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Proceedings of the meeting in

Charleston, S.C.

May 13-15, 1845,

On the religious instruction of

Negroes

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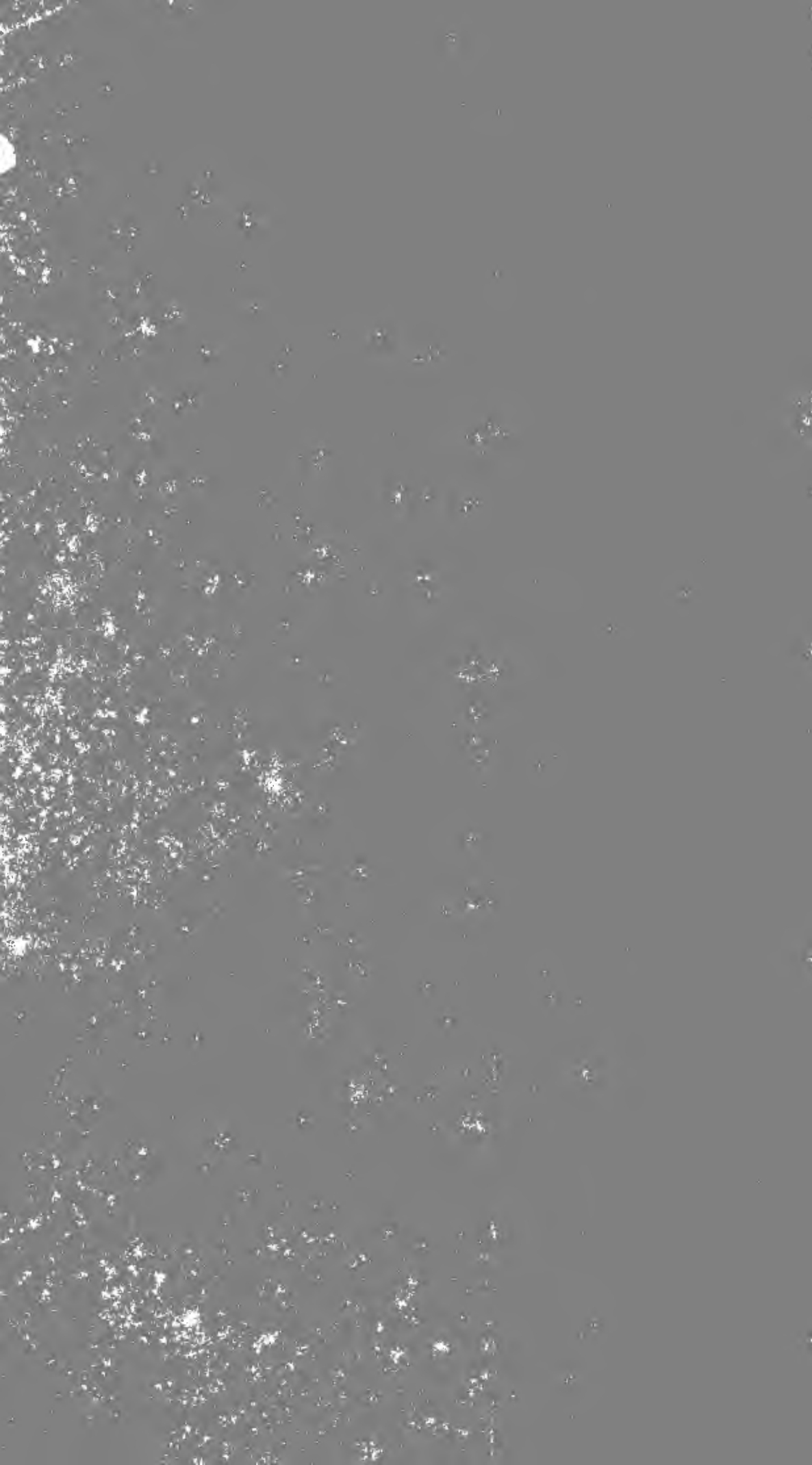
PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
MEETING IN CHARLESTON, S. C.,  
MAY 13-15, 1845,  
ON THE  
RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OF THE NEGROES,  
TOGETHER WITH  
THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE,  
AND THE  
ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

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PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE MEETING.

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CHARLESTON, S. C.,  
PRINTED BY B. JENKINS, 100 HAYNE-STREET.  
1845.



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# ADDRESS

TO THE

HOLDERS OF SLAVES IN SOUTH-CAROLINA.

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In March last, a few persons, considering the importance of a general and efficient attention to the Religious Instruction of our Negroes, met in conference on the subject: and believing that the end would be essentially promoted, by collecting and diffusing accurate information respecting the nature, extent, and results of the efforts known and understood to have been in progress; they addressed a Circular to a considerable number of gentlemen, interested in planting, in all parts of our State, requesting them to attend a meeting in Charleston, on the 13th May, in order to interchange information, and opinions, and to consult upon the proper use to be made of the facts which might thus be obtained. With a view to care and definiteness, they were also requested to furnish, in writing if convenient, and, if not, orally, replies to certain inquiries contained in the Circular.

Although there is reason to believe, that from a want of information of the nearest post-offices to the parties ad-

dressed, many of these circulars were not received, or were received too late, the proposed meeting was respectably attended ; and was continued by adjournments on the 13th, 14th and 15th May. The occasion proved to be one of deep interest. Many letters were received, and read : and several gentlemen communicated verbally their information and views, which were afterwards reduced to writing. These letters and statements were referred to a Committee of five, to be condensed into a Report, with such other information as they might possess, or obtain on the subject, to be published with an Address, by a Standing Committee of Ten, appointed to carry out the resolutions of the Meeting.

The Committee of Five having performed the duty assigned them, the Standing Committee have now the pleasure of placing before the public their Report, and of commending it earnestly to general and careful perusal. It proffers information upon a subject of the highest interest both to masters and slaves, in a religious view ; and of obvious relation to the character, comfort, efficiency, and management of our negro population. It contains,

1st. Extracts from *forty-four* letters received in reply to the Circular, from *twenty* different districts and parishes of this State, all from persons of high respectability ; to which are added communications from two gentlemen of Georgia, who on account of their known interest in the subject, and their long-continued personal exertions in this department of benevolence, were invited to take part in our deliberations, and to furnish their views.

2dly. Extracts from *seventeen* letters, received by a member of the Committee from persons resident in *eight* of the other slave-holding States ; and

3dly. Notices of the action of Ecclesiastical Bodies.

The letters under the *first* head are, for the most part, details of the personal experience and observation of the



writers, given with all the freedom and candour appropriate to the occasion.

Those under the *second* head afford less of detail ; but manifest a common feeling on the subject, equally gratifying and encouraging.

The statements under the *third* head present a general view of plans and operations, destined, we trust, to be more effective, with some results that will arrest and reward attention. Notwithstanding a want of statistics, to be regretted, they still show the system, of which the enterprize is susceptible ; and will suggest facilities to those who may find it necessary or useful to afford their people the aids of missionary labour.

These papers, taken together, will be found to collect the scattered rays of light shed by individual experience and example upon the practical difficulties which the inculcation of religious and moral truth upon our negroes must be admitted to involve. They afford, for instance, direct or incidental notices of—the different plans or means of instruction, both of children and adults ; the catechisms used and approved ; the catechists employed, and whether black or white ; Sunday and infant schools for religious instruction ; the expediency of colored preachers and teachers ; the influence of preaching, and of doctrinal or practical preaching ; houses of worship for negroes on plantations ; provision for their worshipping with the whites ; the influence of a personal interest in the object on the part of masters ; and of their example ; the happy agency of mistresses ; the comparative influence of religious teaching on the young and the adult ; and lastly, its influence on the labour, discipline, and good order of plantations.

The Standing Committee, therefore, feel a confidence, that the Report will not only suggest subjects of serious thought to reflecting persons, but will afford inducements to take up this matter in greater earnest. They believe that he

who concludes to bear his part in it, will find much that he may desire *for guidance*, and much that he may need under *disappointment or discouragement*.

But this document possesses an interest independent of its practical details. The concern which it shows to be deeply and extensively felt, for the religious and moral improvement of our colored population—a concern which can arise only from a religious sentiment—is itself a subject of congratulation.

In the fact, that the sentiment has been carried into action ; that it has fixed the attention of many persons far distant from each other ; that it has enlisted the efforts of Christians of various denominations ; and that a sound and simple teaching is the aim of all ; we have good ground for confidence that the work will prosper ; and that efforts so unostentatious, and often involving so much of self-denial and labour as those here recorded, will commend themselves to imitation, and by the blessing of God, will be more and more extended.

The *duty* of imparting a Revelation which Divine Providence has placed in our hands, to those whom the same Providence has made dependent on us, we trust may be assumed. A sense of that duty is first in the scale of motives to its fulfilment. But of the responsibility it involves, each individual is bound to judge for himself ; and to each the Committee leave it. They would, however, suggest, in aid of a right judgment, a consideration of the extent to which negroes in general are dependent upon the agency of masters for proper religious and moral instruction. We do not say, for *any* religious and moral instruction—for an ignorant, though zealous philanthropy frequently affords an agency, which, if not of questionable value, it would always be wise to supercede by a sounder teaching. In our cities and villages, opportunities of religious improvement are freely enjoyed by negroes : and although

they are no where prohibited to any, we know that to negroes in the country, there are insuperable impediments to the full use of the ordinary provision for worship and instruction in parishes and neighbourhoods. The distance of many plantations from the Churches; the insufficiency of accommodation, were it practicable to attend them; the impossibility of the negroes generally being reached by ordinary pastoral care—although we believe most willingly afforded, as far as it is practicable; and various other causes make the fact indisputable, that an arrangement for these purposes, to be really available to them, must be provided *at home*. The Gospel must be carried to them. “And how shall they hear without a preacher?” is a question which addresses itself solemnly to masters. The object must find favour with them. A merely *permissive* course on their part, is nearly, if not wholly, ineffectual. Appealing then, with strong hope, to the Report, as commending both by example and by the spirit that pervades it, a practical recognition of this duty of masters, the Committee would now advert to other considerations suggested by the document before us.

The stronger direction of the religious sentiment at the South, to the religious and moral interests of negroes, of which the Report gives evidence, is the more valuable, from the intimate connection of the sentiment with the soundness of that public opinion, which, in slave-holding States, is no unimportant part of the law of the relation between master and slave. Public opinion is every where an element of the law of society. But its value in the relation adverted to, is peculiar. There is consequently peculiar reason for regarding with concern, the influences that give it character. Positive enactment, from the incompatibility of general laws with the minutiae of plantation management, would, of itself, fail on the one hand to secure to the slave that which is just and equal; and, on the other, to embrace

the various good, which a master's position enables and inclines him to dispense. The relation has in it much of the patriarchal in character. If it sometimes demands the firmness of authority, it oftener claims an exercise of the higher and milder virtues of Christian kindness. The fact is important, that in reference to a relation which involves so much of discretion, there is a public opinion, a common law of sentiment, which influences and controls, if not with invariable, yet with valuable efficacy, the general management of our negro population. And since this moral control must be valuable in proportion as it is wise and pure, we cannot but regard with deep interest, the evidence that considerations of a religious character—a sense of our responsibilities, as religious and moral beings, are entering more and more into the feelings that govern the relation. A moral agency like this, gains strength by action. The efforts of masters to afford religious instruction to their negroes, will act upon others, and react upon themselves. We can scarcely impart, without also receiving the influences of Christian light and love. “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine,” is both philosophically and religiously true.

Nor is the force of these considerations impaired by the fact that masters, like other men, will exhibit diversities of character. The influence of a sentiment extends far beyond those who, by their virtues and their example, sustain and commend it; as men yield obedience to a law which they neither appreciate nor understand. A good man makes a valuable contribution to society in the mere influence of character. He is a centre of kind affections which glow around him, and warm into life the latent sympathies of others. In proportion as such men are multiplied will their modes of thinking and acting be infused into general sentiment. We trust, then, that

the spirit which gives life to the kindly agencies, both public and private, which the report exhibits, will diffuse itself, and, both directly and indirectly, elevate and improve that public opinion, with which the true interests of the relation of master and slave, both spiritual and temporal, are so closely associated.

We are led by this consideration to another topic, upon which several papers in the report give a gratifying testimony, viz.: The effects of the religious instruction of negroes, upon *labour*, and upon *discipline*.

We cannot separate, in any just view of the economy of life, its spiritual and temporal interests: and we delude ourselves, when we suppose, that any worldly purposes are permanently advanced upon purely worldly principles. A wise management would combine kindness with discipline; and aim at making labour effective, and the labourer happy. But these ends can only be effected by moral causes; causes that act upon character—that form, or reform the moral being. Would we most naturally look for effective labour, in the dissolute, the unprincipled, and the discontented; or in those who are godly and honest, regular in their habits, and satisfied with their condition? And in reference to which of these two classes would we hope for a discipline, mild, regular, and beneficial to master and slave? It would be madness to doubt which to choose, either for interest or comfort. Yet, we know of no other means of accomplishing ends so desirable, but those which divine mercy has made the subjects of express commandment; and of which love to God and love to our neighbour are the embodiment. It would indeed be strange, if instruction based upon these principles, worked no restraints, furnished no direction, and inspired no desires or hopes connected with well-doing. Precepts that inculcate good-will, forbearance and forgiveness; that enjoin meekness and patience under evils; that

demand truth and faithfulness under all circumstances ; a teaching that sets before men a righteous judgment, and happiness or misery in the life to come, according to our course of faith and practice in the life that now is, must, unless counteracted by extraordinary causes, so change the general character of persons thus taught, as to involve by necessary consequence both a change for the better in the life, and a change for the better in the government or discipline, of which they may previously have been the subjects.

There is no point, perhaps, upon which the progress of Christianity in its influence upon society is more remarkable, than in the modifications which have been gradually introduced into the penal administration of Christian nations ; and many of these, by the mere change in the moral character of society—through the influence of which, high and severe penalties have become obsolete, because they have become unnecessary. And we may add, that the milder and more peaceful modes by which differences between man and man, and classes of men, are determined ; and the kindlier aspect which all the social relations wear, when under the plain and simple influences of the gospel, demonstrate its tendency to supercede the law without us, by substituting a law within us—and prove its power to infuse mildness into government, without impairing in the least its authority.

