

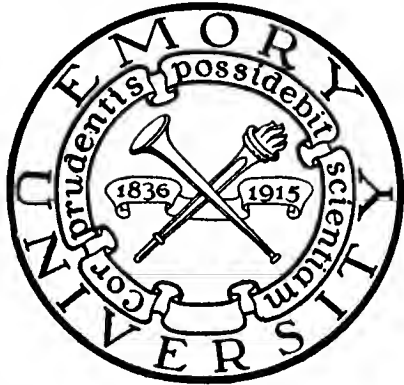
ASSOCIATION FOR THE RELIGIOUS
INSTRUCTION OF THE NEGROES IN LIBERTY,
COUNTY, GEORGIA

9th Annual Report

1843

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NINTH
ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
ASSOCIATION FOR THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION
OF THE
NEGROES,
IN LIBERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA,
TOGETHER WITH
THE ADDRESS TO THE ASSOCIATION
BY THE PRESIDENT
THE REV. ROBERT QUARTERMAN.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE ASSOCIATION.

Savannah:
PRINTED BY THOMAS PURSE.
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OFFICERS FOR 1844.

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REV. ROBERT QUARTERMAN,

VICE PRESIDENT,
REV. I. S. K. AXSON.

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MISSIONARY.
REV. CHARLES C. JONES.

NINTH ANNUAL REPORT

FOR 1843.

THE return of the Anniversary of the Association has once more called us together, and the first expression of our feelings should be that of humble gratitude to Almighty God for the unnumbered mercies with which he has been pleased to crown our unprofitable lives. Nor should we ever neglect upon these occasions to make mention of His mercies. The Lord has made His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and has sent His rain on the just and on the unjust. He has made the earth soft with showers and blessed the springing thereof. He has caused the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man. Our eyes have waited upon Him, and he has given us our meat in due season. And although the expectations of many, in the profit of their labour, may not have been realized, yet we must rejoice in the goodness of God. We may almost say He has suffered no plague to come nigh our dwellings. We have in some instances been afflicted, but with a gentle hand. He has given us quiet throughout our borders, and blessed us out of Zion. If we have been the recipients of so great mercies, our return in gratitude, repentance, faith and devotion should be correspondingly great. But truth requires us to say, that we have come infinitely short of it. There has been a remarkable absence of *converting* influences during the year past: not a solitary conversion in the two denominations *among the whites* under either the *ordinary* or *extraordinary*

means of grace which we have enjoyed. A solemn and startling fact! A fact which should awaken us all to serious self examination and to the exercise of deep repentance and humiliation before the searcher of hearts.

If such has been the state of Religion among the whites during the year, what has it been among *the Blacks*? Some may perhaps think that the religious state of the one class, has but little to do with that of the other. As well may they think that the religious character and conduct of the parent have little to do with that of the child. The negroes are intimately associated with their owners from day to day, and they necessarily exert a mighty influence over them, either for good or evil; an influence which too many, even christian owners, habitually disregard, to their own condemnation. I will only remark here as the particular state of religion among the negroes, will come up in another part of this Report, that while I cannot say that we have had a revival of religion, we have had from time to time pleasing evidences of the presence of the spirit of God in the conversion of sinners and in the sanctification of the members of the Church.

I proceed to lay before you, very briefly, and in the same manner as in former Reports, the labours of the year.

PREACHING.

Our regular stations at *Newport, Midway, Sunbury and Pleasant Grove*, have been supplied with preaching, in the proportion of *one Sabbath in three*, with the exception of *Sunbury*, which in consequence of the greater destitution of the people around that station, has been supplied *once in two weeks*.

You will perceive that this is a greater amount of Preaching and of instruction than the negroes have ever before enjoyed in any one year, owing to the fact that the Rev. Mr. Law has devoted the one half of his time to this work. He has kindly furnished a report of his labours for the information and use of the Association, which is as follows:

Mr. Law's Report.

A minute report from me, of the labours of the year, I deem unnecessary, as that will be given by your Missionary, who devotes his whole time to the instruction of the negroes. Should

not these annual reports, in spreading out before the Association "what God hath wrought," and thereby furnishing abundant evidence of God's approbation of our efforts, serve to excite fervent gratitude and to increase our faithfulness and diligence "in labours more abundant" for the salvation of our servants? Should they not arouse us to some noble generous effort to awaken an interest abroad upon this subject that shall eventually give to all the coloured people of the Southern States, the same privileges enjoyed by the negroes of Liberty County?

Should the tendency of these reports be to weaken in you a sense of personal responsibility, or to weaken the force of the obligations resting upon you to do all you can for the moral improvement of your servants respectively, they will certainly prove an injury rather than a benefit. As the Sabbath School releases not parents from the obligation to bring their children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," so neither does the work of the Missionary release masters from the duty of training their servants for the service of God.

During the past year I have laboured the half of my time at the regular stations, Midway, Sunbury, North Newport and Pleasant Grove. At each of these stations the attendance has been good, very good, sometimes too large for all to find seats, exhibiting on the part of the people no diminution of interest either in the exercises of the Pulpit or of the Sabbath School. It is indeed a pleasant sight to behold a large concourse of our negroes meeting at the house of God on a Sabbath morning, well and neatly clad, their cheerful and happy countenances afford convincing evidence that their masters are neither tyrants nor despots, but christian men who feel that they too have a master to whom they must give an account of their stewardship. Go with them into the Sanctuary and their good order and attention are not surpassed by any white congregation. It is true some of them sleep during the exercises, and some are heedless and inattentive, but I think white congregations are not entirely exempt from these sins. I believe that our negroes are forming yearly a higher estimate and juster appreciation of their privileges. If this be so we need entertain no fears respecting our success.

That many of the Sabbath School scholars do not soon forget

what they learn in the Schools, I have had good opportunity of ascertaining, being engaged in carrying them through a review of Brother Jones' printed Catechism. Some of them remember with great accuracy the lessons previously learned in that Catechism.

Besides Sabbath preaching, I have engaged to some extent in plantation preaching during the winter and two of the spring months. The negroes manifest a very great interest in these meetings, but the continuance of them on my part must depend upon circumstances which I shall merely hint at, as I believe the subject has more than once been presented to your notice. *A house for worship on each plantation* would add much to the accommodation of the people and comfort of the preacher. Last winter I was compelled to postpone preaching on several plantations until the cotton could be got out of the cotton houses, which prevented in a measure my accomplishing the whole work I had laid out. Those planters who approve of these meetings can best show their approval, by making suitable arrangements on their plantations to have them properly conducted.

During the past year there have been at the different stations sixty-four inquirers who have come under my notice and received spiritual instruction. Of these, *twenty-three* have united with the Sunbury and North Newport Churches. Of the number that have been received into the Midway and Pleasant Grove Churches I am not informed. I conclude my brief report with a single remark :

The work in which we are engaged needs *much prayer*.

We all recognise prayer as the great medium of communication between God and his children, as the appointed channel through which flows to them the rich blessings of his grace. If then our labours are without abundant blessings, is it not because we neglect to hold communication with heaven ; because we are not found where this channel empties the waters of life ? The success of this Mission largely depends upon the fervent, persevering prayer of those who compose this Association. In a matter of so deep interest to every one of us as masters and as christians, surely our hearts cannot lack the feelings essential to that effectual, fervent prayer that availeth

much. Every member of this Association should feel himself under the most solemn obligation to make daily supplications to God that our servants may become the servants of Christ. And upon this subject, I know my brother Missionary will most cordially unite with me in this one, short request, "Pray for us."

JOSIAH S. LAW.

It gives me pleasure to add my testimony to that of this Report, that our congregations on the Sabbath have uniformly been full and attentive and orderly. I know of no one instance of improper conduct at any of our meetings during the year. Nor do I see any diminution of interest among the negroes, in their religious instruction.

And I must here record too, with gratitude, that our public worship has not been lost, (with the exception of a single Sabbath,) either from rain, or the state of the weather, or from ill health in the minister. Surely this is a special and great mercy both to preacher and people. The heart of the Minister longs for the return of the holy day, when he can enjoy the privilege of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ to his assembled congregation; and when the heavens are overcast and rain descends, or sickness disables, he is a disappointed and an afflicted man. A Sabbath lost! what a calamity to the people! what a precious opportunity lost for the edification of christians—the conviction and conversion of sinners—the instruction of the rising generation? Especially to a people who depend upon *oral* instruction alone.

