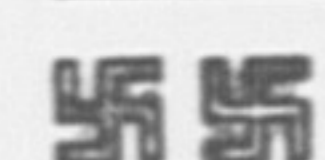
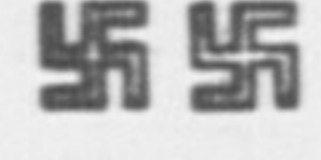


"THE CHEYNEY TRAINING SCHOOL"



G. EDWARD DICKERSON AND WILLIAM LLOYD IMES



THE principal of Cheyney has stated his case in THE CRISIS for April, and it is courteously agreed by THE CRISIS that the opposite point of view ought to be stated.

Let us first examine his "facts" on page 253.

1. "The state law admits of no segregation," yet it admits the statements in the official catalog of Cheyney for this current year page 8, quoted verbatim: "The Cheyney Training School for Teachers is not designed for immature youth, but to develop *Negro* teachers." While the principal is correct as to the letter of the Pennsylvania state school law, yet its state officials are allowed to break both its letter and spirit, and we who protest that this is wrong are called full of "blind prejudice", "bad manners", "violent language", etc. We must keep quiet and see men like Mr. Hill encourage *practical segregation*, which he knows, as well as we, leads sooner or later to *legal segregation*, for in a state like Pennsylvania racial segregation only has come in those matters in which the colored people allowed themselves to be segregated. Why, if he is perfectly in earnest about having a *bona fide* State Normal School, does he make it clear that the Cheyney is for *Negro Teachers*, unless the state officials have demanded this of him in return for their giving Cheyney state normal status?

2. "Cheyney as a private school was avowedly for colored students. Under the state, it continues its primary service to the race, but must admit any qualified applicant without regard to race, color, or creed."

The private school status of Cheyney is a matter of history, truly, and now its public status is just the troublesome thing. Private institutions can be much more narrow in their civic and social lines if they like, but the moment they become *public* in the sense that they are entirely supported and governed by the state, that moment they should have no special race, color, or creed in view, and Cheyney under its present form does have a distinctly avowed racial cast, *Negro*; and further, its distance from the West Chester State Normal School, only six miles from Cheyney, makes it ap-

parent that the state, in setting apart Cheyney, only did it because it was *Negro*. There are not in all the state of Pennsylvania two other state normal schools so close together. The statement of Cheyney's principal that Cheyney "must admit any qualified applicant without regard to race, color, or creed" loses all of its force, therefore, because even if any white persons wanted to attend Cheyney because of its nearness to them; they would inevitably choose West Chester instead, and any *Negro* not especially welcomed at West Chester, would be all the more liable to mistreatment because a "Negro" State Normal is only six miles away across the Chester hills in the form of Cheyney. On December 20, 1922, in the presence of Dr. E. T. Hinson and the Rev. J. R. Logan of Philadelphia, a committee with one of the writers, seeking the truth of the Cheyney question, were informed by the principal of the West Chester State Normal School, Dr. Smith, that he would prefer to see the thirty-five colored students in his institution go to Cheyney, because he felt Cheyney could do more for them than he could. He said he had no personal prejudice, but his student body ostracised them. So Cheyney is to solve the race question in Pennsylvania's state educational system by demonstrating how a "Negro" school can be a perfect haven of refuge to unwanted and mistreated *Negro* pupils. Our whole race might as well leave America because we are on the whole largely unwanted and mistreated!

3. It is clear that the third point, "Any qualified colored student may attend any other Pennsylvania State Normal School," depends on the foregoing. The very existence of Cheyney as a State Normal School now makes the cordial welcome of a colored applicant to other State Normals more and more unlikely. If the state educational officials will wink at the law in allowing a state school to publish in its catalog a distinct racial name and appeal, and to carry this out in practice, will they be any more considerate of law in the attendance of races at schools where they are not wanted, and only grudgingly allowed? Our eleven



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segregated public schools in Philadelphia are part and parcel of this system of public officials in Pennsylvania winking at the law. When it comes to *Negroes*, the law is either disobeyed or cleverly evaded, and it is always some *Negro*, like the principal of Cheyney and others who have his peculiar slant on the race question, who help our public officials disregard the spirit of the law. Cheyney as a private school was all right; but as a public school it now becomes the very keystone in the arch of segregation throughout the state. Our principal of the Philadelphia Normal School made public to an assembly of his students that he deprecated the attendance of colored students because they could not be "placed" after graduation, knowing well that they could only teach in "Jim Crow" schools. Now, if the logic of Cheyney's principal is followed, he will gladly accept the unwanted students from Philadelphia Normal and West Chester, and Philadelphia's Board of Education will further break both letter and spirit of the law by increasing its numbers of Jim Crow schools, to furnish teaching places for Cheyney's product. There would then be absolutely no difference, racially speaking, between education in Pennsylvania and that in Georgia.

4. The fact of there being more colored students in other State Normals of Penn-

sylvania than ever before does not alter the fact that they are there *because they are determined to have an education* for their life work, and not because they are wanted there. Dr. Smith's frank statement as to how he felt about his thirty-five colored students is eloquent enough on this point. *We are glad there are more students in Cheyney, too, for we have never been opposed to Cheyney as a training school for teachers. We are opposed to it as a State Normal School because it practically imposes segregation, while masking behind legal phrases.*

5. This final "point" of Cheyney's principal, that there is no student at Cheyney who has not deliberately chosen to attend that school is too clever by half. It guarantees the present, when Cheyney can accommodate only a few over one hundred students in its dormitories. It does not guarantee the future, when the state will have been asked to enlarge the plant and provide for the unwanted colored students of West Chester and Philadelphia Normal and others. Does the simplest mind suppose that \$800,000 for a Normal School for *Negro Teachers* will be spent for no purpose at all? Cheyney's principal knows better than that, and he knows that we know it, too. Ask Pennsylvania State Senator McDade, who introduced the bill which made Cheyney a Normal School in 1920, why he was opposed to the Civil Rights Bill also up before the Pennsylvania legislature that year. Ask the Haverford township *Negro* voters why they "cut" McDade, and sized up their impression of the "Cheyney State Normal" and of its principal, from this impressive incident. No man can serve two masters. We admire the fine gifts of Cheyney's principal as a literary man and a poet, but because of this indefensible position of his on segregation, which he denies, but does not disprove, we must oppose his public educational policy as unsound and hurtful.

In the school situation at Morton, Pennsylvania, we have an actual example of how the segregated school system as promoted by Cheyney works out in practice. In 1915, the school board at Morton within the same county as Cheyney, condemned the old school building and taxed all the citizens, colored and white alike to build a new one. But when the new school building was opened, they lined up all the colored children behind two teachers, supplied by Chey-