Nor are these views to be rejected, from an apprehension that such results are not to be expected among a class of persons occupying the intellectual and social position of our negroes. Religious and moral influences may be modified by peculiarities of condition, without affecting our conclusion. It is the characteristic of the Gospel, that its power to inform and guide, adapts itself to the wants of all classes and conditions. Its doctrines and principles admit of a developement by which the



highest intellect feels at once enlightened and humbled. But the mercy of God in Christ is often more readily apprehended and felt by the ignorant, than by the cultivated; and the precepts and prohibitions, the warnings and hopes vouchsafed, are plain to all grades of culture. We cannot safely presume, that a gospel designed for mankind, is inapplicable, or inappropriate to the condition of any. God is no respecter of persons. The language of truth is addressed to all. "Give ear, O ye Heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. Because I will publish the name of the Lord." Then, let the name of the Lord be published. "They," says the Psalmist, "that know thy name, will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." And although in the doubtless wise providence of God, all classes do not seem, to human judgment, equally favored in their opportunities, we know that *all* are the objects of his care: and it is certain that much that is valuable may be attained, even if it fall short of our desires. God's spiritual, like his natural providence, is rich in means. The small rain, the dew that distils, and the showers, are vouchsafed to meet the diversities of our need.

But how do we act in matters of worldly interest?—We plant, although the season is discouraging, and the harvest will often depend upon the additional labour, or the new expedients which adverse circumstances indicate to be necessary. Thus should it be, in the matter under consideration. We would adopt a figure from the report, and say, *This* is emphatically, in a moral view, the *field* of the planter. Providence has assigned it to him. He may say, with the Apostle of the Gentiles, "*Necessity is laid upon me.*" And let him be of good courage. His labour

will not be in vain; for he will not work alone. Even when Paul planted and Apollos watered, God gave the increase. If he sow, *or cause to be sown*, the seed will most probably spring up. And although some fall by the way-side, and the fowls devour them up; and some fall among thorns, and be choked; and some fall upon stony places, and because they have no root, wither away; yet, other will fall into good ground, and take root, and bring forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.

Respectfully submitted, by

DANIEL E. HUGER, *Chairman.*  
 R. BARNWELL RHETT,  
 ROBERT W. BARNWELL,  
 HENRY BAILEY,  
 DANIEL RAVENEL,  
 F. R. SHACKELFORD,  
 W. CURTIS,  
 B. GILDERSLEEVE,  
 W. CAPERS,  
 W. H. BARNWELL,

} *Standing Committee.*

*Charleston, July, 1845.*

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING.

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For the purpose of securing a meeting of persons favourable to the Religious Instruction of the Negroes, there was addressed to a number of Gentlemen, chiefly Planters and Laymen, in the States of South-Carolina and Georgia, the following

### “CIRCULAR.

*Charleston, S. C., March, 1845.*

*Dear Sir,*—The character and extent of the religious and moral instruction afforded to negroes in our State, are subjects upon which we are not only misunderstood abroad, but in reference to which very imperfect information is possessed by ourselves. Authentic details, therefore, of much that is partially known to have been in progress, and of the results, as it regards the piety and morals of individuals, and the discipline of plantations, would be interesting and useful, not only to those who have been engaged in this effort, with greater or less success, but also to others who have hitherto been deterred or discouraged by doubts or difficulties. The information which may be collected among ourselves would, we think, show that the inculcation of the truths of the Gospel, in plainness and simplicity, upon our negroes, is not only valuable in itself, but has been proved to be practicable. A better knowledge of facts will suggest modes of proceeding which have been tested by experience, and can scarcely fail to awaken that more general interest in the

subject which all desire it should command. These considerations have induced a few persons, who have conferred upon the subject, to propose that a meeting of planters and others be called, in order to interchange information, and to advise and consult together as to the best mode of diffusing it.

You are, therefore, respectfully invited to attend a meeting for this purpose, to be held in Charleston on the 13th of May next, at 12 o'clock M. at the Depository in Chalmers street, and in promotion of the object, to furnish, in writing if convenient, but if not, orally, information on the following points, viz:—

1. The number of negroes in your parish or district; and, of these, the number which belong to the church in which you worship, and the number which belong to any other church.
2. The number of ministers or religious teachers who labour among them; and the denominations to which the ministers or teachers belong—whether any of them are persons of colour, and if so, under what regulations their teaching is admitted, and what is its practical result.
3. The number of times and the specific plan under which this instruction is given; and the number of children who are catechised.
4. The different comparative results observable in those who have grown up under religious training, and in those who have only received instruction as adults.
5. The degree of benefit apparently derived by the negroes generally from the instruction imparted, and particularly as it regards their morals—their tempers and their conduct in the relations of parent and child, and husband and wife—their chastity—their regard to truth—to the rights of property—and their observance of the Sabbath.
6. The influence of this instruction upon the discipline

of plantations, and the spirit and subordination of the negroes. Very Respectfully,

DANIEL ELLIOTT HUGER,	A. H. BELIN,
J. BELTON O'NEALE,	J. GRIMKE DRAYTON,
WILLIAM CAPERS,	T. PINCKNEY ALSTON,
JOHN ROBINSON,	HENRY BAILEY.
C. COTESWORTH PINCKNEY,	M. T. MENDENHALL,
W. H. BARNWELL,	W. P. FINLEY.
JOHN BACHMAN,	C. G. MEMMINGER,
LEWIS MORRIS,	DANIEL RAVENEL,
ROBERT W. BARNWELL,	H. W. PERONNEAU,
R. BARNWELL RHETT,	F. R. SHACKELFORD,
T. DRAYTON GRIMKE,	DANIEL E. HUGER, JR.
J. H. LADSON,	R. FULLER."

In compliance with the invitation contained in the above circular, a meeting was held at the Depository in Chalmers-street, Charleston, on the 13th day of May, and was continued by adjournments, on that and the two following days. The following gentlemen, being at different times present, viz:—

HON. DANIEL ELLIOTT HUGER.	REV. WILLIAM McWHIR, D. D.
“ ROBERT BARNWELL RHETT,	“ WILLIAM H. BARNWELL,
“ ROBERT W. BARNWELL,	“ CHARLES COLCOCK JONES,
“ JOEL R. POINSETT,	“ J. STUART HANCKEL,
DANIEL RAVENEL,	“ THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.
H. W. PERONNEAU,	“ BENJAMIN GILDERSLEEVE,
JAMES H. LADSON,	DANIEL ELLIOTT HUGER, JR.
JOHN CLARKSON,	THOMAS S. CLAY,
J. DYSON,	M. T. MENDENHALL,
COLONEL GRESHAM,	THOS. M. HANCKEL,
J. DRAYTON GRIMKE,	SAMUEL J. WAGNER,
N. R. MIDDLETON,	T. DRAYTON GRIMKE,
CHARLES LOWNDES,	F. R. SHACKELFORD,
J. McCARTER,	COL. LEWIS MORRIS,

The meeting at 12 o'clock on the 13th, was organized by calling the Hon. Daniel Elliott Huger to the chair, and appointing Dr. T. Drayton Grimke and Francis R. Shackelford, Esq., Secretaries, and its proceedings opened with prayer by the Rev. W. H. Barnwell.

Reports and letters were read from various citizens of South Carolina and Georgia, and for the present were

laid on the table. After an animated discussion on a subject connected with the religious instruction of the negroes, in which the Rev. Messrs. J. Stuart Hanckel and W. H. Barnwell, the Hon. R. B. Rhett, J. Dyson, the Hon. R. W. Barnwell, John Clarkson, Daniel Ravenel and D. E. Huger, Jr., participated, the meeting adjourned to 8 o'clock, P. M.

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*Depository, Chalmers-street, 8, P. M.*

The meeting assembled at the appointed hour.

On motion of the Hon. R. W. Barnwell, it was Resolved that a Committee be appointed to make arrangements for a PUBLIC MEETING on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes, at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Cumberland-Street, to-morrow evening at eight o'clock, and that notice of the same be given in the Gazettes of the City. The Chair appointed the following Committee for the purpose: Samuel J. Wagner, Dr. M. T. Mendenhall, D. E. Huger, Jr., and H. W. Peronneau.

On motion of the Rev. W. H. Barnwell, *Resolved*, that a Committee be appointed to whom should be referred all the verbal and written reports and letters communicated to this meeting, that a digest or abstract of the same may be prepared for publication, and that said Committee be permitted to incorporate therewith any information which they may now possess, or seasonably obtain, on the subject of the religious instruction of the negroes in the slaveholding States, and report the same to this meeting. The Chair appointed the following Committee under this resolution: Rev. Charles Colcock Jones, Rev. W. H. Barnwell, Henry Bailey, F. R. Shackelford, J. Dyson.

Verbal and interesting reports were made by Messrs. J. Drayton Grimke, N. R. Middleton, and the Hon. R. B. Rhett. The meeting then adjourned to 11 o'clock to-morrow morning.



Wednesday, 14th May, 11 o'clock, A. M.

The meeting assembled at the hour appointed. Opened with prayer by Rev. C. C. Jones. The meeting proceeded with the reading of additional reports and letters, which were referred to the Committee appointed to prepare a digest of the same.

The following Resolutions were offered by Rev. C. C. Jones, and being amended, on motion of Hon. R. W. Barnwell, were adopted: *Resolved*, That a meeting, similar to the present, be held in this City in the month of February, 1846. *Resolved*, that a *Standing Committee* be appointed, who shall *publish* the Report of the Committee appointed to prepare a digest of the information presented to this meeting on the subject of the religious instruction of the negroes, and that said Standing Committee endeavour to procure *an address* to the Slave-holders of the State of South Carolina, to be published with the Report or digest of the Committee: That the standing Committee shall issue Circulars and make arrangements for the meeting in February, 1846, and endeavour to procure further and more exact accounts of the efforts made for the religious instruction of the Slaves in the States of South Carolina and Georgia, to be submitted to the meeting of 1846. *Resolved*, also, that the said Committee make financial arrangements for defraying the expences of the present meeting. The following persons were appointed by the Chair on this standing Committee: Hon. R. B. Rhett, Hon. R. W. Barnwell, Henry Bailey, Daniel Ravenel, F. R. Shackelford, Rev. Dr. Curtis, Rev. B. Gildersleeve, Rev. Dr. Capers, Rev. W. H. Barnwell—to which, by unanimous wish of the meeting, the Hon. D. E. Huger was added *as Chairman* of this Committee.

The meeting now adjourned to eight o'clock this evening, to meet in the M. E. Church in Cumberland Street.

*M. E. Church, Cumberland Street, 8 o'clock, P. M.*

A large congregation having assembled, prayer was offered by Rev. B. M. Palmer, D. D. The Chairman, the Hon. D. E. Huger, in a brief and foreible address, urged the duty of affording religious instruction to our slave population; stated the design of the meeting with the citizens and public generally, and introduced to the assembly the Rev. C. Colcock Jones, and the Rev. Richard Fuller, D. D. Addresses on the religious instruction of the negroes were then delivered by these gentlemen, and the meeting adjourned after singing the doxology.

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*Depository, Thursday 15th May, 11 o'clock, A. M.*

The meeting assembled at the Depository at eleven A. M., and was opened with prayer by Rev. Stephen Elliott, Sen.

The remaining letters were read and referred to the Committee. The Chairman of that Committee, Rev. C. C. Jones, stated that it would be impossible to make out a report previous to the adjournment of the meeting, and requested permission to take the papers home with him and prepare the report, and transmit it to the other members of the Committee in Charleston, and to the Standing Committee for their approval and publication. The request of the Chairman was granted, and all the papers of the meeting ordered to be put into his hands. After some discussion in reference to the meeting of 1846, the meeting finally adjourned after prayer by Rev. W. H. Barnwell.

DANIEL ELLIOTT HUGER, *Chairman.*

T. D. GRIMKE,  
F. R. SHACKELFORD, } *Secretaries.*

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

The committee to whom the communications and letters addressed to the meeting were referred, with instructions to prepare a digest or abstract of the same, and to incorporate therewith such information as they might possess or seasonably obtain, on the religious instruction of the negroes in the Southern States, would present the following as their

## REPORT.

The committee would first direct attention to the letters from South Carolina and Georgia, in answer to *the Circular*; next, to letters from various parts of the Southern States, addressed at different intervals during the past and present year to a member of the Committee; and, then, to the action of ecclesiastical bodies on the religious instruction of the negroes, concluding with a few observations on the present state of feeling and action in the Southern States on this great subject.

1. *Letters and communications from South Carolina and Georgia in answer to the Circular.*

To prevent repetition, and to save space, *the Interrogatories of the Circular* will merely be referred to by the figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, whenever the writers are found to have answered them in order.

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“*Greenville District, May, 1845.*”

To the Hon. D. E. HUGER and others:

*Gentlemen,*—I beg leave to make a few statements respecting the religious instruction of the negroes in the upper portions of the State. My remarks will apply chiefly to Greenville district. 1. The number of negroes in the district, 4,000 to 5,000: a large proportion of the adults belong to the Baptist and Meth-

odist Churches. 2. There is no minister exclusively engaged in their instruction. There are some coloured teachers. Prayer meetings are held among themselves at which no whites attend. 3. In Greenville village religious services are held for the negroes, exclusively, at stated seasons, in both the Methodist and Episcopal Churches, by the ministers. A Sunday school of fifty scholars has been maintained for five years in the Episcopal Church, with encouraging progress. No other Sabbath school for the negroes in the district that I know of. We have in the district no specific plan of instruction, but the blacks enjoy the same religious advantages as do the whites. They generally attend some place of worship on the Sabbath. The privilege of attending religious services is, I believe, *universally granted*. 5. Some cases of decided moral improvement. We need more practical preaching, if we would have more decided results. The negroes are often better acquainted with the doctrinal than with the practical part of religion, and my own experience is, that *preaching alone* does not convey sufficiently definite ideas to the African mind. They require, *in addition, catechetical instruction* in the principles of Christ. Respectfully, &c.,

C. C. PINCKNEY, JR."

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"*Greenville District, May, 1845.*

I think there is quite as large a portion of the negroes in the churches generally, as the whites, particularly of the *Baptist and Methodist* denominations—not so many in the *Presbyterian*. About *one-fourth* of the members in the churches are negroes. In the years 1832, '3 and '4 great numbers of negroes joined the churches during a period of revival. Many, I am sorry to say, have since been excommunicated. As the general zeal in religion declined, they backslid. 2. Our churches

are furnished with *galleries*, or portions are set apart for the accomodation of the negroes. They pay good attention, and preserve order. There are a few licensed preachers among them of the Baptist and Methodist order. It has been thought they do some good. They hold meetings only by permission, and not frequently. 3. Our ministers often address the negroes in their discourses. There are some *mistresses* who instruct their servants at home, and, to their credit be it said, that they pay more attention to the instruction of the negroes than *masters*; and to their efforts we are indebted for so many well-ordered negroes. 4. There is a marked difference between those that are religiously brought up and those that are not. 5—6. The preaching of the gospel to the negroes is of incalculable advantage to them, both for time and eternity.