I have hailed with joy the Sabbath sun, and I now remember with heartfelt pleasure our bright and holy days; our large and clean and cheerful, and sober congregations, and our overflowing schools—our calm and serious meetings of inquiry, and our meetings for prayer. Many of them have been very precious days to us, and we trust have been so considered by many of the people themselves.

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Our *Sabbath Schools* have maintained their usual number. The average at Newport, has been 126; at Midway, 90; at Sunbury 103; and at Pleasant Grove, 87, making a total of 406. The attention, the order, the intelligence and the pro-

iciency of the scholars, both children and adults, have been highly satisfactory. From the fact that we are obliged to communicate instruction *alone* and to the whole school *together*, necessarily, we must have a number of children, especially in a large school, where it is impossible, in our limited time, to catechise *every one*, imperfectly taught. I would remedy this if I could. It can only be remedied by taking a *longer time*, or by having *assistant teachers*. I cannot do the first consistently with the best good of the whole people, I cannot hope for the last, and must content myself with the Schools as they are. On the 17th September, I visited by appointment the coloured Sabbath School at Walthourville, and found 120 scholars and a sufficient number of Teachers present. I think the finest school I have ever seen at this retreat, and after a careful and somewhat extended and highly satisfactory examination of the school, I felt constrained, in justice and truth, to commend the scholars and encourage them in their attendance and efforts to learn, and also to unite with the teachers and superintendent in thanking God for their interest in this good work and the success with which their labours were apparently crowned.

On the 23rd July, I visited the School in Jonesville, by appointment, there were sixty scholars present with their teachers and superintendent. I examined the school extensively in the commandments. I found it as in years past, in an improving and prosperous state.

SABBATH SCHOOLS CONDUCTED BY MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

The number has been the same as the year previous.

Report of the Walthourville Sabbath School.

Our School for the last season commenced in May with seventy three scholars. In the course of two or three Sabbaths there were 130 in attendance. On an average about 115. The greatest number were children and youth, many of whom obtained a good knowledge of, and recited their lessons well. That which I have witnessed as more encouraging in the school than usual, was the readiness with which the young people of both sexes engaged in teaching. The apparent

interest of so many in the good work, has the effect to enliven and encourage the scholars and to secure their more punctual attendance. We cannot say what amount of good has been done, yet we are allowed to hope that so much important religious truth impressed upon the memory of the young may be the means in after life of bringing them to Christ as their Redeemer.

OLIVER STEVENS, Superintendent.

Report of the Jonesville Sabbath School.

The Sabbath School at Jonesville was well attended during the whole season. The number of scholars varied from 50 to 70 and the average was probably between these extremes. This was the largest number we have ever had and the interest manifested was as good as usual.

The number of teachers engaged was rather smaller than it was in '42, but still it was generally sufficient for the wants of the school.

These schools I consider to be of the first importance, and their establishment makes an era in the history of the African race in our country generally. Their condition enlightened and improved by the gospel will prove a blessing rather than a curse.

JNO. M. B. HARDEN, Superintendent.

Report of the Gravel Hill Sabbath School.

The school was resumed the last Spring on the first Sabbath in May, and was continued until the second Sabbath in November. We usually had from 20 to 30 scholars who attended regularly, and have had as many as 50 on certain occasions. With a few exceptions they behaved extremely well in time of school, and appeared anxious to receive instruction. I think there was more interest manifested in our school the past summer than I have ever seen since our school was first in operation. Those who attended our school were of different ages, some, I presume, had numbered their three score years and ten, and some not more than five years of age. We had seven teachers, four males and three females who felt deeply for the salvation of their scholars and were always found at the head

of their Classes, ready and willing to impart instruction to them. We expect by the permission of God, again to open our school early in the Spring, and our prayer to God is, that our feeble efforts may be more blessed than they ever yet have been and that our servants may soon be brought to know Him whom to know is life eternal.

W E. W QUARTERMAN,
Superintendent.

The average number of scholars in these schools, including children and adults, is 200, which added to the four schools at the regular stations, gives us 696 Sunday school scholars under a course of religious instruction. Deducting some scholars who attend two or more of the schools at the stations, the number will be something less.

The schools at the stations are now reviewing *the Catechism of Scripture Doctrine and Practice*, with Mr. Law. They have but lately completed a *Catechism on the Creed* with myself, and I am now taking them through a *Historical Catechism of the Old and New Testament*. We have advanced but a few lessons; from the extent of this Catechism, it will occupy the schools a very considerable time. I prepare the lessons as they are wanted and then *correct the questions and answers in the school*, which is the only successful way of preparing catechisms for the instruction of the negroes, or for the instruction of children and youth.

INQUIRERS.

An Inquiry Meeting is held *regularly after the Sabbath School every Sabbath*, and the *names of the Inquirers* are registered in a little book kept for the purpose. By reference to this register I find that at the four stations 126 persons have, during the year, presented themselves for instruction; at Midway, 49; Newport, 17; Pleasant Grove, 28; Sunbury 32. A number have, after a season, ceased to come, many still continue, and some have been received into the Churches: in Newport and Sunbury Churches, 23; In Pleasant Grove, 9; and in Midway —. Those who have ceased to come, have been chiefly from the stations and Churches, where *no special provision* has been made for their instruction. They have seen the Missionary

once in three weeks. The consequence of this neglect on the part of the Churches, to attend to their serious and solemn inquiry, has been, that their feelings have worn away, they have become disheartened and gone back to the world. Let no one say, if the Spirit of God had been really striving with them, they would have continued seeking until they had found. On this ground then, you might dispense with *all means*, at once in the kingdom of God! What did our Lord command Peter? "Feed my lambs—feed my sheep." What did Paul command the Elders of Ephesus? "Feed the flock of God." Are we not instructed that every man must be warned, and taught in all wisdom? That souls are to be watched over, and "watched for?" They that would see Jesus, must be led to Jesus. During the revival among the negroes in 1838 and 1839, the Churches were in the kind providence of God stirred up to attend to the instruction of Inquirers: a deep interest was felt in them by the committees of instruction, but since that revival ceased, that interest has greatly declined, and most injuriously declined in respect to the Inquirers who have come after. I can only repeat here, what was urged in the last Report, that the Inquirers demand the special and constant attention of the Churches. Of course it will remain with them to fulfil their duty to them or not.

Where the number of Inquirers has been so large, we cannot suppose that they all have been influenced by example, or desire of notoriety, or other unworthy motives:—in other words that all of them have been false or deceived. By no means. Many of them we have good reason to believe have been seriously impressed by the Word and Spirit of God, and some of them, so far as man can determine, converted to God.

Plantation Meetings.

The Plantation Meetings have not been as numerous the present as the past year. If life and health are spared, we hope to visit during the present season, the plantations in the District, so as to come within reach of all.

The past season, we connected with Preaching to the adults, a *catechetical exercise* for the *children*, which was held before the meeting for the adults. The effect of this exercise on the

owners, the *parents*, and the *children themselves*, we considered decidedly good. It induced owners and the parents to send the children to the public Sunday Schools. The children were stimulated of themselves to come. Some owners undertook to instruct the children at stated seasons. This plan we hope to continue.

Protracted Meeting for the Negroes.

In the month of November a protracted Meeting was held at Midway Church, in connection with the meeting of the Presbytery of Georgia, which continued about a week. By universal consent of the members of the Church and Congregation, Friday and Saturday were given to the Negroes for religious worship, and some who were not members either of the Church or congregation, gave their people the two days. Planters who were and who were not members of the Church, united cordially in it. Services were held on Friday and Saturday, twice a day for the negroes in their own Church. The house could not contain the people: more were *without* than *within*. On Sabbath, they attended from all parts of the County. The gallery of the white Church was filled, the colored Church was filled, and perhaps as many remained around the doors and windows of the Churches, as had been accommodated with seats within. Such a congregation of negroes had not been assembled in the county for many years. The greatest order and propriety of behaviour prevailed. The members of the Church were particularly grateful for the privileges allowed them, and all seemed anxious to hear the gospel. This protracted meeting for the negroes deserves to be mentioned as an index of the interest of owners in their eternal welfare, of their willingness to grant them every opportunity of salvation, and to share the gospel with them, and also as an index of the confidence reposed in the negroes, and of their general order, sobriety, and propriety of conduct. The moral effect upon the negroes has been of the most satisfactory kind. It has given them increased respect and attachment to their owners; and impressed them with the sincerity of their desires for their best good, and it has led them to believe more in the value and necessity of religion.

