

CHAPTER FOURTEEN MISSION TO AMERICA

The period roughly from 1870 to 1920, a time of liberal trends in theology (Chapter 12) and denominational development (Chapter 13), was also a time of missionary expansion. Chapters 14 and 15 describe the mission to America of the denominations that would become the United Church of Christ. Chapter 16 places them in their global context of world missions and the concern for peace.

The newly organized denominations vigorously undertook their mission to America, which had several aspects. The term *Home Missions* was used in Nineteenth Century America for church extension – starting new churches on the frontier and subsidizing their pastors' salaries (see chapter 9). In the latter part of the century the home mission boards also reached out to the waves of new immigrants coming to America (See Chapter 15), and to the cities. The term *Inner Mission* as used in Germany described a wide variety of missions of humanitarian and spiritual service in the homeland, supported by voluntary contributions. As church extension under a state church was conducted with state funds, that particular activity was not included in *Inner Mission*. In this chapter, the term *Inner Mission* refers to institutions of humanitarian service established by the church in its home country. *Christian Education*, both for those in the church and as a mission to others, developed in new directions. With the abolition of slavery, abolitionists turned their attention to the condition of the *African Americans* and the *American Indian*.

This chapter explores four dimensions of the mission to America of the newly organized denominations, (a) Inner Mission, (b) Educational ministries, (c) African American ministry, and (d) American Indian missions.

PART A INNER MISSION

On 22 September 1848, Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808-81) called on the Protestant churches of Germany, assembled together at *Kirchentag*¹ in Wittenberg, to address the increasingly urbanized, industrialized and dechristianized German nation with an intensive *Innere-mission*. Wichern defined

¹A massive church conference.

the Innere-Mission as:

The *collective* and not *isolated* labor of love which springs forth from faith in Christ, and which seeks to bring about the internal and external renewal of the *masses within Christendom* who have fallen under the dominion of those evils which result directly and indirectly from sin, and who are not reached, as far as their spiritual renewal they ought to be, by the established official organs of the Church.²

The church responded to Wichern's appeal and established the Inner Mission of the German Evangelical Church at Berlin, 4 January 1849.

Wichern, educated for the ministry, never received a call to a church. On 31 October 1833, with his mother and sister, Wichern moved into a small house to provide a home for delinquent and neglected boys—*Das Rauhe Haus*. This mission multiplied and Wichern trained men to serve as housefathers in other homes across Germany. Earlier, Amalie Sieveking (1794-1859) had in 1832 organized a women's society for the care of the sick.

Theodor Fliedner (1800-64) was pastor of a small Protestant congregation in Kaiserswerth, on the Rhine. In 1833 a discharged female convict, Minna, came to Fliedner's house and received shelter. Others followed and Fliedner established a "Magdalene home" for these women. Fliedner had a vision of greater labors of love. He believed the ancient order of "deaconess" should be revived, through which unmarried women could be trained in arts of service to others. In 1836 he established the Deaconess Mother House. Deaconesses were soon directing hospitals, orphanages and sanatoria for the insane in Kaiserswerth and around the world.

The concept of *Innere-Mission* – institutions of caring conducted by the church – came to America with German immigrants. Louis Nollau and Saint Peter's Evangelical Church in Saint Louis founded a hospital in 1856 which became Good Samaritan Altenheim (Old People's Home). After a cholera epidemic in 1858 left many orphans, Nollau founded the German Protestant Orphan's Home (Evangelical Children's Home).³

²quoted in J. F. Ohl, *The Inner Mission: A Handbook for Christian Workers* (Philadelphia: General Council Publishing House, 1913), 13.

³Evangelicals in Louisville had organized a Protestant Children's Home in 1851.