THOS. P. BROCKMAN."

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*"Spartanburg District, May, 1845.*

About *one third* of the members of the church at which I worship (the Methodist) are blacks: in the Baptist church of Spartanburg, about one tenth. I know of no minister *exclusively* devoted to the blacks. The whites and blacks of the different congregations worship together. The Methodists hold separate class meetings for their coloured members. The negroes are encouraged to attend public worship. I know of but two black men that attempt to preach: they are both of the Baptist denomination: neither are ordained. I do not think their preaching has been of much benefit. We have no special organization for the instruction of the negroes, either in the *catechism* or otherwise. Indeed, there does not exist the same necessity for such organizations in the up-country, where our coloured population is comparatively small, as in the low country where your numbers are large. I am perfectly

satisfied, from long observation, of the beneficial effects of religious instruction on the minds and hearts of the blacks. Those who have grown up under such instruction are more honest, truthful, moral, and well-behaved, more neat and clean in their dress, more improved in their manners, and devoted to their owners' interests than those who have not enjoyed the same advantages: and, when they profess religion, there is as little hypocrisy among them as among the same number of whites. A near neighbour of mine, a prominent member of the Church to which he belonged, had contented himself with giving his people the usual religious privileges. They gave him a great deal of trouble, especially in their family relations. About six months ago he commenced giving them special religious instruction. He used *Jones' Catechism*, principally. His people soon became interested; the children were pleased with the catechism; and at this time, there is apparently an entire change in the views, feelings, principles and tempers of all, without a single exception. He states that he has now comparatively no trouble in their management.

JAMES EDWARD HENRY."

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"*Union District, May, 1845.*

The number of negroes in Union District is about 9,000. In the church to which I belong there are upwards of twenty colored members. There are about two hundred belonging to the Baptist churches near me; and a great number belonging to the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. We have no minister who devotes his whole time to the blacks: but they have abundant access to the House of God on the Sabbath, where they worship with the whites. They are well provided for by their owners, and there are none or very few—if any—that would hinder their slaves from going to church on the Sabbath.



The preaching of the gospel has a good effect upon this class of our population. I wish you a prosperous meeting on the 13th.

THOMAS RAYE."

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*“York District, May, 1845,*

I am happy to say that for the last ten or twelve years there has been a remarkable improvement in the moral and religious character of our negroes. One cause has been, the removal of some of the worst characters amongst our slaves to the West. Another cause is, that in the upper districts of our state, our houses of worship have become comparatively more numerous and convenient, than they are in our lower districts and parishes. They are generally fitted up with galleries, for the accommodation of our coloured people. This has induced them to attend public worship, and a number of our clergy adopt the humane practice of giving a plain and simple lecture to the negroes, on Sabbath evenings, after the other services are over, upon the leading truths of the gospel, and particularly as to their duty as servants. This has induced a goodly number of them to apply for and (upon examination) receive the sacraments in the different churches. In the Presbyterian Church I learn and observe, that the number of black communicants partaking of the Lord's Supper, at the same season with the whites, amounts generally from one-fifth to one-third of the whole, and I presume that the relative number in our other churches is pretty much the same. The Meth. Epis. Church have 213 coloured people in their communion in this District. The benefit which our negroes have derived from religious instruction is very perceivable, especially in Yorkville, where they have constant opportunity of attending public worship: and those particularly, who have received instruction in reading and religious training from their masters and

mistresses are, some of them, so well qualified, as to keep up family worship: and it is surprising with what fervency and intelligence some of them are enabled to address their prayers to the Most-High. Thus religious instruction has a salutary influence upon them in all the domestic and social relations of life, and upon their individual characters in respect to chastity, truth, honesty and reverence for the Sabbath. JOHN BLAIR."

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*"Chester District, May, 1845.*

You are well aware, gentlemen, that the relation and intercourse between the whites and blacks in the up-country are very different from what they are in the low-country. With us they are neither so numerous, nor kept so entirely separate, but constitute a part of our households, and are daily either with their masters or some member of the white family: from this circumstance they feel themselves more identified with their owners than they can with you. I minister statedly to two different congregations. More than one hundred blacks attend—and we have about eighteen members. We have no missionaries for them specially. The gallery, or a quarter of the house, is appropriated to them in all our churches, and they enjoy the preached gospel in common with the whites. In our branch of the church, in this District (Presbyterian) we have no coloured teachers. Nor have we introduced any system of catechetical instruction for the children and youth. The advantage of religious instruction cannot be made more apparent than by a contrast of a community of negroes, which has enjoyed the privilege, with one that has not. It is very difficult to inculcate a proper observance of the Sabbath. The whites are greatly deficient in this duty, and the blacks follow their evil example. There is no community within my knowl-

edge, where the negroes more generally attend public worship, than that in which I reside. JOHN DOUGLAS."

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*"Chester District, May, 1845.*

There are about 213 negroes belonging to the people of my charge (the associate Reformed Presbyterian, or Seceders,) 23 of this 213 are church members (14 of them in my own church), 22 of this number can read and probably two-thirds of the whole number can spell and begin to try to read. All are catechised during the interval of public worship. The elders of the church are the Catechisers. The books used are Brown's child's catechism, the Assembly's shorter, and in a few instances the Assembly's larger catechism. In my pastoral visits "from house to house," I examine them all personally, and almost every family catechises them along with the white children every Sabbath evening. There is a disposition in all masters to improve their knowledge and morals. We have no instructors apart from the regular church officers and masters. "The different comparative results" connected with religious training, over those not so trained, are very observable—*where the owner has been careful to keep them under proper government and discipline*: but some of our very worst negroes are those with whom great pains have been taken, and yet to the neglect of necessary discipline. It is rare that adults can be religiously trained to satisfaction, when they have been neglected in their childhood. It is very common for farmers to trust their teams to their servants to haul their crops to Columbia, fifty or sixty miles, and never be an hour with them either going or returning. Generally servants are required, and always permitted, to be present at family prayers; and it is unusual to see the master praying and the servants working in the fields. It is almost impracti-

cable to ensure a constant attendance upon family religion by their negroes, who have been raised up without it.

W. FLENNIKEN.”

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“ *Marlborough District, May, 1845.* ”

1. There are about 4,000 in this District ; about 325 are members of the Baptist and 375 of the Methodist Churches. 2. No ministers in our district labour exclusively for the blacks. We have six Baptist and eleven Methodist ministers. A portion of the house in all our Churches is set apart for the negroes. One Sabbath in each month is set apart by the Baptist Church for their special benefit, and to settle church matters. In the Methodist Church they generally have preaching or religious meetings every Sabbath, where all who attend are as well instructed as the whites. 3. There is but one class of children (I think) catechised in the district. 4. I have not observed much difference between those brought up under religious instruction, and those that have not—except in the matter of attending public worship, which is in favour of those religiously brought up. 5. Many have been benefited by religious instruction. I am acquainted with numbers who are in their lives and characters witnesses of the fact. 6. Plantations under religious instruction are more easily governed, than those that are not. They have a greater disposition to do what is right. THOMAS COOK.”

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“ *Fairfield District, May, 1845.* ”

1. There are 12,517 slaves and 73 free persons of colour in this district. 535 Slaves are communicants in the Baptist Church. I have no returns from the other denominations. 2. All the churches in the District have convenient accomodations for the negroes ; and are so located as to bring the gospel within a few miles' walk of every negro in the District : nor do I believe that there is a plantation

that has not the liberty and opportunity of attending public worship. The average attendance of negroes on the Sabbath at the 12 Baptist churches, in the spring and summer, is 200, or 2,400 in all. There are 8 or 10 negro exhorters connected with the Baptist churches, and, I suppose, as many with the Methodist Church. They are allowed to hold meetings only agreeably to the law which requires a certain number of white persons to be present; except when the congregation is limited to the negroes on one plantation,—which is very common. There have been, but, at present, I know of no catechetical schools for the negroes of the District. 3, 4, 5, 6, Are summarily answered in the 2nd. The discipline of our churches, (the Baptist) is very strict over the coloured membership. Faithful deacons are appointed amongst themselves, who make reports to the churches of all disorderly conduct. Many of them are admitted by wicked men to be examples of piety.

JOHN DAVIS.”

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*“Darlington District, May, 1845.*

1, There are 7,560 negroes in this District: 800 of them attend the several churches at Society Hill. The Welsh neck Baptist church has 359 coloured members; the two other churches, the Epis. and Meth. about 150. 2. Oral instruction is given in the Episcopal Church by the minister every Sabbath afternoon,—average number of attendants, from 100 to 150. Similar instruction is given in the Baptist and Methodist churches every Sabbath morning by a layman: such as reading the scriptures with suitable explanations. The negroes take great interest in these meetings, and the attendance is prompt and good. I believe the same method is pursued by other churches and communities in other parts of the District. 3, 4. Negroes who have from childhood enjoyed the stated ministry of the gospel seem to assimilate themselves more to the

whites, not only in their manner of speaking, but of thinking and acting. And hence I believe it practicable for an experienced observer to single out from a large number of negroes, thrown promiscuously together, those who always have attended church and those who have not. 5. Within ten or fifteen years the standard of the negro character has been very much elevated—from the influence of religion on the character of both master and servant. All the vices common to them have diminished. The truth is, their nature is as susceptible of improvement as our own, and were it not for the deleterious effects of ardent spirits, which is stealthily introduced among them at intervals, we might mark the negro character as having undergone a change as great as the white, in proportion to the amount of intellectual culture. The practice now obtaining so generally among masters, of giving them either a certain proportion of the proceeds of the crop, or which is much more general, allowing them sufficient land to make a crop, has infused into them a greater regard for the rights of others. There are but few coloured preachers within my knowledge. They usually preach in the presence of white persons. I believe this class to be correct in their deportment and consistent in their profession.

J. D. WILSON.”

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“*Sumter District, May, 1845.*”

There are 22,000 negroes in this District. Seventy-one belong to the Baptist church in this place—Sumterville—with one or more watchmen of their own colour: and one hundred and fifty to the Presbyterian church: with a suitable number of watchmen also. During the life-time of Rev. R. W. James of the Presbyterian Church, he met the negroes for instruction every Sabbath morning at 9 o'clock, and after service made inquiries of the watchmen as to the conduct of the coloured members. I am told this



custom is observed in many places, and that at some churches a large number of children are catechised. At the church near this place, built by our excellent citizen, *Col. Moore*, for the benefit of his several plantations, and other coloured people of his neighbourhood, I am informed that the children are catechised every Sabbath morning by the Episcopal minister and a Methodist lay-member, alternately. The M. E. Church of this place numbers about 500 coloured communicants, who are regularly taught from the pulpit every Sabbath, once during the day, and examined and admonished every Sabbath evening by a suitable number of lay-members. A large number of children are catechised on Sabbath morning, once a month. We have coloured leaders which correspond in office and duty to the watchmen of other denominations. The limits of a single letter forbid an extended reply to your 4, 5 and 6 inquiries. Suffice it to say, that the good order which prevails in this village and throughout this district among our negroes, and the general and manifest improvement in their intelligence and character, I am of the opinion must be ascribed to the influence of the Gospel.

GEORGE S. C. DESCHAMPS."

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*"Sumter District, May, 1845.*

1. There are between 2 and 3,000 negroes in the parish of St. Marks, where I reside: from 70 to 100 attend the Episcopal Church: 9 of whom are communicants. 2. One Episcopal clergyman and one catechist employed by the vestry and wardens of St. Mark's Church, who are specially engaged in imparting religious instruction to our coloured people: likewise several persons of the Methodist denomination—ministers and others—are engaged in this work. 3. Ten plantations are attended by are catechist weekly: 420 adults and 160 children are regularly catechised: and every Sunday afternoon the Rector of St.

Marks delivers a sermon for the special benefit of the negroes; and closes with catechetical instruction to those in attendance. 4—5. Although we have not been employed in this work a sufficient length of time to point to decided results, yet enough has been seen and known to create a strong hope that the benefits will be great and durable. The rapid progress of the negroes under my charge, particularly the children—under the excellent system of our catechist, has surpassed every expectation I had entertained, and realized the fondest hopes I could reasonably have indulged. Inducing or compelling slaves to abstain from the use of ardent spirits will be found a powerful auxiliary to religious instruction. In this respect, I have seen, but little difficulty, *where the master sets the example*. 6. Upon the discipline and subordination of plantations, religious instruction will be found generally and decidedly beneficial. J. DYSON."

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"Richland District, May, 1845.

1. The number in the District is 10,664 slaves and 407 free persons of colour. I shall confine myself to the lower part of Richland District, commonly known by the name of *Richland Fork*: lying between the Wateree and the Congaree. We have 2 Baptist, 1 Methodist and 2 Episcopal Churches—one of the last not yet completed. There are 523 coloured communicants of the Baptist churches,—105 of the Methodist, and 100 of the Episcopal. 2. During the last ten years, we have had 1 Baptist minister, 1 Episcopalian, and 1 Methodist engaged, at different periods, in the religious instruction of the negroes, and also 2 Episcopal and 1 Baptist layman. 3. The frequency of the plan of instruction has varied during the period mentioned. The ministers generally preached to the negroes a part of the Sabbath day: and some laymen, owners, catechised and instructed their own people at home. The Episcopal

minister has given instruction once a week on the plantations; in winter at night, in the summer in the afternoon. On one plantation a school, held about 30 minutes every day, has made great proficiency in learning the catechism and hymns, &c. 4—6. Those who have grown up under religious training are more intelligent and more regular in their attendance upon the means of grace than others who have not. The instruction has apparently produced a wholesome effect upon the character of the negroes generally. There are planters who confess this in respect to their own plantations. Clergymen and catechists are very great assistants to owners in the instruction of their *own* people. Catechetical instruction alone for adults (such as is given to children) does not interest them sufficiently to keep up their attention, but must be accompanied with familiar illustrations and exhortations, and should be short, but frequent.