As it was somewhat of an *extraordinary* season, they looked for something *a little extraordinary in the public services* of the sanctuary. But no attempt was made to play upon their feelings, or "to get up an excitement" as some would express it. The Ministers of God preached the gospel in its plainness and power as God enabled them, looking to Him to bless that word, and carefully abstained from using any other than the ordinary means of grace. Some of the negroes expected that the ministers would "*call them up to be prayed for,*" but that was not done. The ministers might have done so, and created literally "*an excitement*"; and what would have been the end of it? Perfect delusion! A substitution of forms and acts and kneelings and prayers, for religion itself! Opening the door for disorders, for spurious conversions, for periodical religion, and a contempt for the ordinary and divinely constituted means of grace! As an individual minister I have never resorted to these means, and with my present views and feelings never will. Whenever used they should be the *effect* of genuine religious feeling and not the *cause* of that feeling. To use such means with ignorant people like our colored population, is madness. The tendency and the final result will be evil and evil only. Wherever the Negroes in the Southern country are trained up to shouting and groaning, and kneeling to be prayed for, and such like things, there is confusion and fanaticism and spurious religion. The last end of many worse than the first. I do not believe that the good sense and piety of this community would tolerate any such irregularities and excesses, and it is surprising that they should be tolerated any where.

Present Religious State.

During the close of the last winter and spring, there was an interesting state of things in Sunbury, and several very marked cases of conviction and apparent conversion. The members of the Church seemed more than usually awakened.

At Midway, we have had a large number of Inquirers, and some new cases occurring from time to time. Some sabbaths have been seasons of solemnity.

At Pleasant Grove, we have had new cases of awakening. I have received into the Presbyterian Church constituted there

nine on profession of their faith, and there are a number more in the Inquiry meeting.

At Newport, the Inquirers have been irregular in their attendance and some have seemed to decline coming altogether. I attribute this to the fact, that no Committee of Instruction has met with them at the church, and they have felt at a loss. In the Sunbury Church, the male members are very faithful in meeting with the Inquirers. It is well known to you, that Newport and Sunbury Churches, are without a pastor: a circumstance, which we who have to do with the colored membership and congregations of these Churches greatly regret. Efforts have been made to procure a Pastor, but thus far without success, and we can but unite our prayers with the brethren that God would direct to them some minister, who shall in piety and zeal and ability, meet all their expectations and supply all their necessities. That these Churches should be supplied with an able and engaged minister, who shall faithfully attend to the Negroes connected with them, is a matter of great consequence to the community at large, and it is of vital importance to the work of the religious instruction of the Negroes in the county.

I am not sufficiently acquainted with the religious state of the Negroes living remote from the Stations, to give any correct view of it; and therefore forbear to say any thing. Some Plantations and neighborhoods have seemed much engaged, while in others there has been a great deal of coldness, especially among the members of the Church.

While I cannot assert, as before remarked, that we have had a revival of religion among the Negroes, I am constrained to say that the religious state of the Negroes in the district embraced in our labors, has been encouraging.

Their general sobriety, order, and attention to their duties, and virtue, and honesty of character, have been commendable.*

* *The Christmas Holy Days*, taking our district generally, passed away like the Sabbath. There was a Sabbath stillness on most Plantations: the people quietly paying their customary visits, and attending to their various domestic affairs. Ardent spirits was introduced clandestinely on one Plantation, but I have heard of it on none other.

Series of Tracts on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes.

The increasing attention to the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States, and the very frequent inquiries made for information and for books and manuals of instruction, suggested to my mind the propriety of a series of Tracts, upon the most prominent points of the subject, and upon the best modes of operation. Presenting the subject to the consideration of a few friends in Savannah, gentlemen of enlightened views and christian benevolence of character, it met with a hearty concurrence, and a considerable sum was subscribed for the publication of the Tracts. On my return to the Country, a meeting of the Association was called in reference to this object, and the proposition made that the Tracts go forth under the name and sanction of the Association, which was agreed to and a subscription entered into in support of the movement. In furtherance of the object, a *Circular* was addressed to the christian public, through several papers of extensive circulation.*

Since the publication of the Circular, I have received letters approving the plan, and some individuals have promised Tracts. One only has been received. Thus far we have published none. It is our hope that suitable Tracts may be prepared, and we would again invite the christian public to the subject, and solicit Tracts on any one of the heads specified in the Circular, or on any other which may be deemed of equal importance. It is high time that the *real friends* of the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States, were putting *their hands* to the work in sober earnest. It is not enough that they commend their brethren who are engaged in the work, they should be willing to endure something of the burden and heat of the day; they should be willing to hazard something of their reputation and standing in the eyes of the world for the good of souls. They should not be content with what a few persons are doing in the South, and when questioned and pressed by men on the neglect of duty to the Negroes, in respect to their religious instruction, content themselves with saying, "here is a report of

* See Circular at the end of this Report.

efforts in such a place and there is a society in such another place, and we have Missionaries and some Ministers who attend faithfully to this class of our population," while they themselves are doing nothing, and perhaps in the district of country where they live, a general apathy prevails. "Brethren, let us not love *in word* but in *deed and in truth*."

While the duty of the religious instruction of the negroes is more distinctly and generally recognized in the South than it ever has been, and while a greater amount of instruction is communicated than in any previous time in the history of our country, and while we recognize with gratitude, a gradual advance in the whole country on the subject, yet let not the friends of the cause abate their interest or their efforts, but remember that compared with what ought to be done, and as we trust in the good Providence of God, is to be done, we are now seeing only the day of small things — we are only seeing the cloud as large as a man's hand rising up from the sea.

There are immense districts of country in the Southern States, in which no light has penetrated on this subject, and the negroes are living and dying in utter neglect and destitution of the means of grace. Their owners are little interested in the Gospel, hear it but seldom, and have yet to learn that the spiritual interests of the negroes are to be cared for, protected and cherished. They have yet to learn or at least *feel* their own great responsibility to God in this matter, and come up to the improvements in treatment, in labour and in discipline which christianity requires, and which their own interest, to rise no higher, will approve. The fact that the negroes, who constitute the labouring class and the productive capital of the South, *are immortal and accountable beings, and must be considered and treated as such*, is rising up in bold relief in men's minds and hearts, *nor can it be longer treated with contempt or neglect*. Hearts are feeling and hands are labouring at different and frequently at widely separated points, yet directly as well as indirectly receiving encouragement from each other. The lights are kindled, they will increase in number, they will approximate to each other, they will burn with an intense flame, until every dark portion shall be illuminated, and the

whole land become a flood of light. Let the friends of this good cause, therefore, gird up their loins and address themselves to the work : let them arise and build, for the Lord, He will prosper them.

State of the work in the Southern States.

It affords me pleasure to state to the Association, upon a review of the religious instruction of the Negroes in the Southern States for the past year, that the work has an *onward* and *increasing progress*.

The *Episcopal Church* is advancing in this duty. The eloquent and efficient assistant Bishop of Virginia, Dr. JOHNS, has brought the religious instruction of the Negroes before the Diocese of Virginia. He is of kindred spirit with Bishop MEADE, the senior Bishop, who has so long and faithfully upheld and prosecuted this good work. The influence of the Bishops of this Diocese cannot fail to be effective, and their present plan of resuscitating decayed Churches, and *uniting the whites and negroes in one charge*, must be attended with the happiest results, in building up their own denomination, and in conferring blessings upon multitudes ready to perish.

The Bishop of *North Carolina*, it is understood, continues his interest in this subject.

The Episcopal Church of *South Carolina*, taken as a whole Bishop, Clergy and Laity, is more active and engaged than in any other State in the Southern country.

The Bishop of *Georgia* is pressing this duty upon the Churches composing his Diocese, and from the Journal of the Convention, for 1843, I perceive, with good success. In all the churches where a colored Sabbath School can be collected and taught, it is done, and the Clergy are directing their attention to the negroes as a regular part of their charge. A parish has been organized in Glynn County, with special reference to the religious instruction of some twelve hundred negroes embraced in it, and the services of a Minister secured. May the example of these servants of God be imitated by their brethren of the same order throughout our Southern country. There is room enough for all denominations in this field, and we bid them all God speed.