The Civil War created an army of orphans. German Reformed pastor Emanuel Boehringer (1823-64) of Philadelphia gathered orphans from the streets into his home. The General Synod established a Board for Orphans Home in 1863 (See *LTH* 5:47), and Boehringer's growing institution moved to Womelsdorf in 1867, becoming Bethany Children's Home.⁴

Evangelical pastors in Saint Louis urged the establishment of an order of deaconesses in their denomination, and in 1889 organized the Evangelical Deaconess Society of Saint Louis. This Society was not composed of deaconesses, but of persons who wished to see the order established. Its Board of Directors consisted of four clergy, four laymen and four women. Inclusion of women as voting directors was a breakthrough for the Evangelical Synod. The Society acquired property for a home and hospital. On 18 August 1889 Katherine (LaPorte) Haack (1840-1919), a pastor's widow, and her adopted daughter, Lydia Daries (1869-1948), were ordained⁵ the first Deaconess sisters of the Evangelical Synod in North America (See *LTH* 4:49). Originally working as visiting nurses, they brought those needing more care into their home, which became Evangelical Deaconess Hospital (*LTH* 5:48). The deaconesses wore distinctive garb, similar to the European deaconesses. The deaconess movement spread rapidly across the Evangelical Synod, and institutions multiplied.⁶ Deaconesses also engaged in parish work (*LTH* 4:50).

The Reformed Church established a deaconess training school and home for the aged at Allentown, Pennsylvania⁷ in 1903⁸ (See *LTH* 4:102). The

⁴ The Reformed Church also founded Saint Paul's Children's Home at Butler, later Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Saint Paul's Evangelical Church of Chicago founded Uhlich Children's Home in 1868. Evangelicals organized homes for children and the aged in Buffalo, NY (1875), and Detroit, Mi (1879). The German Synods of the Reformed Church organized Fort Wayne Children's Home (1883). Bethany Home belonged to Eastern Synod, Saint Paul's Home to Pittsburgh Synod.

⁵The first deaconesses were "ordained." The name of this service of entrance was later changed to "consecration."

⁶Hospitals in Evansville (1892), Chicago (1906), Faribault, Mn (1909), Milwaukee (1910), Cleveland (1914), Marshalltown, Ia (1914), and Detroit (1917). Help for the developmentally disabled at Marthasville, Mo (1893). Homes for the aged at Bensenville, Il (1894) and Dorseyville, Pa (1928). Childrens Home at Hoyleton, Il (1895).

⁷now Phoebe Home.

⁸Also the North Carolina classis founded Nazareth Childrens Home (1906) and Potomac Synod founded Hoffman Home for Children (1910).

Southern Convention of the Christian Church established a Children's Home in Elon, North Carolina, in 1904.

Evangelical pastors in Saint Louis, with the help of seminary students and deaconesses, founded Caroline Mission, for ministry with the city's poor, in 1913. Another such mission, Back Bay Mission, in Biloxi, Mississippi, was founded by the Evangelical Synod in 1923.

The Reformed Church and the Evangelical Synod both established ministries to the newly arrived immigrants. The Harbor Mission consisted of a German Reformed pastor who greeted immigrants as they arrived in New York, and assisted them in any way possible. Initiated by the German Synod of the East in 1865, it was supported by the General Synod after 1884. The Evangelical Synod had a similar mission at the port of Baltimore, which as immigration subsided in the twentieth century ministered to seamen of other nations.

All denominations found ways to express compassion for those in need. For the Evangelical Synod, "Inner Mission" became the central expression of mission, and shaped denominational identity. The order of deaconesses opened to women new avenues for service as well as responsibility in administering significant institutions.

PART B: MINISTRY TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The educational ministry of the church evolved through changing ideas of childhood, education, and theology.

Parochial Schools

In the Evangelical Synod in the late Nineteenth Century between 40% and 50% of the congregations conducted parochial schools—all that could afford it. The training of parochial school teachers continued to be a priority of Elmhurst College. In 1883 Synod congregations employed 110 full time teachers. However, as public education became more widespread, the children spoke more English, and World War I compelled the Synod to seek fuller integration into American society, the parochial schools closed. Elmhurst discontinued the training of parochial school teachers in 1916.

Sunday School⁹

The Sunday School had become an almost universal institution in American Protestantism by the late Nineteenth Century. Trends in Church education cut across denominational lines, and effected the groups that became the United Church of Christ in similar ways at about the same time. From about 1885 to 1910 advances in knowledge regarding child development, education, and psychology suggested new approaches for Sunday Schools. Increasing numbers of persons, mostly women, received education in these areas in preparation for careers in church education, and advocated change. The Religious Education community promoted three changes:

1. Graded Lessons—Bible lessons should be prepared appropriate to each age group, and designed to build on each other through the years.
2. Use of extra-Biblical material--Educators urged instruction in church history, worship, the Christian life, and doctrine, in addition to the Bible.
3. Replacement of content-centered lessons with child-centered lessons.