JOHN CLARKSON."

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"*Richland District, May 1845.*

In the Baptist church in Columbia, of which I am Pastor, there are 372 coloured communicants. I am assisted in my ministerial labours among them by two licensed coloured preachers *in the town*, and four others at various *plantations*. These preachers hold meetings with the people at least two evenings each week. We have also three watchmen in town, and one on each plantation. I personally visit the colored members at the plantations once in three months, with the consent of the owners, and occupy, at present, three preaching stations on some week-day night for the purpose. I have found the owners of the plantations around not only willing, but desirous that we should preach to their negroes, and they find, as they expect, a better spirit and subordination among them. We have church meetings monthly, when we receive

reports of our coloured membership; and the Lord's Supper is administered once in three months, at which we require them to be present. The Rev. Dr. Hooper and the Rev. Mr. Frean occupy a station, six miles above us, once a month.

WILLIAM CURTIS."

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*"Richland District, May, 1845.*

1. In the town of Columbia, where I reside, there are perhaps, 2,500 negroes. The M. E. Church, where I regularly worship, has upwards of 600 coloured members; the Presbyterian about 15; the Episcopal 12. 2—3. The coloured members in the M. E. Church are divided into classes of from 12 to 20 or 30, and put in charge of class-leaders, who meet their classes once a week, sing and pray with them, and have particular conversation with every individual member, advising and exhorting them to good conduct and piety. The minister in charge meets the whole coloured membership once in four weeks, and holds a love-feast with them. None but our white ministers baptize, perform the marriage ceremony, or administer the Lord's Supper. 4—6. Religious instruction has much improved the slaves in their moral character. Many of the largest planters on the Congaree and Wateree rivers are affording their slaves every opportunity of attending the instructions of the missionaries. Some have built churches on their plantations for their people. The M. E. Church has three or four missionaries on these rivers; and the planters are much pleased at the great improvement religion has made among their servants.

ANDREW WALLACE."

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*"Lexington District, May, 1845.*

All our country churches have an apartment for the negroes, and the general custom is, after preaching to the

united congregation, the negroes, that desire to do so, remain and receive special instruction from the ministers. There are few negroes, compared with the number in the district, that are members of the churches; although they attend public worship very well. Two travelling Methodist preachers instruct them at the church where I worship, alternately. Some 60 adults attend. There are two Methodist Missionaries on the Congaree river below Columbia. Some of the plantations they serve, are owned by some of the wealthiest and most respectable planters. The mission is supported chiefly by members of other churches, and even *non-professors* of religion, pay liberally for the instruction of their slaves, which is a strong evidence of its practicability and usefulness. The Rev. J. F. Leppard, pastor of the Lutheran church at Sandy Run, has about 20 coloured members. He catechises and reads and explains the Scriptures to the negroes every other Sabbath evening: and has a great many who attend his ministry. A large number also assemble in Lexington village, where they are taught by the Theological Students of the Lutheran Seminary established in that village. Our instruction is all given by white teachers, orally, which I think is the best form, as it creates an association between master and servant that is not easily dissolved, besides that the instruction is more easily given. The benefit of religious instruction is very apparent upon the negroes. Many can give bright and cheering evidences of the truth of religion and its happy influence on their hearts and lives, and their hopes for immortality.

LEWIS POW."

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*“Abbeville District, May, 1845.*

There are 17 coloured members in the Presbyterian Church where I worship, to 63 white. The Methodist and Baptist Churches have a larger proportion. We have ministers who labour exclusively among the blacks. Pro-

vision is made for their accommodation in all our churches, and they are encouraged to attend public worship with the whites. The Presbyterian clergy generally address a discourse to the negroes every other Sabbath afternoon, and I believe the same may be said of the local Methodist ministers. I know of no coloured religious teachers, except a few, who conduct prayer-meetings among their fellow servants: nor do I know of any negro children that are catechised, except by masters in their own households. Religious training elevates their moral character, and makes them more faithful in all the relations of life. The deeper the piety of the slave, the more valuable is he in every sense of the word. I own some, and I know others whom I regard as worthy of all confidence.                    JAMES GILLAM."

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*“Georgetown District, May, 1845.*

The Parish of Prince George, Winyaw, numbers about 13,000 slaves. The number attached to the Episcopal Church, to which I belong, about 300: the number worshipping with the Methodists, 3,200. The Baptists would claim full half this number—say 1,500. The rector of All-Saints, Waccamaw, visits 2 plantations in the parish, each once a fortnight. The rector of Georgetown, also, labours in this field. The Methodists allow class-leaders, and the Baptists admit preachers of colour. I have a place of worship for my negroes, open to all denominations of Christians. The Methodist missionary preaches to my people every alternate Sabbath, after catechising the children, about 50. By the rules of my plantation the Methodists and Baptists have prayer-meetings at given houses, each twice in the week, besides Sunday, when they meet, and pray and sing together. These meetings are exclusively for the negroes on my own plantation. I have had this custom for 15 years, and it works well. The number of negro children catechised by the

Methodist preachers is, at least, 1,000, and by the other denominations, 300. Of my own negroes, and those in my immediate neighbourhood, I may speak with confidence: they are attentive to religious instruction, and greatly improved in intelligence and morals, in domestic relations, &c. Those who have grown up under religious training are more intelligent, and generally, though not always, more improved than those who have received instruction as adults. Indeed the degree of intelligence which, as a class, they are acquiring, is worthy of deep consideration.

R. F. W. ALLSTON."

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*“Georgetown District, May, 1845.*

1. The number of negroes in All-Saints Parish is about 4,000: of these 1,100, including children, are baptised members of the Protestant Episcopal Church—of whom 150 are communicants, under the care of Rev. A. Glennie, Rector of the Parish. 2—6. Four ministers are labouring among the negroes, one Episcopal, two Methodist, and, occasionally, one Baptist. On my Waccamaw Plantation, a negro, who can read, teaches the children to repeat their catechism, and, during the summer months, reads the appointed service of our church on the Lord's day. On this plantation the Rev. Mr. Glennie, Rector of the Parish, has divine service once a fortnight, on Sunday morning, from the beginning of November to the month of May—and three times in the summer, in the afternoon. I employ a Methodist minister on my Pee Dee plantation. On both plantations I have churches for the accommodation of my negroes, and a catechist to instruct the children, besides the instruction afforded by the Rev. Gentlemen who officiate in them. The number of children catechised on my Waccamaw Plantation is 56, and on my Pee Dee Plantation, about 50: on the latter place the children are catechised during the winter and spring, once a week, by

a member of my family. Experience and observation have fully taught me the very great benefit of the religious training and instruction of the negroes in every particular inquired into by your Circular. JOHN H. TUCKER."

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*“Georgetown District, May, 1845.*

I have 10 plantations under my pastoral charge: finding on some of the plantations negroes of good character who can read, I get them of an evening, and on the Lord's day, to teach the children our church catechism, and the catechism set forth by Bishop Ives of North Carolina: and also to teach these, and such of the adults as are willing, the responsive parts of our Liturgy. I also tell the same, if their master permits them, to assemble together among themselves, and to use only the appointed service as contained in our prayer book. The good resulting from this is, that whilst catechising the children myself, my time is chiefly occupied in explaining to them what they have already committed to memory, and the people learn to worship God in a form of sound words, instead of listening to the senseless, if not erroneous, effusions of an ignorant negro. I cannot say that I have succeeded in this latter respect: there is ever a strong disposition in the blind to follow a blind leader. From Nov. 1st till May 31st, i. e. for seven months, successively, I hold divine service once every fortnight on 10 plantations: visiting 4 on the Lord's day, and the remaining 6 on evenings in the week. From June to October I live on the sea-side, and can hold divine service on only one plantation a week, on Sunday afternoon. The negroes on 7 of these plantations are near enough to the two Parish churches to attend the morning service: and at one of them the coloured attendants frequently amount in number to 200. When on the plantation, I use, of course, the appointed service of our church, the negroes soon learning to repeat, understand-



ingly, the responses, and uniting in the chants with much satisfaction. At the conclusion of the service, I ask them questions upon the short sermon which they have heard, upon a portion of our church catechism, and sometimes upon some parts of our Liturgy. I reported, last year, 331 children under catechetical instruction. I catechise them only on a week-day, and this but once a fortnight for 7 months in the year. At 13 or 14 years of age they are put to some light work, after which period I never see them, unless they feel disposed to attend divine service with the adults. I must add, however, that on 3 plantations the children are also instructed by the masters, or some members of their families, during the winter and spring months; and that on Sunday the larger boys and girls, who cannot be collected on a week-day, are catechised by the same. I must leave the planters themselves to testify to the beneficial effects of religious instruction. The remark is frequently made that the negroes on our plantations have improved of late years; that if only a few on a plantation act from religious principles, yet that a change for the better is visible in all: that considering their condition and their character hitherto, the number of communicants who have been suspended is not great; and that of 39 couple whom I have united in marriage in the last 5 years, I have not heard of one that has broken the marriage vow.

ALEXANDER GLENNIE.

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From a note handed in we learn that there are "7,350 negroes in the *District of Williamsburg*; and that there are 809 communicants in the two Presbyterian churches in that District."

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*"Brownsville, Marlborough District, May, 1845.*

The number belonging to our communion (the Methodist) in our District, is between 3 and 400; to the Bap-

tist between 2 and 300. The Presbyterians have two churches, and but a small number of negroes attached to them. We have no minister or missionary exclusively devoted to the negroes; coloured men occasionally hold prayer-meetings in the presence of some white person and with good results. Our churches are built at convenient distances for the accommodation of the inhabitants of the District, and, in all, there are seats reserved for the negroes. No master hinders his people from attending the public worship of God. And after the white congregation is dismissed, frequently an address is delivered to the negroes, suited to their comprehension. We have no children systematically catechised within my knowledge. All our negroes have, to a great extent, grown up under religious instruction; some, indeed, have been more favoured than others. The *benefits* may be seen by the most superficial observer. They have so improved that they seem to be almost another set of beings. Their improvement has been in proportion to their instruction. They are orderly, well-behaved, and seem to strive to fulfil the relative duties of life. They are faithful in their marriage relations. Immorality is discountenanced. They generally attend the house of God on the Sabbath. We scarcely hear of depredations upon stock, &c. They are more obedient and more to be depended on;—indeed, there has been an astonishing improvement within ten years past. We have few or no runaways,; and corporeal punishment is but seldom resorted to. My fervent prayers attend you in this good work.

NICHOLAS WARE."

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“*Charleston District, May, 1845.*”

*Two reports* from churches within the city of Charleston, of their *Sabbath schools*, were put into the hands of the committee, and they are here given in brief. It is believed that there are coloured schools in all the churches of the

Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal and Presbyterian denominations—and also in the *Circular Church* (Congregational) and in the *Scotch Church* (Presbyterian.)

“The coloured Sabbath school in *Trinity Church,—Meth. Episcopal*, has been organized 12 months. Beginning with 30 scholars, we have steadily advanced to 170. We have twenty teachers, male and female, and have every encouragement to persevere. This school has been constituted a *missionary society*. Its anniversary was celebrated on the first Sabbath of the year: at which time, some of the parents of the children, men of piety and intelligence, were called upon to address the school, which they did in a forcible, impressive and Christian manner.

F. R. SHACKELFORD, *Superintendent.*”

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“At the request of our Pastor, Rev. Dr. Smyth, of the 2d *Presbyterian Church*, I hand you a Report of our coloured Sabbath School. I formed this school in 1831. The attendance has varied from 50 to 200. At present we have about 100. *One-third* are adults. We meet every Sabbath after morning service; and use the catechism prepared by Rev. C. C. Jones. We have also a meeting of coloured persons every Sabbath morning at *sun-rise*, conducted by the *coloured leaders*, and, in most instances, with success: this meeting is very large, numbering from 4 to 500. A similar meeting is held in the afternoon of the Lord’s day, *just before candle-light*, and is as well attended as the morning service.

THOMAS R. VARDELL, *Superintendent.*”

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The Committee would recommend to the special attention of the meeting, and of all christians, the following notice of an association for the religious instruction of the negroes:

“*Charleston, May 1845.*

At your request I furnished you a brief notice of our

society for the promotion of the instruction of the negroes in the State. It originated February, 1844. Our number of members at present is not large. The amount of our annual contribution is \$665.00. As much more would be contributed had we opportunity of employing so large a sum. Our object is two-fold—*First*—to employ throughout the state *approved and efficient catechists*, who shall be members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and act under the direction and supervision of the ministry in that Church in their respective parishes, and aid them exclusively in the instruction of the negroes. And *second*—*To send ordained ministers of the P. E. Church as missionaries among the negroes* to such portions of the state in which they are needed and the planters are willing to receive and to aid them. We have been able to secure the services of only one catechist, such as the society could approve. He is located in St. Marks Parish, Clarendon, in the upper part of the State: under the care of the Rector of the Parish, who has made a most favourable report of his zeal, industry and efficiency, and the prospect of his usefulness. The planters look with much favour on the effort, and have pledged themselves to raise one half his salary. He has 12 plantations under his charge, and is constantly employed during the week in visiting them in rotation, for the purpose of giving the negroes—especially *the young*, catechetical instruction. The catechism used is the one prepared by Rev. C. C. Jones. Regarding every neglected plantation as a missionary field, such associations, as the one of which I speak, would furnish religious instruction to the slaves of owners who were neglectful of their duty to them, and also strengthen and encourage planters themselves who were ready and anxious for the instruction of their negroes, but could not act alone, nor obtain the cooperation of their neighbours.      THOMAS M. HANCKEL.”

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*“Hickory Hill, Prince William’s Parish, May, 1845.*

The number in Prince William’s Parish is little short of 8,000. I confine myself to the *upper part* of the Parish, contiguous to Barnwell and Colleton. In Sandy-Run Church we have 20 members—and about the same in the Baptist Church. We have no minister or teacher devoted to the negroes, and no coloured preacher or teacher. Three plantations catechise their negroes—the work is done by whites of the Baptist denomination every Sabbath. The success and progress of instruction has far outstripped my most sanguine expectations: we need, above all things, for this work, faithful, systematic teachers.

