDSON-AVE.—Small furnished apartment to reliable party only. j-5.

2-ROOM APARTMENT and bath, first floor, also 3 rooms, kitchen and bath, third floor. Apply 2425 Madison Ave. j-9.

1238 MADISON-AVE.—Heat, hot water, good home for good people.

3-ROOM AND BATH APT.—$3.50 weekly, to small, respectable colored family. Near University Hospital Gilmor 7357. j-13

FIRST CLASS APARTMENT with conveniences; 3 rooms and bath. 1600 block Druid Hill Ave. Apply 2116 Druid Hill Ave.

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FURNISHED APT.—1400 Harlem Ave.; heat and light. Mohawk 3512.

705 N. STRICKER-ST.—3rd floor two-room apartment, gas and electric free, $3.50. Apply after 5 p.m.

FOR RENT — Beautiful second floor apartment with heat. 1723 W. Franklin Street.

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BEAUTIFUL 3-STORY HOUSE 1413 Edmondson Ave., in front of Harlem Square. Newly decorated. Small down payment. Balance like rent. Mad 9435. j-13.

HOUSES FOR SALE—In all parts of city. Pay as rent. Small down payment. WILLIAM E. RIBGELY, 720 N. Mount St. Write or call Lafayette 0213.

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NICELY FURNISHED front bedroom. Heat and light. No cooking. Call Madison 8226-J. j-6.

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220 OR 236 N. GILMOR-ST. — One room, $1.50, with electric. 1905 Eutaw-pl., LA. 3297.

FURNISHED ROOMS FOR RENT — $2.00 per week; 2nd floor front room, $3.00 per week. 1109 Druid Hill Ave.

FURNISHED—For working person with refined family. Mad 0975-J. j-13.

FURNISHED ROOM—Gentleman preferred. 1020 Madison Ave., first floor.

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1221 CLOVERDALE-RD., in front of Druid Hill Park, neatly furnished rooms to married couples only. Plenty of hot water and heat. No children and no cooking.

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STORE FRONT—Suitable for any business. 226 N. Gay Street. $5.00 weekly or $20.00 month. Key at 709 N. Gay or 2108 East Baltimore St. j-13

YW Classes to Open Monday January 8

The education committee of the Druid Hill Avenue YWCA announced this week the opening of adult classes beginning Monday, January 8, and continuing until May, 1940.

Classes in golf and badminton will be held at the Sharp Street Community Center every Monday night from 9 to 11. Registrations must be made at the YWCA.

Other Classes

Every Tuesday night at 9 o'clock, classes in knitting, crocheting, sewing, bridge and pinochle will be held at the branch under the joint sponsorship of the education committee and the industrial department.

Jones to Speak

The Business and Professional Women's Club will have as their guest speaker, Monday, January 8, William N. Jones of the AFRO-AMERICAN, who will lead the current events' discussion.

After the meeting, club members will participate in the classes at the Sharp Street Community Center.

The Blue Triangle Industrial Club will meet, Tuesday, January 9, at 8 o'clock for the business session, election of officers and the weekly class activities.

Plan Institute on Citizenship

A goal of three hundred delegates, including all races, has been set by the Maryland Youth Congress for the National Citizenship Institute, which will meet in Washington, February 9-12, officials stated this week.

Speakers at the institute will include Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who will appear at the principal session on Lincoln's Birthday; Aubrey Williams, director of the National Youth Administration, and James Carey, secretary of the CIO.

WANTED

YOUNG BOY with bicycle wanted at 1530 W. North Ave.

WANTED—One-room and kitchenette apartment in Northwest District. Will pay $3.00 weekly. Apply 1419 Edmondson Ave., 3rd floor.

RELIABLE BARBER WANTED — Jules Travis, 416 Dolphin Street, Phone Broadway 7335.

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