A conference in 1906 advocated graded lessons. Denominations began publishing them in 1909. By 1915, two-thirds of the Congregational Sunday Schools responding to a survey were using graded lessons. A broadening of content soon followed. The Sunday School, an institution created by and fostering the piety of the Nineteenth Century, was being carried in new directions by progressive education grounded in liberal theology.

Religious educators organized the Religious Education Association in 1903, to work for change. Some early full-time educators were deaconesses. Florence Fensham opened the Congregational Training School for Women in Chicago in 1909, after a short-lived Deaconess training program folded. Elon College began offering a course for religious educators in 1918. Evangelical Synod established the Oakwood Institute in Cincinnati in 1923 to train religious educators and other lay workers.

Denominations developed summer conferences to train the volunteer teachers. Evangelical Leadership Training Schools (ELTS), summer training schools in religious education, began at Elmhurst in 1914 and were soon duplicated in other locations across the country. About 1914 the Christian Church also organized summer schools for lay people. The Reformed Church began summer leadership training conferences in 1925.

⁹For earlier information on the Sunday School see Chapter 8, Part A.

Ministry to Youth

Francis E. Clark (1851-1927), pastor at Williston Congregational Church, Portland, Maine, faced a dilemma. Young people professed their faith and joined the church, but did not fit into the organizational life of the adult church. On 2 February, 1881, Clark organized the first Society of Christian Endeavor. This organization run by the youth with a weekly prayer meeting prepared young converts for responsible adult membership.

Christian Endeavor spread rapidly from church to church, crossing denominational and international borders. Clark presided over the creation of an international organization, United Societies of Christian Endeavor, in 1885.

Christian Endeavor was a response to a new social reality: Youth. Education extended a person's time of dependence beyond puberty; teens found themselves in a limbo between childhood and adulthood. Christian Endeavor created a church experience relevant to this new community.

The Evangelical Synod, isolated by language from the mainstream of American Protestantism, created its own *Jugendbund* in 1902, after 1913 called the Evangelical League. The Reformed Church had authorized the Heidelberg League for its youth in 1896, however most local youth groups were affiliated with Christian Endeavor. In 1922 Clark wrote that only the Methodists had separated themselves from Christian Endeavor. In 1936 the Christian Youth Council of North America met and Congregational Christian delegates organized a National Council of the Pilgrim Fellowship. The Evangelical and Reformed Youth Fellowship organized at about the same time.

Youth camping grew in importance. Regional bodies and denominations acquired campgrounds. Christians developed summer programs for youth about 1914 at Craigville, in Massachusetts, and other locations. Eastern Synod of the Reformed Church founded Camp Mensch Mill in 1928. The Evangelical Synod conducted youth camping at Dunkirk in western New York. Heavily used by youth camps, lay schools, meetings and work camps, these campgrounds fostered significant Christian fellowship, and an awareness of church larger than the local congregation.

PART C AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE SOUTH AFTER RECONSTRUCTION

In 1877 Federal troops withdrew from the South; white Americans forgot about the Freedmen. Racist attitudes steadily increased in this period, given

intellectual support from “social Darwinism.” This was a perversion of evolutionary theory which proclaimed that some races and ethnic groups were meant to dominate others and should carry out the law of nature, “the survival of the fittest,” by oppressing others. This doctrine was given an altruistic facade, “the white man’s burden,” to justify imperialistic expansion and domination of others. Even humanitarian and benevolent enterprises of liberal Christians in this period were often founded on a premise of inequality.

African Americans were the targets of terrorism – arson, rape, beatings and lynchings. The rights they received during Reconstruction were slowly eroded. Two Supreme Court decisions, *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) and *Williams v. Mississippi* (1898) intensified the oppression. The first justified segregation; the second permitted state election laws which for all practical purposes disfranchised African Americans. In the years that followed, southern society was totally segregated and terrorism intensified.

Two graduates of American Missionary Association (AMA) schools rose to leadership in the African American community. Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), a graduate of Hampton and principal of Tuskegee, urged Blacks to work for economic self-reliance. W. E. Burghardt DuBois (1868-1963), a graduate of Fisk and professor of Sociology at Atlanta University (1897-1910, 1934-44), urged Blacks to demand legal and political rights.