B. McBRIDE.”

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*“Prince William’s Parish, May, 1845.*

There is a Methodist mission in the lower part of the Parish, and also an Episcopal mission. This latter is under the care of the *Rev. Benj. C. Webb*. He has 8 plantations, and the number of negroes between 7 and 800; of these 111 are Church members: and 130 children are catechised. I am *one* of the number of five or six who contribute to the support of the Episcopal mission. *Rev. Mr. Webb* has been acting as missionary to our people six or seven years; a wholesome influence has been exerted over my own people, and they have been improved in every particular mentioned in your circular. My present pledge for the support of the gospel to my negroes is *50c. the head*, without regard to age. Whether spiritual good is to result from these means or not, it is not, I conceive, my province to determine. Viewing it, as I do, in the light of an imperative duty, I should regret the circumstance that would compel me to withhold the means, and thereby deprive them of the privilege. The Pastors of the Episcopal, Baptist, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, it is believed, attend specially to the spiritual welfare of the negroes

attached to their respective congregations. We have no coloured preachers—but all the churches have watchmen.

GEORGE C. MACKAY.”

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“*St. Andrew's Parish, May, 1845.*

The number of people on my place is 116, of which number 13 are communicants of the Episcopal Church with one or two exceptions. There are 13 baptized infants and one candidate for adult baptism. Rev. J. S. Hanckel is the only minister, and my wife and myself the only teachers employed among the people. I read the service and teach the catechism to all the people, every Sabbath afternoon. After family prayers on Wednesday night, I teach those who come voluntarily to be instructed. The children are taught constantly during the week by Mrs. M. and our sons, and know the catechism and several hymns. The children learn more readily than the adults: but many of the latter are very consistent and worthy professors. My experience is decidedly favorable to religious instruction. Among my people vicious habits have certainly been weakened, and a moral sense awakened. In every respect I feel encouraged to go on. Negroes are not what some would make them out to be: they are capable of good feelings, and being influenced by good principles, and I do not hesitate to give it as my opinion, that where every good motive may be wanting, a regard to *self-interest* should lead every planter to give his people religious instruction.

N. R. MIDDLETON.”

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“*St. Andrew's Parish, May 1845.*

The number of coloured communicants in the church of St. Andrew's Parish, of which I am Rector, is 16: and a number of adult candidates for Baptism—on trial—which in some cases I protract to two years. I am the only minister in the Parish who labours among the negroes. In-

struction is given to the negroes once a fortnight at the Parish Church and at two other stations—at both of which, chapels have been recently erected. The plantations are all contiguous to the stations, and the number in attendance of adults, varies from 50 to 120. My mode of instruction is expository and catechetical. The children are catechised by the owners on several estates, and some of them daily. The communicants exhibit evidences of marked improvement. In 7 years only one has been disciplined for immorality. Planters generally are encouraged by the good resulting from religious instruction, and I would refer you to their testimony. There are coloured Methodist and Baptist religious teachers, and the “practical results” of the teaching of these preachers, or class-leaders, or watchmen, (so far as my experience goes) is decidedly bad. J. STUART HANCKEL.”

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“*St. Peter's Parish, Pipe Creek, May, 1845.*”

There are 6,601 negroes in this Parish. Of this number there are 1,335 belonging to the M. E. Church: 719 under two circuit riders, who preach at their stations once a fortnight: and 616 to whom two missionaries are sent for their exclusive benefit. There are 10 ministers of all denominations—some have large congregations and many coloured members. There are many so-called “Negro Preachers,” but, more properly, exhorters—one or two on every large plantation. Some of them possess the confidence of the negroes and their owners, and are, in many respects, decidedly useful. I believe the Methodists have a school for the catechetical instruction of the children in all their societies. At the church in which I worship, we have more than 60 who are catechised every Sabbath. The regular attendance, the interest and improvement of the children, render the duty a source of pleasure. I say with great satisfaction, the condition of our negroes has been

improving, in every respect, for many years, and continues to improve, and I believe them to be a happy people, where they are judiciously managed and attended to.

EDMUND MARTIN.”

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“ *Glympsville, (Newberry District) S. C., May, 1845.*

The number of communicants under my ministry 400 : and the like number in neighbouring churches. Their conduct is generally becoming their profession. We have no teacher entirely devoted to them, owing to the smallness of the number owned by individuals in this section. Ministers give them special instruction on the Sabbath : and they have daily opportunity of instruction at home. We find that no coloured teacher has been profitable among us, owing, I think, to a want of capacity to teach. The degree of benefit derived by the negroes, from religious instruction, is great. They throng our churches to hear the Gospel, well-behaved and decent in their appearance ; and we see their improvement in every particular mentioned in your Circular.

G. W. BROOKS.”

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“ *Woodville, S. C., (Abbeville District, May, 1845.*

There are 3 churches of the denomination to which I belong (the Baptist) in this neighbourhood : they have 300 black communicants. The Presbyterian Church has 20. We have 1 Presbyterian and 1 Baptist minister. They lecture for the negroes once a fortnight, and once a month. We have one coloured exhorter. The result of their labours is favourable. The children are catechised in some private families, and in some of the churches. The benefit of religious instruction is great. I have, on my own plantations, several families who profess religion. They live happily—observe the Sabbath, and manifest by their walk and conversation a desire to live up to the requirements of God’s holy word. There are no people who hold



a station so fearfully responsible in a moral and religious point of view, as slave-holders, and as a consciousness of this truth has for a long time weighed heavily on my own mind, as well as on the minds of many with whom I have conversed, I cannot express to you, in terms too strong, my high gratification at the noble design of your effort.

RICHARD GRIFFIN."

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" *Colleton District, Edisto Island, May, 1845.*

The number on the Island 4,000. Of these 100 are communicants of the Episcopal Church, and about 200 attend our services: 157 are communicants of the Presbyterian Church: 100 of the Baptist Church. The Methodist minister visits 11 plantations: there are 345 church members and 180 children catechised. The negroes are preached to and catechised every Sabbath by the Rector. He is, also, ready to engage the services of an assistant to visit the several plantations of those who may desire it. Owners generally say that their religious negroes appear to have greatly profited by religious instruction, and exert a wholesome influence over the irreligious ones.

C. E. LEVERET."

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" *Colleton District, Edisto Island, May, 1845.*

There are 157 negroes in communion with the Presbyterian Church, of which I am Pastor, and from 250 to 300 attend our Sabbath services. No persons of colour are authorized to teach in connection with our church. My plan of teaching is by oral instruction and catechising. I use *Jones' Catechism*. The young negroes are catechised every Sabbath: I also instruct candidates for church membership, of whom I have 30 on my list. I have a service for the coloured people every Sabbath, after the whites have been dismissed. During a part of the winter I have preached every Sabbath afternoon, alternately, on two plantations, and catechised about 30 children. Within the

last five or six years, I have found a number of the children of the members of the church offering themselves for membership. This may be considered the result of religious training: a larger proportion of young persons than usual, is found among the applicants under my care, at the present time. There is, I believe, a general and decided improvement in the moral character of those who have the advantage of religious instruction. It would be difficult to say what has been "the influence of this instruction upon the discipline of plantations, and the spirit and subordination of the negroes:" as opinions on this subject vary with the prejudices, or the favourable feelings (and I might add the candour) of the planters.

WILLIAM STATES LEE."

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*"Colleton District, James' Island, May, 1845.*

There are 1,500 negroes in James' Island: 18 belong to the Episcopal Church I worship at: 300 to the Presbyterian. In this latter church, there are several coloured class-leaders, who hold weekly or semi-monthly meetings, but it is thought they do little good: and there is a plan in contemplation by the Presbyterian Clergymen to go into effect the 1st of June, to supersede the necessity of them altogether. There are exemplary members on almost all the plantations, who hold the office of a kind of watchman. The negroes attend public worship all the year, and after the morning services, on the Sabbath, there is a special service adapted to, and intended for, their use. They are then instructed in the catechism, the Lord's prayer, the Creed, and Commandments, all of which is explained: the two churches pursuing very nearly the same plan of instruction. Thirty or forty children and youth of the Episcopal Church attend a Sunday School in the summer, and are examined once a month by the Rector: and with good results. There are several plantation Sunday Schools,

by members of the E. Church, conducted chiefly by ladies. The interest in these Sunday Schools is increasing. Dr. Capers' and Mr. Clarkson's catechism, are used, and Dr. Watts' Hymns. My most orderly negroes are those connected with the church. Religious instruction promotes the discipline and subordination on plantations. My conclusions are the result of experience on my own plantation.

JOHN RIVERS."

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*“ Colleton District, Walterboro, May 1845.*

During a ministry of 21 years, a part of every Sabbath has been *exclusively* devoted to the negroes. I have two appointments distant asunder 25 miles, which together, place under my spiritual charge some 600. I find a perfect willingness on the part of the several owners of these slaves to have them religiously instructed, and a constant and increasing attention on the part of the slaves themselves. I spent 14 years of ministerial labour in the Parish of Prince William, and in that Parish, where perhaps the system of religious instruction has been as well tested as in almost any other portion of our State, the united testimony, as I have reason to believe, is in favour of systematic, prudent religious instruction, and that testimony is yielded in view of the beneficial results which have flowed from it. The practicability of moral elevation and spiritual improvement on the part of the slave, is placed by an appeal to facts, beyond question. Nothing seems to be wanting to render the whole work of the religious instruction of the negroes easy and successful but some more finished system of operation. May not a kind Providence be *now* opening the way for this, by concentrating the wisdom and energy of those who shall calmly, solemnly and prayerfully deliberate on this important matter. I devoutly hope so. EDWARD PALMER."

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*“ Colleton District, Walterboro, May, 1845.*

I shall confine my remarks to my own negroes. There was a revival of religion in Walterboro in 1832, when all my adult household servants professed religion: and as far as outward actions can decide the case, I have no reason to doubt their sincerity. The younger negroes of my household show likewise the good effect of early instruction. The negroes on my plantation being more numerous; their means of instruction less, and the restraints of vice diminished, have not given such favourable results. But instances are not wanting among them of the elevating and sanctifying influences of religion. Upon all my negroes, I think I am safe in saying that evidences of moral improvement are perceptible.

JOHN G. GODFREY.”

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*“ Beaufort District, May, 1845.*

In St. Helena Parish, there are 6,740 negroes—of which 51 belong to the Episcopal Church in Beaufort in which I worship: 1 to the E. Church in St. Helena Island: 2132 to the Baptist Church in Beaufort: 900 to the B. Church on St. Helena and 314 to Methodist mission in the Parish. One Methodist missionary devotes the whole of his time to the negroes: he teaches the people and catechises the children on 20 plantations: number of children catechised 300. No coloured teacher employed. There is great difficulty in conveying religious knowledge to the minds of adult negroes who have grown up in ignorance. The children and youth receive and understand the instructions of their teachers with comparatively great readiness and ease: and their intelligence and docility are decidedly improved. I am sorry to say, that while in general, our negroes have manifestly improved in their manners and appearance, the benefit they have derived from religious instruction as it regards their morals, their various relations, their virtue, regard to truth, and observance of the

Lord's day, is by no means so apparent and satisfactory as we desire. Their improved manner and appearance result, very much, from their habit of coming every Sunday, into town to worship. This habit exerts, I think, a decidedly bad influence on their morals. Removed as so large a number are, every Sunday from the control and discipline of the plantations, and impossible as it is for the Church to know and to control their conduct, they use their liberty in ways and for purposes adverse to their morals. Nothing seems to me more essential, in order to their becoming a religious people, than that they receive their religious instruction at home, and that they be subjected to the supervision on the plantation, of the minister of a Church, that will investigate and correct their wrong views and bad habits, and will help their infirmities. It is owing, I think, to the want of religious instruction and discipline on the plantations, that the influence of religious instruction on the discipline of plantations and the spirit of subordination among the negroes is so little seen and felt.

THOMAS FULLER."

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*"Beaufort District, May, 1845.*

The gospel has been preached for many years to our negroes on the Island of St. Helena: and many are leading honest and upright and Christian lives. Independent of Sunday meetings at our Church (the Baptist) the members meet two or three times a week in the prayer-house on their own plantations and unite in singing, praying and reading the word of God—(when any one is present who can read) and in exhortation. A method is used with the little negroes which is found effectual:—every evening they are assembled by an old black man, who is a Christian *and can read*. He teaches them the catechism as put out by our Methodist brethren, and with great success.

WILLIAM FRIPP, SENR."

“*Charleston, May, 1845.*”

I have been engaged about six years in the religious instruction of the negroes: not, however, uninterrupted. The improvement among my people, both in morals and religion (for they had previous to my labours among them enjoyed some religious opportunities,) has been very manifest, almost all the adults have become savingly acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus: they give evidence of this in regulated lives; a perceivable improvement appears in all their domestic relations—in their virtue, honesty and fidelity. For years I have not been robbed of the value of a pin. I hear little of Sabbath-breaking among them. In my plan of instruction, I unite with the adults, the *Expository* with the catechetical. They assemble on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings: and when the days are long, three times on the Sabbath; occasionally our parish minister gives us a helping hand. In teaching I *illustrate* truth very largely—and intersperse frequent *anecdotes*. This secures attention and interest. Of their own accord, my people planted and tended, year before the last, in their own time, a *missionary crop*. They made \$16, which was appropriated to the extension of the gospel. The Rev. Mr. Hazelhurst, one of our missionaries to Africa, visited and addressed them. They were much affected by his statements of the spiritual condition of their brethren, and they immediately made up a contribution for the furtherance of his mission. The children have been taught *Jones' Catechism* entirely. Mrs. D. and myself meet them two evenings in the week and on Sunday afternoon, with encouraging success; as yet no instances of hopeful conversion have occurred among them, but we cannot doubt the blessing of God on our labours. Much has been said slightingly of the piety of our negroes. Many suppose it little better than a compound of psalm-singing and animal excitement. I take a different view. I have never seen

clearer examples of undoubting faith—of holy love, and of a meek and consistent walk than among them.