Of the movements of the *Baptist Church* for the past year, I have obtained but a few fragments of information, which, however, have been favorable, and indicate progress in the work. It is not to be denied, that this denomination is in the Providence of God, called upon to be specially active in this field. Their colored membership is not exceeded, except by the Methodists, while they have more regularly ordained and licensed colored Preachers than all the other denominations put together. The Sunbury Association of Georgia agreed to raise the past year, by an assessment of *twelve and a half cents* upon every member, a sum sufficient to support two Missionaries to the Negroes, within their bounds—one on the Savannah River, and the other on the Altamaha. The plan is simple and well worthy the attention of the Churches. How small an assessment upon each member, will supply a fund sufficient for the support of a Missionary, in a vast number of associations, and Presbyteries! The association alluded to, has connected with it six African Churches, supplied with colored Preachers, and connected with these and the other Churches of the Association, 5,416 colored members.

The *Methodists* report a large increase of their colored membership for the past year, and their missionary efforts are extending. The Missionary Society of the Conference of South Carolina and Georgia has now about twenty-five Missionaries in the field, and new calls are presented for assistance.

The *Presbyterians* are acting in a manner that promises lasting benefits to the Negro population; they are *uniting* in their pastoral charges, *the whites and the blacks*, and *instituting Sabbath Schools for the colored children and youth, and preparing manuals of instruction for them*. The number of Pastors, and stated supplies, who devote a portion of their time to the Negroes, is on the increase; and their united judgment seems to be that the Negroes require *instruction* as much, if not more, than *preaching*; both, of course, must be united. Preaching can never be set aside as God's appointed means of bringing the Gospel before the minds of men; but the effect depends upon the degree of intelligence in the hearers. "Jesus went

about all Galilee *teaching* in their Synagogues, and *preaching* the Gospel of the Kingdom.”

An interesting report was made to the *Synod of Virginia* at its last session, which has been published and circulated, and a new impulse given to the subject; and one *prominent effort* in that State now, will be *the establishment of Sabbath Schools for the Negroes* in all the Churches, where the number of Negroes connected with them will admit of it. The *Synod of South Carolina and Georgia*, at its annual session, took notice of the subject in the Report on the State of Religion, and from all I could learn, there was an evident progress throughout the bounds of Synod.

The *Synods of the other Southern and South Western States* are interested, and in some portions of their bounds very efficient efforts are made by Pastors and Missions. The Synod of Mississippi prepared and published a small Historical Catechism for the religious instruction of the blacks, through the General Assembly's Board of Publication, and the Synod has a Committee now engaged in preparing another Catechism.*

* From the Methodist Denomination alone, do we receive *regular annual returns of the colored membership, and of efforts made for the instruction of the Negroes in the United States*. It would be of the greatest value to the cause of religious instruction, if *regular returns* were made of their colored membership, and of efforts to evangelize the colored population of the United States, by the *General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church*, (old and new school,) by the *General Conventions of the Baptist and Episcopal Churches*. The order for these returns, their *collection and publication*, would awaken a greater interest in the work in each denomination, besides promoting it generally throughout the country. And while the denominations are taking up the subject, I do not see why *their Committees or Boards of Domestic Missions* may not *receive contributions for the support of Missionaries and Ministers to our colored population, and advertise the Church* to that effect, and *call for Missionaries and invite information* as to any fields of labour opened to them. That it is their duty to do so, appears plain to my own mind. That thousands of dollars would be contributed for the purpose, I have no reason to doubt, and that Missionaries would offer for the field, I am certain. The whole country is ripe for action of this sort, and such action on the part of the different denominations will *give prominence, permanency and efficiency* to the work. *Who will move in it?*

Correspondence.

A few extracts from letters, received the past year from various parts of the Southern States, will close our Report :

“FEBRUARY 28, 1843.

“Your noiseless labours in Liberty County are not unobserved by the Christian World, and are watched with intense interest by many.”

“MARCH 22, 1843.

“The writer, after stating that a Lecture, opened for the Negroes in the City where he is located, which, from its novelty, had attracted many of the colored population, had dwindled so much, that he was induced to give it up, states as a reason, that besides the majority of them being of *other* denominations, they had *three Churches of their own with colored Preachers*, and meetings almost every night in the week, at which they indulged in audible expression of feeling, and such meetings of excitement and exclusion they preferred to meetings conducted with intelligent preaching and exposition, and with quietness and order. He thinks such a state of things an evil, and that it can be overcome only by “steadily and continuously labouring, satisfied at first with the day of small things, and acting upon *individuals*.” He adds—“I lay out my strength now on a colored Sunday School, of which I act as superintendent, and which is decidedly flourishing.”

“MARCH 16, 1843.

“I am now residing on my Plantation. The teacher of my children, preaches to my own and my neighbor’s Negroes. He has adopted your Catechism and I think much good has been the result. Several of the Negroes give decided evidence of piety. And experience has taught me that the facilities of discipline are just in proportion to the interest manifested on the subject of religion.”

“MAY 15th, 1843.

“I have been extremely cast down and disheartened by entering upon the Planter’s life, in earnest. I know not why a Christian, with God’s word before him, and the testimony of his own heart fairly taken, should feel surprise and discouragement.”

ment in the discovery of sin, however gross and ineradicable in others; yet, I was distressed and confounded, I must acknowledge, when I begun to understand the true state of morals among my Negroes. The Bible, and the experience of my own heart, have taught me calmer and juster views of the matter. I have read your Book on the *Religious Instruction of the Negroes in the United States*, with very great interest, and trust it will do good. Much interest continues to be felt among us here upon the subject of the religious instruction of the Negroes."

He proceeds—"Our difficulties are, I think, very great and somewhat peculiar," arising, as he remarks, from the fact that the majority of the Negroes in the district are of a denomination *different* from the two denominations who are making efforts for their instruction. He proceeds—"You are aware that, with a people dependent upon *oral* instruction imparted by another and superior class, *Church membership and association* are almost indispensable to render their instruction efficacious and permanent. The fact is, that to the Ministers of the Gospel must we look for sustained efforts in this matter. Churches must take it up and conduct their operations in the spirit of Christian charity, regardless of the contributions of the particular owners. The system now pursued by us here, is to have missionary labour only upon those plantations whose owners contribute to the Mission. This is attended with two serious evils:—the Planter is inclined to look for money's worth from the labours of the Missionary; the Negro has the feeling toward the Preacher as to one hired to attend to this thing. With you, these evils are somewhat obviated, and we are trying to provide a remedy here."

"JUNE 26, 1843.

"We received the *Reports*, for which we are much obliged to you. I exceedingly rejoice to find your prospects are so favourable. You are doing a great work; the books you are preparing will aid thousands. There is no field from which you could calculate to reap such a harvest of souls, and do so much permanent good to the Church and that neglected race."

"JULY 9, 1843.

"The Report of your Association for 1842 is calculated to

arouse public attention to the subject, and to give direction to efforts in behalf of that portion of our population. A better feeling is manifesting itself in this region, and I trust the day is not distant when the whole Church will be sensible of the responsibilities that devolve upon it. It is a happy remark in the address appended to your report, that if we justify slavery by the Bible, then are we bound to obey all the injunctions of the Bible in relation to the institution."

"JULY 12, 1843.

"I have seen some notice of efforts made by yourself, and others, for the purpose of disseminating information respecting Missionary work among the colored population of our land. I can cordially sympathise with you in all such labours, and sincerely hope that Christian interest and Christian effort will mutually sustain each other, and awaken a proper attention to the subject throughout our Southern country. My colored congregation is much larger than the white, numbering on ordinary occasions about two hundred. To them, I devote half my time, and I regard it my duty to become acquainted with the best means and manner of instructing them. I have, therefore, written to get some information concerning *the Tracts* about to be issued; and I herewith enclose you a small sum, that you may send me such as shall be or have been already published. May the blessing of God rest upon your efforts in Liberty County."

"JULY 17, 1843.