Throughout this period the AMA stood firmly for both economic advancement and legal rights, supported schools and churches, and spoke out against injustice. However, in spite of its efforts, the AMA could not even hold back the tide of segregation in its own denomination.

Schools¹⁰

Throughout this period of terror the AMA schools continued to graduate a steady stream of African American leaders to teach in schools, preach in churches, and otherwise give leadership to the African American community.

The AMA, which through Reconstruction had a strong record of using persons of both colors to teach, soon came under criticism for not giving African Americans teaching positions in colleges. In 1877 the AMA resolved to “make haste slowly” in this area. It was very slow; in 1895 only 4% of the faculty of AMA colleges were African American.

¹⁰For earlier information on education for African Americans go to Chapter 10, Part C, Higher Education.

Churches¹¹

The AMA, which had been transformed by the needs of Reconstruction from an anti-slavery society to an education society, went through another transformation as Reconstruction ended. The Freedman's Bureau had closed; most of the common (elementary) schools had been turned over to the states; other denominations had established their own missions to the Freedmen; the AMA now had closer ties and official support from the developing Congregational denomination. The Congregational constituency urged the AMA to do more church work.

The AMA appointed Joseph Edwin Roy (1827-1908), a white minister, to be Field Secretary in 1878. Roy moved to Atlanta – the first AMA secretary to live in the South – and focused on founding churches. In seven years (1878-85) AMA church work in the South grew from 4,212 members in 64 congregations to 7,512 members in 113 congregations, and new Congregational associations were founded.

After this spurt of growth, Black Congregationalism grew slowly. The congregations depended financially on the AMA, which assigned pastors to churches. Gradually the theological departments of the AMA colleges provided Black Congregational pastors.

In 1914 AMA churches in the South numbered 165. Because of the poor rural economy, many African Americans migrated north. The AMA began sending pastors north to organize the migrants into congregations in northern cities.

The African American Christian conferences continued to grow, and joined together about 1892 in the Afro Christian Convention (See *LTH* 6:27). Reorganized in 1914, the Convention advanced under the leadership of Smith A. Howell, president for the next twenty years. The Afro Christian Convention in 1916 counted seven conferences with 153 congregations. With support from northern white Christian churches, the Convention struggled to maintain an educational institution at Franklinton, North Carolina (See *LTH* 6:28), for the education of pastors and teachers, from 1878 to 1930.

¹¹For earlier information on African American churches go to Chapter 10, Part C, African American congregations.

Color Line Debate--Part 1

Piedmont Congregational Church¹² organized in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1882, and received support from the American Home Missionary Society (AHMS). The AMA protested. The establishment of an all-white congregation supported by one missionary society in a city that already had a predominantly Black congregation of the same denomination,¹³ supported by another society, appeared to be establishing a color line. Both societies were on record opposed to segregated churches.

Representatives of the two societies met in Springfield, Massachusetts, in December, 1883. They agreed to the following principles:

1. Neither society would give aid to any congregation that would refuse to receive an applicant for membership based solely on color.
2. Churches receiving aid from either society were expected to fellowship with other churches in the geographic association in which they were located.
3. The societies agreed to consult with each other before supporting churches in communities where the other was at work.

Piedmont Congregational Church and the AHMS agreed that any “colored person suitably qualified” would be received into membership. In spite of the agreed upon principles, a de facto color line was slipping into the Congregational community.

Color Line Debate--Part 2

Central (formerly Piedmont) Congregational Church of Atlanta, and three other white congregations, united with Congregational Methodists¹⁴ in 1888 to create the United Congregational Conference of Georgia. The formation of this all white Conference in the same geographic area as the predominantly Black Georgia Association, renewed the color line debate. The AMA protested. The Georgia Association presented several proposals for uniting the two bodies, but did not receive a reply.

Two Georgia delegations went to the meeting of the National Council of

¹²now Central Congregational (UCC).

¹³First Congregational Church (UCC).

¹⁴See Chapter 13, Part B, Congregational Methodists.

Congregational Churches in 1889, asking to be seated. The Council seated the Association delegates, and received the Conference representatives as “honorary delegates.” In 1890 the Georgia Association (Black) became an Association of the (White) General Congregational Convention of Georgia.