J. GRIMKE DRAYTON.

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*“St. Peter’s Church, Charleston.*

Sunday schools for the coloured people have been kept up in connection with this congregation for the last 11 years. The instruction has been oral. The pupils have been, some of them, adults, but the greater part of them, children between the ages of 4 and 14. The average number has been about 200. There have been as many as 400. The present number is about three hundred. They have been instructed chiefly in the catechism of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and the rector of the church has been in the habit of catechising them in the church after morning and evening service, and has been gratified at the proficiency which they have shown. Several of the scholars have become communicants of the church, after careful instruction and close inquiry, not only into the outward, but the inward perception they have of the truths taught. Several of the pupils have died quite young, but have given to those around, evidence that they felt prepared to meet God. During the summer months a class of adults has generally been formed; and, in one or two instances, we have had reason to believe that those there taught had been converted to God; they having lived by faith in Christ, and died happily. Hymns and portions of scripture are also taught them.

During the last summer an effort was made to sustain a Daily school for those of the negro children whose owners were willing to send them. About 40 attended. They were taught orally, and made considerable progress. Several of the ladies of the congregation undertook to be present, alternating the duty. They were obliged, how-



ever, to give up the good work, as the winter came on, but it is hoped that it will again be resumed.

The number of coloured communicants connected with this congregation is but thirty-three. They conduct themselves, in general, with much propriety. The number could be very much increased but for the unwillingness of the rector to receive any but such as he has good reason to hope are truly converted. Meetings for prayer and exhortation have been held for them at sun-rise on Sunday morning, and on one of the evenings of the week; and after every monthly communion they are specially addressed.

W. H. BARNWELL, *Rector of St. Peter's Church.*"

P. S. "There is connected with each of the Episcopal Churches in the city, and, it is believed, with most in the Diocese, one or more Sunday schools similar to the above; and, in every congregation of the Episcopal Church, of which we know any thing, religious instruction is statedly given to the negroes.

W. H. B."

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*"Charleston District, May, 1845.*

The religious and moral instruction of the negroes has, for several years, been a subject of great interest to me, and I am satisfied that our exertions in their behalf (although much, very much, yet remains to be done) are not only misunderstood abroad, but unappreciated. To improve the negro is a far more arduous task than many, who have no experience in teaching them, are aware. They are naturally dull, and of weak intellect, but generally possessing good memories; and those who have been engaged in this work of charity, have to lament, after much labour, that the instruction they have endeavoured to give, although remembered, has been perverted and misdirected. We are not, however, to despair. The path of religion is plain,



and the way-faring man, though a fool, need not err therein. To proceed, however, in my reply to your interrogatories, I state first, to 1. That the number of negroes on North Santee, where I reside a portion of the year, is estimated at between 5 and 6,000. The church in which I worship has only been organized about three years, and religious service has been since held there throughout the winter and spring seasons, to about 250 adults. The number attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church, as I observe from the report of its missionary at the last conference, is 718 church members and 255 children. 2. There are three ministers labouring amongst them, viz.: 2 Methodist, and 1 Episcopalian. Persons of colour are not allowed to preach, although it is occasionally done amongst themselves, but, as far as I know, has always been discontinued by the ministers and planters. Meetings for prayer and singing are frequent; in the latter exercise they take great pleasure. 3. On my plantation, religious service is held every alternate Sunday throughout the year, by the missionary and by myself, when present, once every Sunday; having, therefore, on such alternate Sundays, a double service, morning and afternoon. The plan under which instruction is given is that of the Methodist Episcopal Church, prayer, singing and a plain sermon by the missionary; and, as adopted by myself, the service of the Episcopal Prayer-book, omitting the portion of the Psalter, followed by a familiar and affectionate appeal of my own, with such assistance as I am able to procure from books of sermons. And here I take great pleasure in commending the "sermons for negroes," lately published by the Rev. Mr. Glennie. The missionary frequently catechises the children on week-days, after the form published by the Rev. Dr. Capers. 4. As is usual, I have observed that the seed of divine truth sowed in childhood, makes but little growth in the period of youth. The amusements

of "out-doors" have strong attractions for such, and I frequently have to lament their absence from the house of worship. Our congregation consists mostly of those of adult age and the *very old*, who, in a religious point of view, are most valuable on a plantation, and, from their good counsel, and advice to the young, are, indeed, to be regarded as the conservative "salt of the earth." 5. The degree of benefit derived by the negroes from such instruction was very apparent on my plantation at first, nor have I now much of which to complain. Several have been added to my number of late years, who have had little religious instruction, and most of the irregularities observed, proceed from them. It is to be hoped they will become leavened with the lump. The tempers of my negroes are decidedly improved; we have little quarrelling and fighting, and hatred or malice are, I think, banished. Parents love their children, and in most cases, the children obey their parents. The duties of husband and wife are faithfully performed. I have heard of few instances of want of chastity amongst them, and but one case, in several years, has occurred of an unmarried woman having a child, on a plantation comprising, perhaps, 10 or 15 such. The truth is often perverted, and more frequently hid,—lies are common, when there seemingly is no inducement to withhold the truth. Their readiness at evasion is well known; but is it not the common vice of all mankind? Under a more full developement of religious instruction, the spirit of truth will guide them into all truth. They have a just notion of the rights of property, and thefts now amongst themselves are almost unknown. An old and respected neighbour once remarked to me, "I know not how it is that I cannot keep a fence-rail on one side of my settlement, whilst in that next to you, I never lose one," and one of my negroes told me "they had now no occasion to lock their poultry houses." This is

commendable and encouraging, yet I do not think it prudent to excite their cupidity by offering inducements, and therefore have both locks and bolts upon my barn and granaries. The observance of the Lord's day by abstaining from labour, is exact. The weekly provisions are distributed, corn ground, fuel provided, &c., usually on the Saturday afternoon, the tasks given them on that day being, if possible, short. My chapel has now been built about 9 years. It can accommodate 100 or 110 when filled. The bell from the steeple summons the negroes about a half hour before service, and is loud enough to be heard by the negroes of adjoining plantations, some of whom are permitted to come and hear the word of God read and preached. 6. I am satisfied that the influence of this instruction upon the discipline of my plantation, and on the spirit and subordination of the negroes has been most beneficial. Their spirits are cheerful, as I judge from their gaiety of heart, and the respect for the overseer, and drivers, is evinced by, generally, a ready obedience to orders. We have had no runaway for years, and an offer to such as exhibit dissatisfaction to exchange them for others, by a sale, is usually met with aversion. My neighbours concur with me in the remark that I have a well-ordered people.

JAMES H. LADSON.

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Interesting and encouraging statements of the results of religious instruction on their plantations were made *verbally* by the Hon. R. Barnwell Rhett, and several other gentlemen to the meeting, which the Committee have not been able to procure in writing, and must, necessarily, be passed over. Two communications were received from Georgia, and are the following :

“ *Bryan County, Ga., May, 1845.*

1. There are within the planting district of this county,

to which my remarks refer, about 1,300 negroes: nearly 400 of whom are connected with the Baptist Church, which, together with the Presbyterian, forms *one congregation*. The Baptist Church is composed entirely of negroes: the Presbyterian of white persons. The instruction and discipline of the former church have been, for a series of years, confided to the latter, and been conducted with the utmost harmony. To meet the wants of the baptismal and sacramental seasons in the Baptist Church, a minister of that denomination is employed to attend four times a year. 2. We employ, at the present time, no coloured teacher among our people, though in the discipline of the church great assistance is derived from the services of intelligent and faithful negro officers—known among them as elders and watchmen. 3. Besides participating with the whites, in one general service on Sunday morning, there is a second service by our minister, exclusively for the blacks: and during the winter and spring there are two evenings in each week devoted by him to holding meetings at the different plantations. There is no parochial system of catechising the children, but there are several plantations where this is done regularly on Sunday, and frequently through the week, by the female members of the Planters' families. 4. In point of intelligence, the difference is considerable between those who have grown up under religious training and those who have not, and I think a better standard of morals is sustained by the former; but the constant intercourse between the taught and the untaught tends much to keep down improvement in character and conduct. 5. When the system of religious instruction now existing in Bryan county was first introduced, the impression made on the negroes by its novelty, and the manifestation of good will on the part of masters, was very marked. The number which came regularly to church was much increased: their attention

and patience while taught, commendable, and there was a perceptible diminution of crimes and of intemperance, the fruitful source of them. The novelty has long since lost its influence, and I sometimes fear the masters do not take as much interest in the matter as they did at first: but still, I think very decided benefits mark the general condition of order and morals among our negroes, growing out of the efforts made during the last 17 years, for their moral and religious improvement. In all their domestic relations there certainly has been, within the limits of my observation, an obvious improvement. It has been remarked that negroes are very fond of their children, though very indifferent to their other relations. The improvement I have been struck with, is in the character and manifestation of this affection shown in the care they take of their children, the provision they make for them, and their willingness to have them controlled and instructed. I perceive, also, improvement in their tempers and intercourse as husbands and wives. The last point in which improvement is to be looked for respects their morality. In this a change for the better is seen in the greater frequency of marriage, the greater permanency of the relation, and the rebuke which a growing sense of virtue administers to transgressors. If in the church, they are expelled—if out of it, they lose, in some degree, the standing which they held before among their fellow servants. In nothing is the elevation of character more manifest than in the growing regard for truth. They have learned that without truth, there can be neither religion nor respectability. Where negroes are well-treated, the temptation to steal is less than many other temptations to which they are exposed: and we generally find a respect for property more readily cherished by them than some other of the virtues; for as soon as a negro begins to reform, he begins to accumulate some property for himself, and nothing so forcibly teaches

the value of honesty, as the having something to lose by dishonesty. The Sabbath is generally respectfully observed, for though the proportion which go to church do not exceed a sixth, yet there are no disorders on that day, and very little working, or fishing, or hunting. 6. Independent of its religious bearing, I do not hesitate to say, that the *policy* of imparting religious instruction to the ignorant and degraded is a *wise one*. It gives them something to hope for better than their present allotment affords them, and so helps them to bear, with resignation, unavoidable trials and privations: it adds the sanction of an invisible Power and government to those human laws on which the well-being of society rests: it draws together the well-disposed and orderly, and by their union gives force to their character and example: it establishes a *caste* among this people, always and in all ages held in respect by the young and the great mass of mankind: and it forms a body through which good principles and salutary regulations may be imparted to the whole community. But to make this system truly and permanently beneficial upon plantations, the entire discipline and economy of the plantation must be established and regulated in harmony with it. The master must not only provide that his people be religiously instructed, but he must manage them on those very principles he wishes them to govern themselves by. He must keep his own temper, and in all things be temperate: he must hold the truth sacred, and his word must be truth. He must respect the rights of property in the smallest matters, and cherish among his people a love of property honestly acquired: it will help them to become honest, and possibly teach him to control a passion—the love of accumulation—that may be too strong in his own bosom. A spirit of truth, kindness and justice, manifested by the master, will pervade his people, and he will find that while he has been trying to do *his people* good, by

teaching them fidelity and subordination, *he* has received a greater good, the mastery of himself.

THOMAS S. CLAY."

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 "Riceboro', Liberty county, Ga., May, 1845.

1. There are 4,212 negroes in the District of the county in which I reside and labour. Upon a rough estimate 1,000 of them are members of the different churches: say 350 to the congregational church: 550 to the Baptist—and 100 to the Presbyterian and Methodist. 2. There is one Presbyterian minister who devotes the whole of his time—and one Baptist minister who devotes the half of his time to the religious instruction of these people. There is *one coloured minister connected with and under the supervision and control of the Congregational Church*, who preaches to the colored congregation of that church between morning and afternoon services in the white Church, when the white missionary is not present: he performs marriages—attends funerals, &c., but administers *no ordinances*, this is always done by our white ministers. He also visits as he is able, and receives permission, the different plantations, and holds prayer-meetings with the people and attends to their spiritual affairs. There are *coloured watchmen*, regularly appointed in both the congregational and Baptist churches. Their duties are expressed by their *name*. They conduct plantation prayers in the evening where they reside, in connection with prominent members of the Church, of their own colour, and on other plantations when invited and permitted. They exhort the people: give instruction to inquirers—assist members in their Christian walk—warn and reprove, and report cases of delinquency. They are appointed by and are amenable to the white churches. *We have no coloured churches independent of the whites.* Such organizations we do not deem expedient. The



practical effect of the lives and labours of these coloured helps in our churches, on the whole has been beneficial.

3. There are 5 stations, supplied by the two ministers, or missionaries to the negroes, already referred to, *each, once in three weeks*: the stations are so located as to be convenient to large neighbourhoods of negroes, and the congregations which worship at one station are able in good part to attend one or more of the other stations. The plan of instruction is *oral*, and divided into *preaching* in the morning to the *whole congregation*:—and *teaching* in the afternoon, for *all the children and youth present* and as many adults as unite with them. Our manual of instruction for the schools is Rev. C. C. Jones' Catechism. The number of children and youth at the 5 stations in our schools, receiving instruction, is about 450. There are *three other schools at the summer retreats* in the county, which would swell the number to 600. These three schools are conducted by teachers from the congregational and Baptist churches, every Sabbath during the summer and autumnal months; we connect with these *Sabbath labours, plantation preaching and catechising*. The plantations are visited and the little negroes assembled and catechised and a lecture or discourse delivered to the adults and children united. These meetings we endeavour to make as frequent and as extensive as possible, as the success of religious instruction depends very much upon them. We hold also from time to time *meetings for the watchmen*, for their instruction, encouragement and support: *meetings also for church members*, at which we consider the state of religion, our obligations and duties, and prominent sins, &c., and every Sabbath, at the close of the day's services, an *inquiry meeting*, in which we endeavour to deal faithfully with souls convicted of sin: and after we have good evidence that they have passed the great change, we recommend them to the churches for membership. The



churches also have *committees of instruction* for inquirers. We have two Presbyterian ministers, who devote the whole of their time to the whites, and one Baptist minister, who devotes the half his time: and the Methodists preach at the county town, once in two weeks, and in all our houses of public worship where those ministers preach, there are good accommodations for the negroes, and they attend in considerable numbers. All this is *in addition* to the missionary labour performed among them.

4. The religious intelligence of those who have *grown up* under religious training, is far beyond that of those, who have received instruction as adults. *Our main hope of success is with the young.* 5. The improvement of the people in the county is very apparent. They are more faithful to the owners: more thrifty for themselves: more steadfast in their married relations: more attentive to their children: more honest and virtuous, and observant of the Sabbath, and more careful of character. For information on this head, I would beg leave to refer you to the eighth annual report of our association for the religious instruction of the negroes, in which you will find *thirteen letters* from the *planters themselves*, giving the views expressed above of the improvement of the negroes. 6. Their management has been made more easy: discipline is less frequently administered, and the people, generally speaking, are remarkably subordinate. Running away is rare and so are instances of severity. The effect of religious instruction has been to benefit owners themselves. Masters have improved, as well as servants. On the whole subject, as far as it relates to our operations and experience in this county, I would refer you to our *tenth annual report*. Therein you will find a full, yet brief history of the religious instruction of the negroes in this county from the earliest times to the present, together with our plans, efforts, results and inferences.