"Having examined with much interest the eighth Annual Report of the Association for the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in Liberty County, Georgia, and being desirous of aiding our Pastor in a like instruction of the colored people here, and especially in a catechetical manner, I would ask you to do us the favour of sending by mail, to my address, a copy of the Catechism adopted and in use in your schools. I am an *Elder* in the Church."

JULY 25, 1843.

From a Theological Seminary.

"DEAR SIR—There is in this Institution an organization called *The Society of Inquiry on Missions*, which has for its ob-

ject the obtaining of information as accurate and extensive as possible, concerning the state of religion in the world, in order that we may be able to select our fields of labour advisedly, and also that we may be incited to more fervent prayer and more diligent exertion for the salvation of our fellow men. Among other things, our attention has been directed to the *religious condition of the Negro population of our own country*; and we find that with us, as well as the Church at large, there exists a deplorable ignorance, and, of course, great apathy concerning the religious condition and prospects of the Negroes. Knowing that you have devoted much of your time to this subject, the Committee of the Society, to whom this subject is intrusted, have directed me to write and request your assistance, so far as your engagements will permit, in obtaining the information which we need. Our ignorance is extreme as to what *has been* done, what *ought* to be done, what *can* be done, and *what kind* of men are best adapted to the work. We are also in danger of falling into fatal error; those of us who know nothing of slavery as it exists in this country, are liable to be misled by the deceitful glare of the Abolition fanaticism, and those of us who know a little, are in danger of spending our strength in combatting Abolitionists, while we neglect the real interests of the people in question. I do not mean to convey the impression that there is now any such contest going on amongst us, for most of us are able to see that Abolitionism can do no good, but at the same time we cannot see that there is any other way of benefitting the Negro. Now, Sir, the object of those who have assumed the lead in this matter, is to draw off the minds of our fellow students from the subject of *slavery*, as one with which, as Christian Ministers, we will have little to do, and to induce them to regard the Negroes as two millions and a half of fellow sinners perishing for the bread of life, and to show that they are in a more favorable situation for the reception of the Gospel than any other destitute people of whom we know anything,—to show that something has been done, and that much more may be accomplished if attempted in the right way. We cannot hope to gain our end, unless we can obtain informa-

tion. We will gladly learn whatever you may think proper to communicate."

"AUGUST 7, 1843.

"I have read with great interest the accounts of your labours among your colored population, and think that you have chosen a most important and honorable field of labour, in which I trust you will reap an abundant harvest."

"AUGUST 7, 1843.

"It has been with far more than ordinary interest, that I have just read your communication in the papers, respecting the instruction of the Negroes in the South. Your plans appear to be just the thing that is needed, and they are worthy, not only of the prayerful consideration, but also of the hearty co-operation of Christians. The publication of the Tracts will, by the blessing of God, be effective of great good, and seems happily timed in the order of things for your object."

"SEPTEMBER 26, 1843.

"I have felt a deep interest in the religious condition of the Negroes, and have no doubt that Ministers generally have been greatly deficient in giving them religious instruction. Yet, I know that it requires great prudence and caution to give any advice or admonition on this subject, without arousing prejudice against the work, as well as the workmen. Something, however, ought to be done, and I cannot but hope that *Tracts* well written and widely circulated may answer the purpose. Resolutions of Presbytery, I find, do very little good; their effects have been transient as far as I have observed.

I would gladly engage as a Missionary to preach to the colored population in any part of the United States, if I knew where there was a field and how I could be supported. Will you be good enough to write to me whether there is any encouragement in Georgia of this kind? Have you any society to raise money especially for this purpose? or are there any Churches or individuals willing to support Missionaries in their service? My family is small and I would be contented with a bare support, if I could be actively engaged in preaching to full congregations of blacks."

"SEPTEMBER 12, 1843.

"If I wanted proof of the value of your labours in Liberty

Co., the state of things here would furnish it. How great the contrast! Until recently the only kind of religious instruction of importance the negroes have had, has been from colored preachers, at the — Church, Sabbath afternoons, where a crowd would assemble and get shouting, tearing off clothes and conducting so indecently, that I almost believe more harm than good was done. So indeed the gentleman who had charge of the matter told me. Our Church has about seventy colored members, the Presbyterians, perhaps ten, and the Episcopalians nine. Through Mrs. P——'s labours something is doing. The Presbyterian Church has commenced a Sabbath School with your Book, near one hundred attend. There being some dislike to use our Church for this purpose, which is newly carpeted and painted, about \$600 have been raised to build a *Lecture Room* for the instruction of our colored congregation. It is erecting and when finished we shall have quite a useful and large body of negroes to instruct from your Catechism. A minister told me the other day, "it is no use to preach to the Negroes, they will pay no regard to a white man; I tried it a few weeks ago, but one went to sleep and some went away. They want one of their *own colour*." "What did you preach to them about?" said I. He answered, "their duty to their masters." This without showing them the *principles* on which such duties were to be performed, seemed to me, for an only discourse, first and last, like "*mustard without beef*," as they say in England. Indeed the state of the Negroes here, morally, is wretched. Hardly one in ten in any Church know any thing about religion. The best of them will *lie* and cannot understand it to be wrong. Most *steal*, and every gross vice is so dreadfully common, that to them it does not seem inconsistent with piety!"

"SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1843.

"I have long looked with deep interest at your labours, in the instruction of the Negroes. I have in my possession your first printed sermon on the subject and your book lately published. I think I have also your 1st and 2nd Reports. But I am still not in possession of as full information of your plans and operations as I should desire. May I therefore beg you, if possible, to procure and forward to me a copy of each of the

reports of your association, I would like also to have a copy of the revised enlarged edition of your Catechism. I noticed with interest the proposition made by the Liberty County Association through you, for the publication of a series of Tracts, and I have been making the attempt to prepare one myself. We are behind hand in this State in regard to our efforts for the Negroes, especially for their thorough and systematic instruction. Something is occasionally done in families, and I know of one Pastor in a neighboring County, who gives out a Bible lesson to the blacks of his congregation once or twice a month which they learn by reading or hearing, and as he tells me with encouraging success. A gentleman of this place is giving instruction to some of the blacks on Sundays at a little African Church below our village. I have not known of any thing scarcely, that could properly be called a Sabbath School for the colored people, until the recent establishment of one in the congregation of my brother."

"SEPTEMBER 23d, 1843.

"We are trying to do what we can for the Negroes; but religion is at a low ebb. Yet we have whispers of better days to come."

"SEPTEMBER 26th, 1843.

"Believing from my understanding of God's Holy Word, that the relation of master and servant may subsist and yet the spiritual interests of the servant be secured, my desire is to know in what way I may most benefit them in that respect. The Tracts you propose to publish would be a great auxiliary to us in this State, who feel alike interested with yourselves, and I am glad to say, there seems to be an increasing interest on this subject with us. I learn also, that you have published books to aid those who desire to instruct their servants. These I have no doubt would be of incalculable benefit to me. For those which I have, prepared by persons who have not had sufficient experience in the work themselves, I consider very defective, not being adapted to the simple, untutored, uninformed mind of the Negro. Please send me a copy of each of your works, and also let me know something of the *practical part* of the work."

“OCTOBER 30th, 1843.

“At the late meeting of our Synod, the subject of the instruction of the colored population came up in a Report made by a committee. The Synod appointed a committee to procure a supply of suitable Catechisms for the purpose. The attention of the Synod was directed to your Catechism, as on the whole the best as yet prepared. I write to ascertain upon what terms and in what manner we can obtain a supply, say 200 copies? We design forming a Depository for the supply of the State. In returning home, I travelled with an Episcopal minister who told me he had used your Catechism and thought that Episcopaleans would use it, omitting only the chapter on Church polity. A very large Sabbath School for colored children has been begun in P., and there is evidently opening a large field in this State for this kind of labor.

“NOV. 16th, 1843.

“There are a few persons connected with the Presbyterian Church in this place about to commence a Sunday School for the Negroes. They are anxious to procure your Catechism. I understand that you have also published a work giving a history of the religious instruction of the Negroes, and the best mode of communicating it to them. Send one of the Books and 3 or 4 dozen of the Catechisms, and give us some information on the subject of instructing the Negroes.”

“NOV. 24th, 1843.

“I am encouraged in my special service for the Blacks. I ought to have written more about them. I regard them as the most promising part of my field.”

“DEC. 18th, 1843.