Congregational Methodists in Alabama organized a General Congregational Convention of Alabama in 1892 without consulting the existing (predominantly Black) Alabama Association. Proposals from the Association for union were rejected by the Convention. The National Council in 1898 and 1901 refused to seat either delegation and called on them to unite.

The white churches in Georgia withdrew from the General Convention in 1903, leaving it a Black group, and united with the all White Florida Conference, to become the General Congregational Association of Florida and the Southeast. In 1904 the National Council seated the separate Black and White delegations from Georgia and Alabama. Segregation had won. By 1915 Congregational organization throughout the South was segregated. The CHMS supported White churches; the AMA supported Black churches.

PART D AMERICAN INDIAN MISSIONS

The North American Indian . . . possessed not only a superb physique but a remarkable mind. But the Indian no longer exists as a natural and free man. Those remnants which now dwell upon the reservations present only a sort of tableau—a fictitious copy of the past.¹⁵

When Charles “Ohiyesa” Eastman¹⁶ wrote those words in 1902 in the preface to his *Indian Boyhood*, the noun “Indian” was often preceded by the adjective “vanishing.” When confined to Reservations, the old Indian way of life vanished. As religious beliefs were intimately intertwined with all of life, the old Indian religion, forced underground, appeared to be vanishing on the Reservation. Indian land vanished from the map as Reservations were reduced in size, and Reservation land was opened to American homesteaders. By 1901

¹⁵Charles A. “Ohiyesa” Eastman, *Indian Boyhood* (New York: Dover Publications, 1971) (originally published by McClure, Phillips & Company, 1902), [v].

¹⁶Ohiyesa, a Lakota, became a member of the Presbyterian Church, received an M.D. degree from Dartmouth College, and returned to the Lakota reservations as a doctor.

the American Indian population of the United States and Alaska had fallen below 270,000. Some Americans wanted to erase the reservations entirely from the map and absorb the Indians into American culture.

A Conference of “Friends of the Indian” met at Lake Mohonk, New York, every year from 1883 to 1916. These Eastern liberals used their considerable influence to bring into effect government policies which they believed to be beneficial to the American Indian. Lyman Abbott, who became a leader of the “Friends of the Indian,” never set foot on a reservation and had little personal contact with Indians. He based his belief about what was best for the Indian on his experience with Freedmen during Reconstruction. African Americans strove for equal rights before the law as Americans, for education, for land, and for integration. Abbott transferred this agenda to the American Indian. The “Friends of the Indian” opposed Indian sovereignty, urged the government to disregard its treaties with the Indians, and to grant land “in severalty” (individual ownership). Through their influence the Dawes Act was passed in 1887, which divided Indian lands in severalty with the remaining land opened to homesteaders. Abbott, who had opposed the close collaboration of the AMA and the Freedmen’s Bureau as a violation of the separation of church and state, also opposed governmental support of church run schools on reservations. In 1894 Congress adopted a plan to gradually phase in government schools and phase out aid to religious schools.

What was the consequence of the efforts of the “Friends of the Indian” on the Reservations? The Dawes Act led to moral decline and further exploitation of the Indians, and is considered today to have been a disaster. Religious schools run by the Congregationalists had not pressed acculturation as aggressively as government schools, which increased the severity of the war on Indian language and culture.

American Indians had different concerns from African Americans. Indians wanted *sovereignty*, not *integration*, the survival of Indian *nations*, not *individual* advancement within an American nation. They had good intentions, but the “Friends of the Indian” did as much harm to the Indians as their enemies.

Dakota Mission¹⁷

The Isanti¹⁸ Dakota had passed through crisis, 1862-66, and had adopted

¹⁷For earlier information on the Dakota churches go to Chapter 7, Part B, Dakota.

¹⁸The Dakota/Lakota nation can be divided into three divisions, the Isanti in the east, the Wiciyena to their west, and the Titonwan further west. These divisions represent three dialects, “D” “N”

the Christian religion. In 1866 the Dakota Mission was on the threshold of a new era, with two tasks: (1) to train the Isanti in their new religion, developing self-supporting and self-governing churches, and (2) to reach out to the Wiciyena and Titonwan divisions of the Dakota/Lakota nation, using native pastors as quickly as they could be prepared. The Dakota Mission was also experiencing a transition in leadership, as children of the pioneer missionaries replaced their parents.