C. C. JONES.

Thus far *the Letters addressed to the meeting in answer to the Circular*. We would now present,

2. *Letters from various parts of the Southern States addressed at different intervals during the past and present year to a member of the Committee.*

We propose to give but brief extracts from a portion of them :

*From Virginia.* “ Within the circle of my acquaintance several of the large slave-owners have built chapels upon their Estates, to facilitate the religious instruction and worship of their negroes. Several employ Chaplains, who minister to them periodically. And all the masters—(but especially the mistresses) who profess Christianity, as well as some who do not, begin to be awakened to a fuller sense of their responsibilities touching this subject: and would be glad to do more in the way of giving religious instruction to their people, than they can find means of accomplishing in the present scarcity of ministers of the gospel amongst us. But God, in his Providence is exciting a new and lively interest in the ministers of every name, to look to the spiritual wants of this people. As far as my experience has gone, those who have made the greatest progress in the knowledge of the Scriptures, are in the same proportion, the best servants, as well as the most contented and happy individuals. I am of opinion, that the most successful system of instruction must commence with *infant schools*. Some intelligent coloured female: or the chief nurse on the plantation, might be fitted to take charge of such schools, and with good success: being subjected to the supervision, and receiving the assistance, of the mistress, or master, or missionary. Gospel truth, thus early implanted, is sowing good seed in fresh mould, with the fairest prospect of having it take too deep root for the evil one to catch it away. This system opens to our *ladies* of the Southern States, an ample field for

Christian benevolence and enterprise. A few of our ladies here have already engaged in this field, so manifestly opened by God himself, and others are fully prepared to follow their footsteps."

*From North Carolina.* "I believe, that with one solitary exception, our ministers have laboured without hindrance among the coloured portions of their flocks: and in the instance to which I refer opposition arose more from the Pastor's gathering the blacks into the body of the church, after service, than to his instructing them. The majority of our negroes, perhaps, are more in connection with the Baptist and Methodist, than with the other denominations."

We omit letters from *South Carolina* in consideration of the number already introduced in this report.

*From Georgia.* "I can only pray that the blessing of the Lord may continue to attend your work and labour of love. It is a glorious work, angels would delight to engage in it: our blessed master, if he were with us in the flesh, would doubtless be found more frequently in such a field of effort than in the temples that religious pride and form have erected to his praise."

*From the same State.* "Miss —— commenced the school in a kitchen at first. The number increased, so that she could not attend to them from the state of her health, and want of room. She communicated the fact to two of the college students, and the school was opened in another building, more commodious, and there were present on the first day 80. It finally attained the number of 200, who were served by twelve teachers, male and female. The progress of the scholars in this Sunday school has been encouraging; and although it may require to be suspended in the winter, yet it can be revived again in the spring and summer."

*From the same State.* “The religious instruction of the negroes has excited some attention among the Methodists. They have several agents engaged in the work in this county. The Baptist minister in our neighborhood preaches on Sabbath afternoon, twice in the month, to the negroes, and is much interested in the work.”

*From the same State.* “In my church the coloured Sunday School is continued with encouraging success. I have religious exercises for the negroes every Thursday night. I have been lecturing, in course, upon the Shorter Catechism.”

*From the same State.* “We have a Sunday School in our church for the Blacks. We numbered, during the Summer and Fall, from 75 to 96. The interest of the teachers has been without diminution, and the proficiency of the scholars, to me, astonishing. Let God’s glory be our object.” The *Pastor* of this church, in a letter, observes—“For the first time, yesterday, I *catechised the negroes publicly*. All who attend the school were present, and it was an interesting time. I went through 9 or 10 first chapters in Jones’ Catechism, and the questions were answered with great promptness and accuracy. I think the plan a good one.”

*From Florida.* “My wife continues her Sunday teachings to the children, and is encouraged in this path of duty by observing a decided advance. Who can tell that a blessing may not follow after many days, the bread now cast by her on the waters? We hope to make arrangements to secure permanent instruction by a competent minister to our people.”

*From Florida.* “My coloured congregation is more than twice as numerous as my white; and more than twice as large as when I began. It is a steady con-

cern. There is more than usual attention and tenderness among them. Some profess to be earnestly seeking an interest in the Saviour. The movement is still, but not very general. I trust that God will give me my heart's desire of being instrumental in the salvation of their souls. My soul burns to do them good."

*From Alabama.* "In my present church we have 40 whites and 80 coloured persons. I preach regularly one half the Sabbath to the negroes; and every three months I hold a sort of class-meeting for them, in which I go round and converse with all the members upon their progress in the divine life. Last Sabbath I gave my coloured charge a formal introduction to *Jones' Catechism*. It had a wonderful effect! Our church members were all present; and 50 came forward and joined the class. Next Sabbath they are to bring their children with them. Four well-educated young gentlemen, members of my church, have offered themselves as teachers." Again he writes: "Our class now consists of about 100, with 5 teachers. The interest increases among the people. We need more catechisms. I am confident a thousand copies could be sold, if they were deposited in Mobile, and the public were advertised of the fact. The Lord has done, and is still doing great things for this people, by the instrumentality of other, as well as our own denomination."

*From the same State.* "The black part of our congregation here is very interesting; I wish the whites afforded as much encouragement. Among our coloured members there are two or three that can read. One of these can read Greek and Latin. He is the servant *Ellis*, whom the synods of Alabama and Mississippi proposed to purchase in order to send him as a missionary to Africa. He is an extraordinary man. His blood and colour are unmixed. He gives us much aid in our meetings, though more retiring and modest than most people of his condition, when

they have ability above their fellows. He is anxious now to undertake Hebrew. The ministers with whom I am associated take great interest in the religious instruction of the negroes ; and some of them do a great deal in the way of catechising and preaching to them."

*From the same State.* " I am employed as missionary in this region to the negroes ; am wholly given to this work. My plans are not yet matured. Thus far I have confined myself to preaching. We need Jones' catechism. I have to contend with difficulties. By adopting a wise and approved plan of labour, I hope to secure the favor of all the planters around me."

*From the same State.* " Our colored Sabbath school goes on well, and begins to win the approbation of all. Dr. M. is a sincere friend to this work. In three discourses, on different public occasions, within a few months, he has introduced this subject to the attention of his audiences, at length, and with great effect. You will see the action of our church, and then of the convention (Baptist) upon the subject."

*From Mississippi.* " I have travelled in the western part of the state of Mississippi, and am prepared to judge of the condition of the blacks, and the increasing claims they have upon the church for the bread of life. I look upon this class of the population as decidedly the most interesting field of labour that this country now offers ; and I believe that it will grow in *interest, promise and importance*. The temporal condition of the negroes is generally well attended to. The plantations, for the most part, are provided with comfortable and neat houses, and the people are well fed and clothed. But alas ! for their spiritual wants ! There are in this valley multitudes who have no body to look after their souls. The harvest is great, the labourers are few. How important it is that masters should feel the obligation resting upon them to provide

religious instruction for their people. Thanks to Almighty God, they are beginning to feel this obligation. In this region there is a fine field of labour among the negroes. There are three or four in my acquaintance,—including two of the Presbyterian Church,—who are exclusively devoted to preaching to the blacks. I am now wholly given to this good work. Five or six planters have invited me to take charge of their servants. I have accepted their invitation. They have, without hesitation, raised \$600 for my support, and have committed to my care about 1,000 souls! I have two stations for Sabbath peaching, and visit the plantations during the week. The responsibility is very great. I feel that in myself I am not ‘sufficient for these things.’”

*From the same State* “Our Presbytery, at its late session, resolved that the session of each church should provide for the religious instruction of the negroes coming under their care. The session of our church has accordingly organized a sabbath school for that purpose. We need suitable books for their instruction, and believing the catechism which you have prepared would be of essential service to us, I now write to procure copies.”

*From Louisiana.* “Have the goodness to inform me if you have any tracts published, on the religious instruction of the negroes. Can you inform me whether a volume of sermons, intended for the benefit of the negroes, has ever been published; and, if so, where can I procure it? If not, could you not have it done? Such a volume in the hands of pious masters would be productive of great good to their people. I feel the want of such a volume, that I might have it in my power to read one or two sermons on the Sabbath-day to those of my own household.”

*From Kentucky.* “In a recent trip in Tennessee and Kentucky I fell in with several congregations of blacks,



and find the work of religious instruction rapidly advancing. Some of our brethren in Tennessee wish to introduce your catechism. The work may be distributed from Louisville in the adjacent states."

We suspend extracts, and proceed:—

3. *To the action of Ecclesiastical Bodies on the religious instruction of the negroes.*

1. *The Episcopal Church.*

The Committee have no information from the *Diocese of Maryland*, and know not what attention is paid to the religious instruction of the negroes by the clergy and laity of that diocese.

It is well known that the venerable bishop Meade of the *Diocese of Virginia*, has, for very many years, been a zealous, and able, and untiring advocate of this good work, as well as a labourer himself in the field. He has several times brought the great duty of evangelizing the negroes before his diocese; and in his efforts he is now ably supported by the assistant bishop, Dr. Johns. The attention of the clergy is, from year to year, more and more directed to the systematic and constant instruction of the coloured portion of their charges. Of the *memorial of the Presbytery of Georgia* to the Southern Presbyteries, on the religious instruction of the negroes, bishop Meade remarks, "I am rejoiced to see the different religious denominations of christians in our Southern country, taking up this subject in a more decisive manner than ever before; and hope that they may stimulate each other, by such addresses, to immediate and zealous action."

Bishop Ives of the *Diocese of North Carolina*, has prepared a catechism and put it in circulation, intended for the benefit of the coloured charges of his clergy, and for the domestic instruction by the laity at home. Several clergymen of this diocese are much engaged in discharging their duty to the negroes connected with their congregations.

There is no *Diocese* more engaged—and doing more for the negroes than that of *South Carolina*. There are several clergymen acting as missionaries, who are wholly given to the work, and some catechists: while almost the entire body of the clergy are, in their respective parishes, to a greater or less extent, engaged in it. The laity also of this *Diocese*, embracing many of the most distinguished and wealthy citizens, are supporters of the work: contrib-



uting not only of their substance, but giving their own personal attention to it.

Bishop Elliott, of *the Diocese of Georgia*, continues to give importance and encouragement to the religious instruction of the negroes. His effort is to incorporate the negroes with the whites, as one charge, in the parish churches, and to bring the children and youth into efficient Sabbath schools. In three parishes the ministers are almost exclusively devoted to the negroes.

Of efforts made in the dioceses of *Kentucky: Tennessee Mississippi and Arkansas: and Louisiana and Alabama*, we have no information.

### 2. *The Methodist Episcopal Church.*

This branch of the Church of Christ, has advanced beyond all others in direct and well-sustained efforts in the coloured field. It is the only denomination which furnishes statistical information respecting its coloured membership and missionary efforts for that class of our population. The present number of coloured communicants cannot be less than 160,000 in the slave-holding states. Besides the attention paid by the travelling and local preachers to the negroes in their regular ministrations, there are between 80 and 90 missionaries to them, who have under their charge over 18,000 church members, and 100,000 attendants on their services. Over 1,000 negroes are in connection with the Methodist Church in Texas. The *South Carolina Conference* has *sixteen missions* to the negroes; the *Georgia Conference, twelve: Tennessee—five: Alabama—seven: Memphis—nine: Arkansas—one: Mississippi—seven: North Carolina—two: Virginia—two.* The catechising of the children and youth is a prominent part of their labour. Dr. Capers' catechism, prepared expressly for the purpose, is extensively used: 4,380 children are catechised in the missions of the S. C. Conference, and the expense of those missions is over \$11,000, annually.

### 3. *The Baptist Church.*

We regret that we cannot furnish any *general* information of the feeling and efforts of this denomination. *The proportion of coloured to white members* is greater in this Church than it is in the Methodist, although the Methodist may have in the *aggregate* a greater number. By a late return, the estimate of white members is 700,000; of this number we set down *one-seventh* as coloured, that is

100,000. There are many ministers who devote a part of their time to the negroes: we do not know the number of missionaries exclusively devoted to them. Some associations are actively engaged in the work. There are more coloured licensed preachers and more coloured churches regularly organized, of this denomination, than any, or all the other denominations put together. The Sunbury Association, for example, on the sea-board of Georgia, employs *two white missionaries* to the negroes; has 4,444 coloured to 495 white members: *seven* coloured churches: *four* ordained coloured ministers; and *one or more*, licensed to preach. Of the 60,000 members in the state of Georgia 45,000 are negroes. The *Alabama State Convention of Baptists*, at its meeting in Tuscaloosa, Nov. 1844, took up the subject of the religious instruction of the negroes, with much solemnity and zeal. A committee on the religious instruction of the negroes, presented resolutions, expressive of the obligations of the convention to impart the gospel to the negroes, and their determination to do so by every means in their power. The convention recommended both pastors and private members to engage in the work immediately and efficiently. We feel assured that the example of this Convention will be followed by the conventions of the other States. At the late convention in Augusta, Georgia, made up of Delegates from all the slaveholding states, for the purpose of separating from the Northern portion of that Church, very special mention was made of the negroes in the South, as a field for missionary labour, and claiming the attention of the Church in its new organization. This augurs well for the negroes in the Baptist Church, *South*.

#### 4. *The Presbyterian Church.*

The movement in this Church, in favour of the religious instruction of the negroes, for the last ten years, has been gradual, and for two years past, rapid and extensive: more so than in any previous years within our recollection: and, as a consequence, ministers and churches are doing more than ever towards the evangelization of this people. We have not space to set down at large the *notices of labour* among the negroes, in the narratives on the state of religion of the Presbyteries and Synods, and the General Assembly: nor the *Resolutions and recommendations* of Presbyteries and Synods on the subject. We notice a growing interest and increasing efforts in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and

Virginia, and Kentucky, and Tennessee. In all these States there are numbers of ministers who devote a considerable portion of their time to the negroes : some acting almost as missionaries : while the number of missionaries is increasing. We know of very many Presbyteries in different parts of the States just mentioned, every member of which is more or less engaged in the work. There are three grand features which the Presbyterian Church is endeavouring to make prominent in the religious instruction of the negroes : *first*—to unite the masters and servants in one charge, that each class may receive its just proportion of ministerial labour : *second*—to establish in all the churches Sabbath Schools, and classes of instruction for children and youth especially : and for adults also : and to encourage such schools privately in households : and, *third*—to open the field as fast, and as far as possible, to missionaries duly qualified and employed.