“I re-commenced the colored Sunday School yesterday afternoon at 2 o'clock, under most favorable auspices. Although the afternoon was unpromising, (in regard to weather) there were *fifty scholars* and *ten teachers*. I am Superintendent. After my ordination, I hope to be able to establish a meeting for the Negroes, on Wednesday night for preaching. I pray that God will give me grace *never to forget them.*”

“DECEMBER, 1843.

“In my travels through the State of —— I made inquiries into the state of feeling and action on the religious instruction of the Negroes. In Mr. P’s church is a very pious lady, who has been in the habit of keeping a Sabbath School for the colored part of the congregation. I found Mr. —— of —— a large owner, taking a great interest in their temporal and spiritual welfare. He has a large and flourishing Temperance Society among them. Rev. Mr. A——preaches frequently to the blacks and makes use of your Catechism. I met with a young gentleman, now in a Theological Seminary, who has an eye to the blacks, when licensed. Several of your Catechisms are in Rev. Mr. N’s congregation. This gentleman would be glad to receive and dispose of copies. As yet there is but little attention paid to the religious instruction of the Negroes in this State, but the attention of the people is turning to it. The pious part, are inquiring for light. The chief difficulty is, to know the best method of doing the work without exciting popular prejudice. All Reports from Liberty County are read with eagerness. The County has obtained celebrity, for taking the lead in this work. Persons from abroad, expect too much improvement, for the short time attention has been directed towards them. I have often been asked, if our Negroes do not speak as correctly as the whites? These things ought to stimulate the people of Liberty County to persevere in, and perfect their efforts, that they fall not below public expectation, and that the cause suffer no detriment at their hands.”

The Extracts from letters from different parts of the Southern States, will assure you that there is an onward progress to the work in which we are engaged, and impress upon you a deeper sense of responsibility, as the eyes of multitudes are turned upon us. We need what has frequently been urged, more fervent prayer for the blessing of God upon this work, and more individual effort among our citizens, on their own Plantations both for the instruction of the old and the young, and for their physical improvement. May God who has mercifully preserved us and prospered us in our labors, continue and increase to us,

in all our weakness and unworthiness, his presence and grace and unto His great and holy name, shall be the glory forever through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Association is called to mourn the loss of one of its members during the past year—*Mr. Albert T. Bacon*. He promised to inherit the feelings of his Father on the subject of the religious instruction of the Negroes, who was one of the first and firmest members of the Association. He was taken away from his interesting family, from a large circle of relatives and friends, from the Church and this community in the prime of his manhood and from prospects of growing usefulness. May we all wisely improve these visitations of God, and so live, by the assistance of His grace, that we may be found in peace and in preparation for our departure, at the coming of our Lord!

CIRCULAR REFERRED TO IN THE FOREGOING REPORT.
TRACTS ON THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OF THE NEGROES
IN THE UNITED STATES.

To the Christian Public.—The increasing interest in the religious instruction of the Negroes, and the continued calls for information, have influenced “The Association for the Religious Instruction of the Negroes in Liberty County, Georgia,” to undertake *the publication of a series of Tracts on the subject for general circulation.*

The Association proposes to print and to circulate the Tracts *gratuitously*, relying upon its own resources, as well as upon the co-operation of such persons as are friendly to the object and feel disposed to contribute towards it. The Depository will be in Savannah, and persons from a distance, wishing the Tracts, can order them from **Mr. THOMAS PURSE, at cost.**

The Tracts will be printed as fast as they are obtained, under the direction and control of the Association, in good style; and the object being to condense truth and information, as much as possible, they will be from four to six, eight and twelve pages each. The Association is impressed with the belief that great

good will result from this effort, if it can be judiciously conducted, and it has made every arrangement within its power to secure that end. At the present, more than at any time previous, something like a *head or fountain of information*, seems to be required. The feeling awakened in the public mind, needs to be properly cultivated and turned to good account. Many Ministers and private Christians in all our denominations throughout the Southern States, feel conscientiously bound to do more than they have done, and more than they see doing for the christianization of the Negroes. But they know not well *where* or *how* to begin. They inquire for the wisdom, the observation, and the experience of others, and with a little aid they may be encouraged to commence their labours, and accomplish much. While we have to contend with a great amount of apathy, and, if possible, stimulate it into action, we meet with *objections* also against the work, advanced by unenlightened or prejudiced minds, which must be candidly met and removed. One point of vital importance is the physical improvement of Plantations. Here, *at home*, so to speak, the work must receive substantial countenance and support; and it is here, *at home*, that we would look for reformation. It is desired, it is sought by not a few. The influence of a single Planter can be extended over wide districts of country. When he undertakes the work in good earnest, and by the blessing of God, brings the moral and physical condition of his people into something like order and prosperity, his Plantation becomes an example, and he rejoices in the improvements which he sees attempted around him. Few men can long resist the force of good example, and still fewer the current of public opinion and practice. There are districts of country in the South now in *the transition state*, from the old habits and customs of government and treatment, to those suggested by more enlightened and Christian views, supported too by considerations both of expediency and interest.

An increasing regard for the religious instruction of the Negroes, *in the Ministers* of our country, upon whose agency and zeal the work depends more than upon all other classes of

society put together, we hail with heartfelt joy. Their labours are annually and rapidly multiplying. It is not uncommon to meet with Ministers, especially those just entering upon the duties of their sacred office, desirous of being employed in this field. They would cheerfully entertain calls to do so, if assured of any thing like a support. It is not every Minister that, in the Providence of God, can afford to preach *for nothing*. They that preach the Gospel to the *Negroes*, must *live of the Gospel*. If a plan could be devised for raising a fund, in the different denominations, by Committees, Societies, or otherwise, for the support of such Ministers to the Negroes, and the fact be made known, and Planters be given to understand that they could be supplied, these Candidates for the Missionary field would be invited to different stations, and that speedily. The Planters themselves would contribute to their support.

The christianization of the Negroes is the great duty of the Southern Churches, whether we consider the Negroes as mere creatures of time, or expectants of eternity. It is a duty we owe to God, to our country, to them, and to ourselves. *The work has to be done.*

The Tracts will be required on such subjects as the following:—1. The spiritual destitutions of the Negroes in the Southern States. 2. Their moral and religious condition. 3. The great duty of affording them the Gospel. 4. Do both classes, masters and servants, constitute a Pastor's charge? Is he conscientiously bound to minister to both? 5. Are owners bound to provide religious instruction for their people? 6. Plan for the physical and moral improvement of Negroes on Plantations. 7. Plan for conducting family and plantation *instruction* for the Negroes. 8. Necessity and utility of Plantation meetings, and instruction by owners and Missionaries or Pastors. 9. Necessity and utility of Sabbath Schools for the Negroes. 10. Best plan of establishing and conducting them. 11. Oral Instruction—Extent to which it has prevailed heretofore in the world; how far it may advance a people in religious knowledge; success which attended it in past and present times. 12. Instances of success which has attended efforts for the re-

religious instruction of the Negroes, *private* and *public*. 13. Religious instruction contributes to the peace, good order, morality and prosperity of society. 14. Objections to it stated and answered. 15. Appeal to Ministers. 16. Appeal to Masters. 17. Appeal to Christian females. 18. Error and criminality of opposing this work.

An individual who will write a *good Tract* on either one of these subjects, will have it placed before thousands of minds, and he may be the instrument in God's hands of conveying temporal and spiritual blessings to destitute multitudes. What a field for usefulness? Are there not many pious Christians, and Christian Ministers, who will use their talents in this way to God's glory? We invite them to do so, and that speedily. Money for printing the Tracts is now lying in our hands idle.

A Committee of Revision and Publication is appointed by the Association, and all Tracts prepared for the use of the Association must be written in a plain hand, (accompanied with the name of the author, which may or may not be used, as shall be considered best,) and forwarded, *post paid*, to Dr. JOHN M. B. HARDEN, Secretary of the Association, Riceboro', Liberty County, Georgia, or, at the same place, to

C. C. JONES.

Riceboro', Liberty County, (Georgia,) May 25. 1843.

MOTIVES AND ENCOURAGEMENTS.

AN ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

ASSOCIATION FOR THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

OF THE

NEGROES,

IN LIBERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA;

DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING,

JANUARY 23, 1844.