Then the mission divided. Following the reunion of old-school and new-school Presbyterians in 1869, ABCFM missionaries were allowed to transfer to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. The Dakota Mission was the last mission to have its status resolved, in 1871, and the only one to split.

The schism created in 1871 was totally irrelevant to the Dakota people, and the missionary families intended to continue to work together, disregarding their different denominational affiliations. As a result, the missions and churches developed a network of institutions through which they worked as if they were one.

1. Ptaye Owoglake¹⁹ On 21-24 June 1872, the missionaries called together a “mission meeting” of all the missionaries, “native helpers,” and a representative from each congregation, of both denominations, to discuss common concerns. Through this representative group, meeting annually, they hoped to continue to work in unity. This “official” meeting had thirty-six persons in attendance. However over 600 people showed up for preaching, worship, discussion, fellowship, and the reception of new members. The Ptaya Owoglake, as it developed, resembled the pre-Reservation Lakota encampments for religious ceremonies, now given a Christian content. The representative organization contemplated by the missionaries gave way to Lakota direct democracy, through which Presbyterians and Congregationalists functioned as one.
2. Santee Normal Training School, founded in 1870, trained Indian pastors and teachers, and later functioned as a boarding school for children and youth.

and “L” speakers respectively. The name for the nation, Dakota, Nakota or Lakota, is affected by the dialect change, but refers to the entire nation, whichever dialect is used.

¹⁹Ptaya Owohdake in “D.”

3. lapi Oaye, a monthly Dakota-language paper started in 1871, bound together Dakota Christians of both denominations with reports from native missionaries and discussion of issues.
4. Wotanin Wašte, the native missionary society, founded at Ptaya Owoglake in 1875, received funds from Dakota congregations to support native missionaries. The two denominations worked together in Wotanin Wašte 1894.
5. language work—The translation and publication of the Bible, hymnal, dictionary, grammar and reading books in Dakota continued to be supported jointly by the two denominations. Most significant in the life of the churches was the hymnal, *Dakota Odowan*. Many of the hymns were translations of popular gospel songs of the day. A few were original Dakota hymns written by Joseph Renville and others, to native tunes which were “translated” into European notation.

Dakota Presbytery had been reorganized in 1868 as an ethnic and linguistic, rather than geographic, presbytery. Dakota Association was organized in 1888. However, missions and churches continued to function as one to such an extent that many members did not realize the difference. Denominational leaders “back East” never understood this unique relationship, and applied consistent pressure on Presbytery and Association to conform to denominational norms. Through the Twentieth Century they succeeded in slowly eroding the solidarity that had once existed between the two groups. By 1896 the Dakota Association counted twelve congregations on four reservations.

New President Ulysses S. Grant decided in 1869 to “clean up” the corrupt Indian agency by assigning reservations to missions. The mission or church “nominated” the agent for a given reservation, and the President then appointed the agent, who was accountable to both government and church. While other missionary societies gathered like wolves around a carcass to get a good share of assignments, the ABCFM remained aloof, and only held a relationship to one reservation for one year.²⁰ With Grant’s Peace Policy came exclusion. Wotanin Wašte missionaries were excluded or discriminated against at Roman Catholic and Episcopal Reservations. Presbytery and missionaries protested loudly against this “outrage” against religious liberty, and slowly gained limited access.

The Dakota Mission was transferred from the ABCFM to the AMA in 1883.

²⁰Sisseton Reservation, 1871. The AMA then supervised Sisseton, and also Fort Berthold and four other reservations.

The AMA placed greater stress on education and was more willing to cooperate with the government. With government funding the AMA supported a large missionary teaching force. In 1886 the government ordered all schools conducted by missionary organizations to conduct all instruction in English. The missionaries protested, dropped some programs, and complied. In 1888 a government inspector visiting Santee School objected to the use of Dakota in devotional exercises. In 1892 the AMA and other mission boards resolved to no longer accept government support for their schools.²¹ After severe cutbacks in personnel and programs the AMA resumed its educational ministry.

Fort Berthold

The Hidatsa, Mandan and Arikara were farming Indian nations that lived along the Missouri River. Gradually migrating upstream, these once large nations were reduced in smallpox epidemics of 1781 and 1837 to small remnants. The survivors of the Hidatsa settled at Like-a-Fishhook Village in 1845, were soon joined by the Mandan remnant, and in 1862 were joined by the surviving Arikara. They always maintained friendly relations with the United States government, which recognized them as the Three Affiliated Tribes of Fort Berthold.

