

**AN APPEAL FOR
NEGRO BISHOPS,
BUT NO SEPARATION**

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An Appeal for Negro Bishops, But No Separation

BY

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To

MY WIFE AND CHILDREN, WHO HAVE BEEN MY
CONSTANT SOURCE OF JOY AND INSPIRATION
IN ALL MY WORK FOR THE UPLIFT OF THE
RACE, AND WHO DESIRE FOR THEMSELVES AND
THE RACE THE LARGEST POSSIBILITIES IN
CHURCH AND STATE, THAT THEY MAY
SHARE WITH ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN THE
RICH FRUITAGE AND THE FULL TITLE TO ALL
THAT BELONGS TO MAN WITHOUT REGARD TO
COLOR, THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS AFFEC-
TIONATELY DEDICATED BY THE AUTHOR

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THIS little book of Dr. Bowen we publish on the same basis as that which decided our publication of the book by Dr. Shaw entitled "Should the Negroes of the Methodist Episcopal Church be Set Apart in a Church by Themselves?" These authors respectively represent views of an opposing character, but each forcibly presents his side of the question, and both have a right to be heard.

EATON & MAINS.

FOREWORD

THE appeal of the Negro to the Methodist Episcopal Church is purely an impersonal one. It is not an ambitious contention for honor of office. Our plea for recognition and for opportunity for service is another phase of that constant struggle from which we are never free, looking toward the fixing of a status of the Negro among men. There is a vast difference between the cry of children and the pleading of men. One may be a fretful whine, the other a petition of men who are conscious of their strength and realize their potentiality for service. Our emancipation is only begun. We have more than justified the expectations of Lincoln. The step proposed by the author in this book is not a long one. It is a conservative step compared with the advancement given the Negro under the guidance of the great emancipator. But

the step for which we now plead is but another in our racial development. We have reduced our illiteracy to almost one third. We have accumulated property amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars. We have constructed a family and Church life. Our contention at this time is simply a part of the scheme for the larger emancipation of a people, and it is related not merely to a segment of the Negro race that is within the Church, but it concerns the entire ten millions of the race in this country and other multiplied millions on their native soil.

If office *per se* were the desire on the part of those who agitate recognition, offices could be secured by pulling the entire Negro membership out from the Methodist Episcopal Church. In that case we would have an organization all our own. Those who have desired us to go have intimated, even promised, that the Church would subsidize the new organization, help to sustain its schools, and grant us our *pro rata* of the Book Concern capital. With this proposition before us it seems

clear that if the contention of our colored membership were based upon a selfish desire for office, they would pursue a different course than they are now pursuing. Reckoning on a basis of other Negro denominations in a separate organization, we would have five to seven bishops, with a full corps of general officers, to say nothing of positions in the schools that would necessarily and logically follow in the separation.

It is not office for office' sake that is the motive for our contention. We would have an adjustment which will make more efficient our present relation to the Church. Our contact with the Church we would preserve; but we would have recognition, among other reasons, as a substantial reply to the propaganda waged by our opposers, and as a testimonial to our advancement during the past fifty years. Our history of freedom may be disappointing to some, nevertheless we are bold to say that our record is not one of complete failure. Bishop E. E. Hoss, of the Methodist Episcopal Church,