BY

THE REV. ROBERT QUARTERMAN.

~~~~~  
PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE ASSOCIATION.  
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Savannah:
PRINTED BY THOMAS PURSE.
1844.

ADDRESS.

To rescue man, fallen man, from that depth of ignorance, barbarism, corruption, and death, into which he has plunged himself by disobedience to his Maker, and to fit him for that high and noble end, for which he was made, is to a benevolent heart, an object of vast and commanding importance, an object around which all the sympathies and sensibilities of the soul are gathered, and by which all its energies are roused and enlisted. Other objects relate only to the *body*,—this has reference to the interests of the immortal *soul*; other objects, to whatever importance they may rise, are short lived, of only momentary continuance,—this will live through time, survive the tomb, and live on through endless duration; it has reference, not only to the highest happiness of man in the present life, but looks beyond this narrow bound, and contemplates an interminable career of blissful existence. Who can think of man, debased and ruined by the fall—overspread with moral darkness—ignorant of his own true happiness—beguiled and deluded by Satan—enslaved by sin—a prey to corruption and every vile passion—and maturing fast for eternal destruction; but redeemed by the blood of the Son of God, favoured with an opportunity and all necessary means for returning to God, to virtue, and to happiness, without some rising emotion of pity and compassion for him, some anxious desire to reach to him the blessings of salvation! Can he be worthy the name of a Christian, or even of a Philanthropist, who, enjoying himself the rational and refined pleasures of civilized, social and religious life, beholds the hundreds and thousands of immortal beings around him with minds naturally as strong, capacious and susceptible of improvement as his own, but neglected, uncultivated and undisciplined, through trammelling circumstances over which they have no control—living in ignorance, immorality and impiety, which degrade the nature of man—are the bane of human happiness, and the fruitful cause of

misery, both in this world and the next, without dropping a tear of commiseration over them, raising a supplicating cry to heaven for them, and resolving upon a more actively benevolent effort to instruct, elevate and save them! If we indolently slumber over the ruin of the fall, the wide-spread desolations of depravity, or merely breathe forth occasionally a feeble wish, or heartless petition, that this depravity may be arrested, this ruin repaired, and man recovered to that dignity and happiness for which he was originally formed, what will it avail? Will our wishes, and even our prayers, accomplish for them all that good which they need, without positive, personal efforts? Will they become intelligent, virtuous, holy and happy, without our zealous, patient, untiring exertions to enlighten and instruct them? “If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled—notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body—what doth it profit?” Did the blessed Redeemer content himself with coldly *desiring* man’s salvation! Had this been the fact, no cheering intelligence of, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good-will to men,” would ever have been announced by angels to our apostate race. No—to effect the redemption of fallen men, the Son of God did *act*, and act in such a manner as did, and ever will, excite the admiration and astonishment of all virtuous intelligences. Though he was *God*, possessing all the essential attributes of Deity, yet he emptied himself and became *man*; though, as Creator, he was the rightful Sovereign and Lord of all, yet he humbled himself and assumed the form of a *servant*—for he came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many; and though he was the great object of Heaven’s love, adoration and obedience, yet, as servant of all, he went about doing good—submitted to wearisome toils and exhausting labours, yea, to the hatred, scorn and persecution of an ungodly world. Here is a model for universal imitation. Here may be seen that spirit which should animate the bosoms and regulate the lives of all,—that active, self-denying, energetic principle which ought to pervade and move the *whole man*, calling forth and employing all the

powers of both body and soul for human salvation. And had this principle, unfettered by depravity, unclogged by indolence or love of sensual things, and freed from every carnal restraint been allowed to operate with all its inherent strength in the hearts of Christians, long ere this, no doubt, this world of sin and sorrow, of tears and groans, of ignorance, degradation and moral death, would have been enlightened, regenerated and converted into a paradise of peace, and rest, and holy delight. Had the same spirit of love and self-sacrificing devotion to Christ and to his glorious cause, which animated the bosoms of the Apostles and primitive Christians, descended without any abatement in strength or energy to the generations who succeeded them, how vastly different would have been the moral state of the world from what it now is? But scarcely had they been called from their labours to receive their reward in Heaven, when the spirit of missions began to decline, and that burning, constraining love to God and souls, which animated their souls and impelled them onward in their self-denying labours, gave place to a spirit of internal dissensions and feuds in the Church, in which the moral destitution and miserable condition of the world were almost entirely lost sight of. The mantles of the Apostles fell upon very few. Nor did the spirit of simple, fervent piety, and Christian enterprise in primitive saints, go down to their successors without being greatly impaired.

To that bright morn of Gospel promise to the world, succeeded a long and dreary night. Age after age rolled away, while the Church, persecuted, hunted down and driven into the wilderness by that man of sin—the Romish Church, her spirits broken down and her energies crippled, could do little more than preserve, pure and unadulterated, the doctrines and sacred ordinances of the Gospel. And though this spirit was again revived, and brought into exercise by that noble band of Reformers, who boldly exposed the corruptions of the then reigning religion, breasted the storm of Papal persecution, and periled all in defence of the Gospel in its native purity, and freed from all human perversions and mutilations,—yet this spirit of uncompromising devotion to God and his cause has not been so general and strong among Christians, as to have led them fully

to comply with the Saviour's command—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," even down to the present day. And though the spirit of missions has received a new impulse within some thirty years past, and the Church has nobly undertaken more general and systematic efforts for the salvation of men,—yet, even now, are there millions who have not so much as heard whether there be any Saviour for sinners, and, I must add, *there are multitudes more, even in Christian lands, who, with strict propriety, may be denominated heathens.* To look not beyond *our own favored country*, after all that has been done to diffuse the light of the Gospel—(that great moral sun which alone reveals to men infallible truth and unerring duty, that great moral lever which alone is adequate to the lifting up of men from that depth of ignorance, degradation and ruin, into which sin has sunk them, and elevating them to that high and holy rank, for which they were originally made,)—how large is the number on whom this light has never shined, or so feebly, as to have been wholly ineffectual to the accomplishment of these blessed results? I refer particularly to the *Negro population of our country.* And to come *nearer home* still, whilst *among ourselves, in this county*, this light has been kindled, and kept steadily burning for more than half a century, how few comparatively, of the Negroes, have reaped all the advantages of moral elevation, and Christian instruction, and consolation from it, which it is designed and exactly calculated to impart?

Well satisfied with the constant and regular ministrations of divine truth and ordinances among us, (which were indeed free for all, both white and coloured,) for many years it seems scarcely to have been known or to have been remembered and acted upon, that the administrations of the Gospel, as suited to the one class, were almost an unmeaning and vain service to the other. Few seem to have considered, that a system of religious instruction, adapted to cultivated minds, would be to the unlearned and ignorant, unintelligible, and therefore unprofitable. And thus, year after year, rolled away without any special efforts for the religious instruction of the blacks, except what was voluntarily contributed by the Pastor and a very few Lay-

members of the Church. And here, I cannot forbear a passing tribute of praise to the memory of the Rev. CYRUS GILDER-SLEEVE, a former Pastor of the Midway Church and Congregation. During nearly a year's residence in his family, I often heard and witnessed the deep interest he felt in the instruction of this class of his Congregation. The evening of every Sabbath was devoted by him to this truly benevolent work, when all, who chose, or could make it convenient, assembled in his parlor, and were taught in plain, familiar language, adapted to their limited understandings, the great truths and duties contained in the Bible,—sometimes in the form of an address, occasionally intermixed with questions to ascertain whether he was understood by them, but most commonly in the form of a catechetical exercise on the fundamental doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, and almost always beginning with questions concerning the sermons, to which they had that day listened. For the most part, his parlor was crowded even to overflowing and an interest manifested by them in these exercises, truly gratifying to a pious heart. I was almost always present, except when there was not room to be admitted; and here, I believe, I received those impressions of compassionate sympathy for this class of people, which have never been lost, and which, I doubt not, will abide with me to my dying hour. Though not a professor of religion at the time, yet my attention was called to the subject of some special plan of religious instruction for them, better adapted to their comprehension than what is furnished to them in the public services of the sanctuary. For whilst my judgment is, and has long been, opposed to a separate or a distinct *ecclesiastical* organization for them, for reasons not now necessary to be named,—yet I have been equally clear in the belief that a distinct system of religious instruction, brought down to a level with their limited capacities, and gradually elevated, as their powers of understanding are strengthened, is necessary in order to a successful ministration of the Gospel to them. And in accordance with this conviction, so soon as I was admitted into the Church, I entered upon that work, and commenced a weekly meeting for their special benefit. This