The ABCFM sent Charles Lemon Hall (1847-1940) to Fort Berthold in 1876. He had been ordained by the Dakota churches, Congregational and Presbyterian, with leaders of both groups, White and Indian, participating. Children sent to Santee School in 1881 were converted, and returned home to share their new faith with their families. Otter and Miriam, daughters of Poor Wolf, and Ernest Hopkins, were among the first of these new Christians.

The Dawes Act scattered the people of the Three Tribes, making new congregations necessary. Native pastors were licensed in 1916, one of whom, Edward Goodbird, was ordained in 1925.

The Ho Cak²²

The Ho Cak, formerly called "Winnebago" by English and French speakers, used to live in farming settlements across much of Wisconsin. As non-Indians pressed into their territory, the Ho Cak surrendered land in a series of treaties from 1829 to 1837. The Ho Cak then became a pilgrim people, located by the

²¹For many of the missions this was a protest against the Roman Catholics getting a disproportionate share of the Reservations.

²²This Indian nation calls itself "Ho Chunk." The congregation spells its name "Ho Cak." The meaning and pronunciation are the same. "Ho Chunk" is an English phonetic spelling of the name spelled "Ho Cak" in the orthography of the written language.

Federal government on Turkey River in northeast Iowa (1840), Long Prairie, Minnesota (1847), Blue Earth, Minnesota (1855), Crow Creek, South Dakota (1863), and Thurston County, Nebraska (1865). Throughout this period, some Ho Cak people drifted back home to Wisconsin, and were forcibly removed when discovered by authorities. Forced removals ceased in 1874, and the Ho Cak were allowed to homestead in Wisconsin.

One Sunday, Professor Henry W. Kurtz (1823-89), of Mission House, was caught in a snow storm on his way home from a preaching assignment. An Indian found him, fallen asleep, and took him to safety. After that incident, Kurtz urged the Reformed churches to do something for the Indians. In 1878 Sheboygan Classis sent Jacob Hauser, a returned missionary from India, to the Ho Cak near Black River Falls, Wisconsin. The community received him, and he started a school. Jacob Stucki (1857-1930) replaced Hauser in 1884. The first baptisms of Ho Cak people of Black River Falls occurred on 2 January 1898—David Decorah (1876-1945), John and Martha Stacy, and King of Thunder. Decorah was later licensed as assistant pastor, and John Stacy was an active evangelist until 1945.

The “Winnebago Mission” was transferred from the Sheboygan Classis to the Board of Missions of the German Synods in 1917. That same year the Stuckis began a boarding school in their home. The Woman’s Missionary Society of the Reformed Church established the Winnebago Indian School in Neillsville in 1921. The Winnebago Indian Mission Church²³ was organized in 1922. Mitchell Whiterabbit (1917-86), of the Ho Cak nation, ordained in 1945, served the “Winnebago Mission” Church 1947-69.

Reflection

It is difficult to write about this period (1870-1920), when even the liberals were racists. Certainly there were racists before this time. But people like Jeremiah Evarts and Lewis Tappan spoke and acted courageously, inspired by a Biblical doctrine of human worth. But this period (1870-1920) was the heyday of “Jim Crow.” The United States took up the “white man’s burden” of Imperialism. “Social Darwinism” and “survival of the fittest” were commonly held ideas. That the church was captured by the spirit of the times, rather than by the gospel, is seen in the misguided efforts of the “Friends of the Indian,” the “make haste slowly” policy of the AMA, and the segregation of Congregationalism.

Certainly the church had significant accomplishments in this time:

²³now called Ho Cak Church.

- The rise of Inner Mission and the Deaconess movement.
- The beginning of Youth Ministry.
- The ordination of a few women.
- Outreach to new immigrant groups (Chapter 15) and advances in global mission (Chapter 16) (Excepting the embrace of American imperialism in Hawaii).
- The spirituality expressed in *In His Steps* and *O Master Let Me Walk with Thee*.

However, the church's vision was blurred. It failed to stand firmly *against* the norms of the society in which it found itself, but blended those norms with its own.