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## THE NATIONAL NEGRO BUSINESS LEAGUE.

Holds its Second Annual Session in Chicago, Ill., and is Largely Attended by Delegates From Nearly Every State and Territory in the Union.

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON'S ELOQUENT Appeal For Sterling Worth and Citizenship—On to Richmond in 1902.

Chicago, Ill.—(Special)—The second annual session of the National Negro Business League opened in this city. Delegates are present from over thirty States.

President Booker T. Washington in his opening address said in part: "As a race we must learn more and more that the opinion of the world regarding us is not much influenced by what we may say of ourselves or by what others say of us, but it is permanently influenced by actual, tangible, visible results. The object lesson of one honest Negro succeeding magnificently in each community in some business or industry is worth a hundred abstract speeches in securing opportunity for the race.

"In the South, as in most parts of the world, the Negro who does something and possesses something is respected by both races. Usefulness in the community where we live will constitute our most lasting and potent protection.

"We want to learn the lesson of small things and small beginnings. We must not feel ourselves above the most humble occupation or the simple humble beginning. If our vision is clear, our will strong, we will use the very obstacles that often seem to beset us as stepping stones to a higher and more useful life."

The enrollment of the members present was not completed at the first session, but the hall was crowded and 200 of those present were visitors in Chicago. Pictures and some of the products of Negro concerns decorate the walls, as evidence that the black man is rising above the cotton plantation, his first field of labor in this country. Pictures of brick blocks, factories, livery stables, farms and shops of every description owned by Negroes in many different States of the Union are in the collection, but the greater evidence of the Negro's development is the men taking part in the deliberations of the sessions. They are clean cut, well-dressed, intelligent, and have put a business method into the organization. DELEGATES THRIC WELCOME.

The convention was called to order at 10 o'clock. Walter Fieldhouse represented Governor Yates in delivering an address of welcome, and Howard S. Taylor spoke for Mayor Harrison. On behalf of the colored business men



PROF. BOOKER T. WASHINGTON.

Principal of Tuskegee and President of the National Negro Business League

and women of Chicago the president of the local league, W. F. Taylor, gave the address of welcome, and with this the session was well under way.

After the organization of the convention was completed by the appointment of committees the formal programme of speech-making was taken up. Mr. Giles B. Jackson, secretary of the Business League of Virginia, read a paper on Negro industries in that State, showing what has been accomplished in thirty-five years "in the solution of the so-called Negro problem." The Negro has invested in business in Virginia, he said \$14,426,536. On behalf of the State League he extended to the national organization an invitation to hold its next annual session at Richmond in 1902.

W. L. Taylor, head of The True Reformers' Bank, in Richmond, gave interesting details of its plans under the head of "Business Features of the Order of True Reformers." Mr. Taylor's address was eloquent, scholarly, teeming with wit and anecdotes. He spoke of the great volume of work done by the True Reformers' Bank, the branch

stores, the farms, the hotel, the printing department, and the great work at headquarters, which employs over one hundred officers, chief clerks and employes. He was followed by Mr. J. A. Wilson, who delivered a witty and eloquent speech on the Twin City Business Association of Kansas City, Mo., and Kansas City, Kan., and what it has accomplished.

Mr. Theodore W. Jones, of Chicago, was the last speaker of the first session. Answering the question as to whether or not the Negro can succeed as a business man, he cited the facts that he may be found fulfilling his post on the battlefield, in the shop and at the head of industrial interests.

"The tone of this convention," he said in concluding, "clearly indicates that the Negro will succeed as a business man in proportion as he learns that manhood and womanhood are qualities of his own making, and that no external forces can either give or take them away. It demonstrates that intelligence, punctuality, industry and integrity are the conquering forces in the business and commercial world, as

well as in all the affairs of human life."

### BUSINESS EFFORTS CITED.

The delegates, through the speakers, took up specific and practical phases of business in the evening, and the session was well attended. Mrs. Albreta M. Smith read a paper on the Negro Women's Business Club, showing what had been accomplished in Chicago by the colored women. Charles Banks, a successful merchant and property owner of Clarksdale, Miss., talked on "Merchandising;" William Oscar Murphy, of Atlanta, Ga., discussed "The Grocery Business;" Harris Barrett, of Hampton, Va., detailed the workings of the Hampton Building and Loan Association; A. N. Johnson, publisher and editor of Mobile, represented the Negroes of that city and delivered the closing address of the day on "Negro Business Enterprises of Mobile."

After the appointment of the several committees the convention adjourned for the evening session at 8 p. m.

### THE EVENING SESSION.

At the evening session Mrs. Albreta M. Smith told about the achievements of the Business Woman's Club, and Charles Banks read an excellent paper on "Merchandising," he being the proprietor of a large general store at Clarksdale, Miss., which grew from a trade of \$1,500 to the carrying of a \$5,000 stock, the ownership of \$30,000 worth of real estate, and a yearly business in general goods and cotton of over \$40,000. On the subject, "The Grocery Business," W. O. Murphy, of Atlanta, Ga., told how he and his father had built up a business of \$30,000 a year, and he hoped and expected his son would raise it to \$100,000.

An interesting feature of the evening was the address of Judge W. W. Gibbs, United States Consul to Madagascar, who traced his career from slavery to that of representing his country in a foreign land. F. D. Patterson, of Greenfield, Ohio, a carriage manufacturer, and Martin Ferguson, of Jacksonville, Fla., a liveryman also spoke.

Perhaps there was no clearer or more convincing illustration of this than the declaration of Mr. Ferguson, a delegate from Jacksonville, Fla., who conducts one of the largest livery stables in the South. He told of his experience as a young man trying to make a fortune. He had enough money to carry him within thirty or forty miles of Jacksonville, and he walked the rest of the way. He reached the city with 10 cents in his pocket, and, like Benjamin Franklin, on arriving at Philadelphia, bought rolls and bread. He slept in a picnic ground and found some chicken bones to gnaw at for his second meal. But he was persistent and worked his way into a prosperous trade, and one that is netting him a large income.

### FORMER SLAVES TALK.

Some of the men who took part in the discussions were slaves forty years ago; others were of a later generation and had received a business or special education. All told of how the Negro, with the exercise of forti-

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