meeting was continued with but few interruptions, with heartfelt pleasure to myself, and, I trust, with some profit to them, until I entered the Ministry. And though, since that time, my labours among them in this way have not been so regular and systematic as before, owing to an increase of other labours, they have not been wholly suspended or laid aside. Feeling an undiminished interest in this benevolent work, this labour of love, I have ever been ready to teach them myself, and to patronize every plan of operation for advancing their spiritual interests.

The Churches, too, began to awake to their responsibility in this matter—to devise and carry out more efficient plans for imparting religious instruction to them. In *our own Church*, (I know very little of the doings of sister Churches in this work,) a Committee was appointed, whose duty it was to attend, at their own convenience and discretion, to this very thing, the instruction of the blacks,—with direction to report to Session, quarterly, or before each communion season. For many years, this plan of operation, under the immediate supervision and direction of the Church, was pursued with more or less success, doing something, but far too little, to meet and supply the spiritual wants of that people. Still, however, the subject was not forgotten, but continued to spread from heart to heart, and with increased importance and interest; yet a growing conviction of the defectiveness and insufficiency of our then present plan of operation, seems to have been felt by all. The plan was not sufficiently extensive—it did not and could not reach all, or cover the whole ground which it was desirable to occupy,—it only embraced such as were *already under conviction of sin*, and were inquiring the way of salvation,—exerting little or no beneficial influence upon those who were *not already interested* in the subject of their own salvation. And while all were thus casting in their minds for some more extended and efficient plan, it pleased God to send to our aid a beloved brother, the Rev. C. C. JONES, whose heart had been long and deeply exercised on this very subject, and whose bowels of compassion had yearned over the moral condition and prospects of this very people. His return to his native county, with feelings of deep interest for the spiritual welfare of the Negroes, was hailed by

all the sober, thinking and truly benevolent among us, as a pleasing prognostic of a more systematic and efficient action in this benevolent work. Nor has expectation in this matter been disappointed. With a prudent, persevering energy and zeal, worthy of so good a cause, he has gone forward in this good work, preaching the Gospel to the poor and unlettered, dispersing from their minds the darkness of spiritual ignorance and error, and supplying its place with the light of Bible truth and duty. By his addresses and reports, he has called up our attention to this important work,—he has awakened conscience, and enlisted, not merely our sympathies, but our hearty co-operation. By his published documents, he has also shed light upon Churches and communities far and near, and moved them to more systematic and vigorous efforts in giving the Gospel to the Negroes.

Thus has this work been for years gradually advancing, as the Providence of God and the wisdom of experience opened the way and pointed us to it, until it has at length settled down into a systematic organization, in the form of this Association, for the religious instruction of the colored people. *Of the success* of this Association through the wise, energetic and persevering labours of our brother, you have been advised from year to year by his annual reports, which have always contained intelligence of a truly cheering and animating nature. Who has not listened this day to the report submitted by him, with feelings of gratitude to God for the past, and of increased encouragement for the future? Turning our eyes backwards some *ten years*, and contrasting *the then existing state of things* among this class of people with what it *now* is, who is not sensible of a great and important change in their moral and religious character, and tracing this change back through all subordinate instrumentalities up to the great first-moving cause, are we not constrained to exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" That there has been a great and manifest improvement in their moral sense, begetting in them more self-respect, and leading them to a more honest, upright and respectable outward deportment, is evident to every, even casual, observer. Drunkenness, theft, falsehood, profaneness, and even lewdness, (that hitherto

rying sin among them,) though not wholly banished, do now exist to a very limited extent, in comparison to what they formerly did. In external appearance, too, we rarely behold that filthy and disgusting squalidness, that utter indifference to even the common decencies of life, which so generally prevailed in former times. There is, also, a greater regard to the duties and obligations involved in the various relations of civil and social life; those obligations are better understood, and those duties are better performed. Indeed, they are in all respects a more decent, orderly and morally respectable people. Their tone of character in a civil, social and religious sense, is evidently elevated and improved.

But while this is true here, and in some Churches and communities elsewhere, it is far from being true of this people generally. In many places, they are still a people morally ignorant and degraded, enjoying no such means of systematic instruction as are adapted to the wants of their rational and moral nature; while, in many places more, the work is but just beginning. Christians are but just awaking from their long sleep of inactivity to their solemn responsibilities in regard to this class of men, and to feel that they owe them a debt of sympathy and christian effort, which, it is time they were at least, *beginning* to discharge.

And, my friends, though we have done much for the instruction and salvation of our servants, yet that much is but *little, very little*, compared with what must yet be done, before our duty to them will be fully performed. We, ourselves, are scarcely under way in this good work—the tug of labour is still before us; much time must yet be consumed, many sacrifices of both time and labour must yet be made, much patience must yet be exercised, and many persevering efforts must yet be put forth, before the object contemplated will be fully attained. But shall we be discouraged in view of the arduousness of the work? or shall we be so well satisfied with what has been already achieved, as to relax our efforts and sit down in ignoble sloth, till excited to renewed action by the more energetic and persevering example of others? Having nobly, and with *encouraging success*, embarked in this great work of rescuing

men from the dreadful consequences of the fall, to life and happiness, shall we now grow weary in well-doing, lose the ground already attained, and suffer a night of moral ignorance and death to come over this people again? Do we need *motives* to urge us onward in this work? Look, then, at *the greatness of the work aimed at!* It is nothing less than *the rescue of many immortal spirits* from guilt, moral degradation, and endless wretchedness in hell,—and reclaiming them to virtue, holiness, and eternal life in Heaven. And what object is there so great, so grand, so soul-stirring, and so altogether worthy of our regard, and our resolute, persevering exertions? Look, next, at *the numerous sluices of iniquity, which we shall thereby arrest and for ever close up*, as well as *the vast amount of virtue or moral excellence* in the kingdom of God, which will be *gained*, to the praise and glory of his name for ever and ever. Every sinner enlightened and regenerated, be his complexion what it may, is a soul rescued from sin, and from hell, its just reward,—brought out of the kingdom of Satan, and into the kingdom of God, as a trophy of his victorious grace, and thus fitted to shine to his glory for ever.

Think, too, *of the command of God*, which makes it the imperative duty of all to pray and labour for the salvation of all men. His command is, “Go ye unto all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Though this injunction was intended specially for his Apostles, to whom it was originally given, and their successors in the ministry, it does yet extend to all, imposing a most solemn duty on every one to use his instrumentality for spreading abroad the knowledge of his Gospel for the salvation of souls.

Again, remember that *it is the very object for which the Son of God and Lord of Glory stooped to the humble form of a servant—* endured the contradiction and persecution of sinners against himself—and, at length, suffered, bled and died upon an ignominious cross. And let his infinitely condescending and generous love constrain us to emulate his example, in patient self-denying labours, for making effectual to men that great salvation, which he has purchased for them at so great a price. Yea, let us not forget the direction of the Apostle, “but to do good, and to

communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." There is a luxury in doing good,—an inward peace and heartfelt delight spontaneously springing up in the soul from a consciousness of having contributed to the happiness of others. And the promise of God is, "They that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

Finally, let us remember that *it is the cause of God*, and therefore cannot fail, but must, and will, ultimately triumph over all opposition, and be crowned with complete success. Though there is much to damp the ardor of our feelings, yet there is much to inspirit and encourage us. Though there are many difficulties in the way, yet there are also many powerful inducements to impel us onward. If we are doing God's work, as we are sure we are, we need not fear a failure, for "if God be for us, who can be against us?" His word of promise is enough to dissipate every thought or feeling of despondency, and to nerve up our souls to unyielding constancy and zeal in this holy cause. Has not God promised, "To give the Heathen to His son for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession?" Hath he spoken? and shall he not do it? Away then with unbelief, with every disheartening fear. It is for the salvation of immortal souls that we are labouring,—to save them from endless miseries, and fit them for everlasting glories. It is the command of God; it is to imitate the example of the blessed Saviour; it is to advance our own peace and happiness, by doing good; and it is the cause of the All-glorious God, and must prevail.

