

12. Is Booker T. Washington's popularity as a leader increasing or diminishing among Negroes?

ANS. *I do not know whether Mr. Washington is increasing or decreasing as a leader among Negroes.*

It is not very hard to obtain Mr. Fisher's point of view on the problem that is still paramount in the forums of public opinion. His position was not entirely conservative nor radical, but it savored of both, leaning, however, toward radicalism. He had abiding confidence in the people whom he essayed to lead. He believed firmly in the enforcement of every righteous law of the land. Still, he was careful not to make statements that would smack of injury to the reputation of a leadership established through suffering, toil, and woe, and honored by men of every color. To do so would be to commit the same offense against others which his less charitable brethren were guilty of as touching him. However, if he was not correct in his judgments, he was at least consistent in his thinking. People have always followed a consistent and positive leadership. On all matters pertaining to the Negro his position was not negative but positive.

Many Negroes of Chicago appreciated this fact. It was a common occurrence for him to sit on the church steps evenings about six o'clock waiting to talk to the laborers as they returned from work. From ten to twenty persons were always in attendance.

Gertrude Lillian Fisher-Brown, who had been a great help in the church, died March 4, 1908. The

funeral was delayed several days because Mr. Fisher established a custom of not having Sunday displays. To purchase a burial lot in Oakwoods Cemetery it was necessary to pay considerably more than if she had been white. What caused the difference God only knows, but Rev. Mr. Fisher resolved from that day to have a cemetery for his own people. Mount Glenwood Cemetery Association was advertising for colored stockholders. He bought several shares of stock but withdrew from active participation in the company after finding that the concern was controlled by white people. He called Undertakers Charles S. Jackson, Daniel Jackson, George O. Jones, Clifford Johnson, Dr. George C. Hall, the Rev. Dr. S. L. M. Francis, and Messrs. S. A. Griffin, R. M. Johnson, and W. H. Terrell together and laid plans for the purchase of beautiful Mount Forest Cemetery in the suburbs of Chicago. Today, this resting-place is a landmark along the course of Mr. Fisher, and it is used and kept up almost wholly by the ever-increasing number who die as members of the Olivet Church.

The purpose of the following remarks is not to rehearse the views of Pastor Fisher nor to vindicate the legitimacy of the conclusions which he reached, but rather by some notes to show his further attitude toward good government. He was partisan. He had no hesitancy in endorsing those candidates whose past record appealed to him and whose attitude toward the Negro was seemingly fair.