#### 4. *Conclusion.*

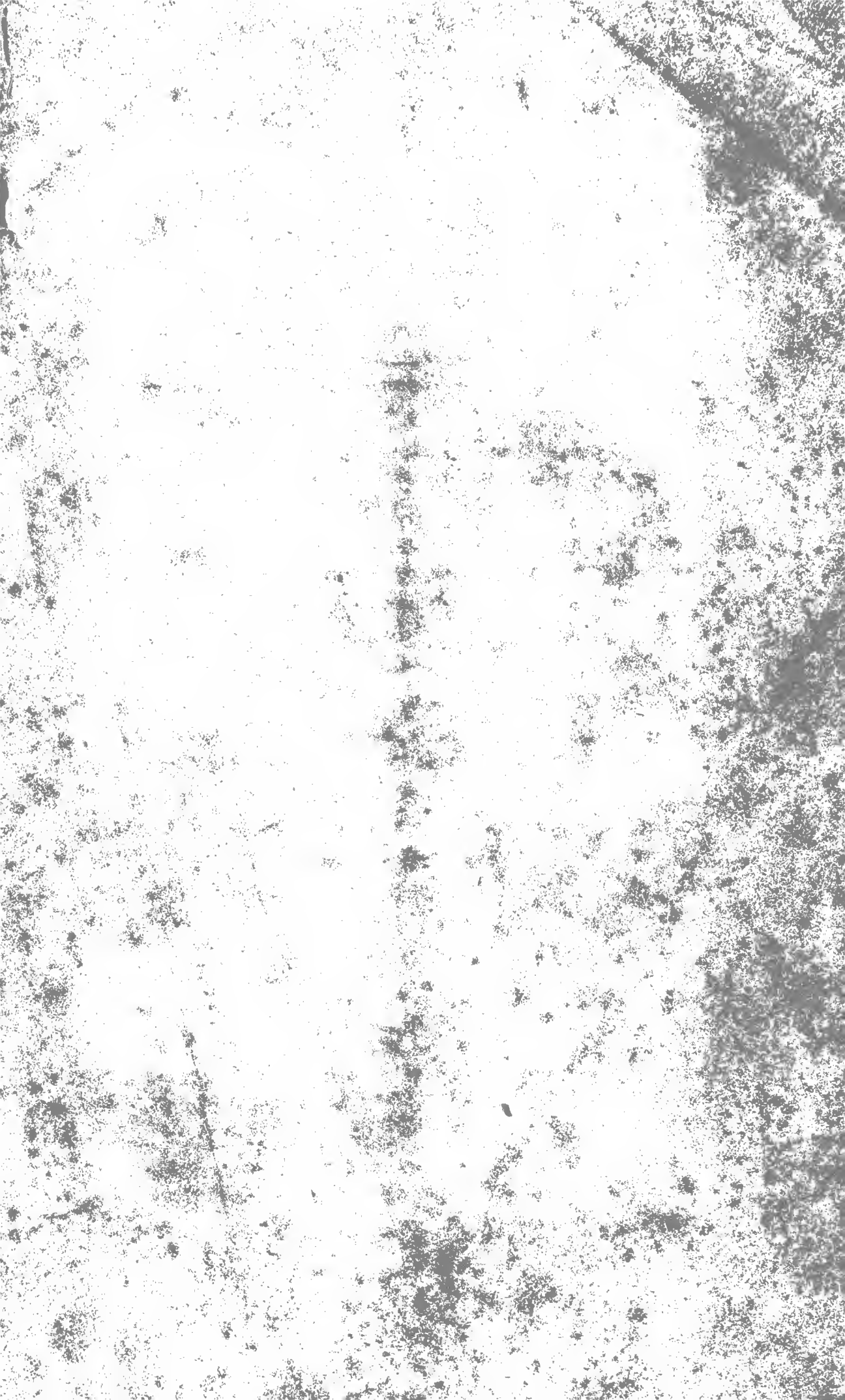
The Committee have now complied with the wishes of the meeting. Their report might have been much more extended and much more minute in its detail, but they did not think it necessary. Brevity is desirable, and it was sought.

The letters which have been addressed to this meeting from the States of South Carolina and Georgia, breathe a spirit of true devotion to the cause, and diverse from the spirit of the world : and they reveal an amount of individual and long-continued activity which has affected us with surprise. We discover also from the letters from other States—(which might have been multiplied)—that there exists much of the same devotion and activity in them. We feel confident that if the voices of all the friends of the religious instruction of the negroes could be heard, even as fully, from every slave-holding State, as has been from South Carolina, and the amount of their labours told, their voices would be as the sound of many waters, and their multitude and their labours would exceed our most sanguine expectations.

In looking back for fifteen years, we rejoice with gratitude at the progress which the work has made. The truth is not to be disguised. The leaven hid in three measures of meal has been silently and powerfully pervading the mass. From Maryland to Texas, and from the Atlantic to the Ohio, the subject is spoken of: the great duty is urged and acknowledged: and feeling lives in action. What is peculiarly a subject of gratitude is, that *all denominations* of Christians are entering the field. It is wide enough for all. It lies at our own doors, and God in his Providence and holy word, has laid the duty upon us to cultivate it. We can anticipate nothing but his displeasure, if we neglect it. Indeed, we look upon the religious instruction of the negroes, as THE GREAT DUTY, and in the truest and best sense, THE FIXED, THE SETTLED POLICY OF THE SOUTH. We believe God has so moved (and will continue so to move) upon the understandings and consciences of our Christian citizens, and so opened the door of access to the negroes, and so demonstrated by his blessing his regard for the work, that we can never go back. The flood has fairly set in. Difficulties and obstructions we may encounter, but the stream will rise higher and higher, and flow with a current that must sweep every thing away before it. *The work must go on.* Let us look humbly and believingly to the sustaining grace, wisdom and power of the great God and our Redeemer, and all will be well.

Respectfully submitted,

C. COLCOCK JONES,	} Committee.
WM. H. BARNWELL,	
HENRY BAILEY,	
F. R. SHACKELFORD,	
J. DYSON.	







DOC. No. XXXI.

REPORT

OF THE

JOINT COMMITTEE

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA

ON THE

HARPERS FERRY OUTRAGES.

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JANUARY 26, 1860.

1907

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# REPORT.

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The Joint Committee of the two Houses of the General Assembly of Virginia, to whom was referred so much of the Governor's Message as relates to the recent outrages committed at Harpers Ferry and its vicinity, have had the same under consideration, and submit the following report :

In the night of the 16th of October last, a band of armed conspirators from the Northern States, in fulfilment of a design which had been long entertained and deliberately matured, made an incursion into the State of Virginia, at Harpers Ferry, for the purpose of inciting our slaves to insurrection, of placing arms in their hands, of aiding them in plundering the property of their masters, of murdering them and their families, and of overthrowing the government of the Commonwealth.

The number of persons directly concerned in this nefarious conspiracy cannot be accurately ascertained, because many of them escaped, and fled to the Northern States and the British provinces. Their plan seems to have been conceived two years ago, and John Brown, the leader of the party, and his more active confederates, have been cautiously engaged for that length of time, in procuring information by means of secret emissaries, collecting money, recruiting men, and obtaining supplies of arms and ammunition, to be used in the accomplishment of their fiendish purposes.

To give greater dignity and importance to their movements, the conspirators met together at Chatham, in Canada West, in May, 1858, and formed what purported to be a constitution for a provisional government, which was to be substituted for the fundamental law of Virginia when it should have been subverted. Under this instrument it appears that W. C. Munroe, a free negro, was elected president, A. M. Chapman vice president, John Brown commander-in-chief, Richard Realf secretary of State, J. H. Kagi secretary of war, George B. Gill secretary of the treasury, Owen Brown treasurer, and M. K. Delany corresponding secretary. Subordinate military officers were appointed under the authority of this alleged constitution, all of whom were required to take oaths to support it.

Having thus perfected their arrangements, Brown and his associates established a secret military rendezvous in Washington county, in the State of Maryland, a short distance from Harpers Ferry. To this point they caused to be conveyed 200 Sharpe's rifles, which had been furnished to Brown by the Emigrant Aid society of Massachusetts, to accomplish his bloody purposes in Kansas; about the same number of revolver pistols, with large quantities of ammunition and clothing, and 1,500 pikes, which had been manufactured to his order by Charles Blair of Collinsville, Counecticut. These pikes are very formidable weapons, and peculiarly adapted for the use of the slave population, who are unskilled in the management of fire-arms. The heads are about fifteen inches

in length, with sharp edges, and the handles are longer than the ordinary musket, with a view to give those who employ them an advantage in a hand to hand contest with troops armed with the musket and bayonet.

Early in October, John E. Cooke, one of the conspirators, was dispatched, under false pretences, into the interior of the county of Jefferson, to ascertain the number of able bodied slaves in particular neighborhoods, and to learn their disposition towards their masters, and Brown acknowledged that he himself had also visited different parts of the State for similar purposes.

The town of Harpers Ferry, situated on the south bank of the Potomac, in the county of Jefferson, is the seat of an extensive armory of the United States, and for many years past has been without the protection of a military guard.

When everything seemed ripe for the execution of their scheme, between ten and eleven o'clock of Sunday night, the 16th of October, a band of the conspirators, in number about twenty-three, advanced stealthily on the town and finding that the inhabitants had generally retired to sleep, took possession of the armory containing about 50,000 stand of arms of different kinds.

Parties were then sent into the neighborhood, who broke into the dwellings of unsuspecting citizens, seized them in their beds, and carried them and their slaves as captives to Harpers Ferry, where they were held in close custody.

At daylight it was discovered that the armory was in the possession of a body of armed men, whose number and purposes being alike unknown, a panic very naturally spread over the town and vicinage. The extreme audacity of the act tended to increase the apprehension which filled the public mind, for no one supposed that so small a number as were actually present would have ventured on such a demonstration, unless they were assured of assistance from some quarter. The peculiar character of the population of the town added to the feeling of distrust. In other towns, having a fixed population bound to each other by ties of kindred, social sympathy and common interest, every one feels that he may safely rely on his neighbor for assistance in the defence of his family and fireside; but in a community like that of Harpers Ferry, where so many are mere temporary sojourners, the sense of security which springs from mutual trust and confidence is greatly diminished.

Early in the morning some skirmishing began between the citizens and the bandits, and several were killed and wounded on both sides. Pressed at all points, the conspirators were soon driven to seek refuge in the Armory and engine house. The armory, from its structure and the number of its windows, was much more exposed to attack than the engine-house, and those who sought shelter in it were promptly dislodged, and in the attempt to escape across the river, were either killed, or wounded and captured. Those in the engine-house were surrounded and held in close siege.

In a few hours, troops from the neighborhood assembled in sufficient numbers to storm the engine-house, but as many citizens of the county were held prisoners in it, the citizen-soldiers hesitated to commence an assault which might endanger the lives of their friends.

Thus matters stood until night, when a body of marines from Washington arrived, under the command of Col. Robert E. Lee. It was deemed advisable by that gallant and considerate officer, to defer the attack until daylight. Accordingly, at an early

hour of the morning of the 18th, a party of marines detailed for that service, under the immediate command of Lieut. Green, stormed the engine house and released the captives. All the conspirators were either killed or taken prisoners. The prisoners, among whom was the notorious John Brown, were handed over to the civil authorities for trial and punishment.

Of the marines engaged in the assault, one was killed and another wounded.

During the skirmishing of the preceding day, four of the citizens of Virginia were killed and ten were wounded. Among the former were several gentlemen of eminent moral and social worth.

The names of the prisoners were Brown, Stevens, Coppoc, Copeland and Green, of whom the two last named were negroes. All of them except Stevens, whose trial was postponed, have been tried, convicted and executed.

During the first night of the attack, and before the citizens of the town were apprised of the danger, a band of the conspirators, among whom were Cook and Hazlitt, were sent to the rendezvous in Maryland, with wagons and teams, and several slaves whom they had pressed into service, to bring off the rifles, pistols and pikes which had been collected at that point. But when they received information of the condition of their confederates at Harpers Ferry, they abandoned their purpose and fled to the mountains, and made their escape. The slaves availed themselves of the first opportunity to return to their masters, and a body of troops sent for that purpose, visited the rendezvous and brought off the wagons and arms.

Cook and Hazlitt were subsequently apprehended in Pennsylvania, and promptly surrendered upon a requisition of the Governor of Virginia. The conduct of the Governor and civil authorities of Pennsylvania, throughout the whole affair, was in all respects worthy of commendation, as having been dictated by an earnest desire to uphold the Constitution and the laws.

Cook has been tried, convicted and executed, and Hazlitt remains in confinement with Stevens, awaiting his trial.

Thus, so far as the immediate actors are concerned, this atrocious and bloody invasion of Virginia has terminated. Five of them have paid the extreme penalty of the law, and the two remaining in custody will probably in a short time suffer an ignominious death on the gallows.

But, in the opinion of your committee, this is but a single and comparatively unimportant chapter in the history of this outrage. They would cheerfully have undertaken the task of investigating the subject, in all its relations and ramifications, if they had possessed the power to compel the attendance of witnesses who reside beyond the limits of the Commonwealth; but having no such power, they are constrained to leave that branch of the investigation in the hands of the committee of the Senate of the United States. Your committee have no hesitation, however, in expressing the opinion, from the evidence before them, that many others beside the parties directly engaged in the raid at Harpers Ferry, are deeply implicated, as aiders and abettors, and accessories before the fact, with full knowledge of the guilty purposes of their confederates. Some of these, like Gerritt Smith of New York, Dr. S. G. Howe of Boston, — Sanborn, and Thaddeus Hyatt of New York, and probably others, are represented to have held respectable positions in society; but whatever may have been their social standing

heretofore, they must henceforth, in the esteem of all good men, be branded as the guilty confederates of thieves, murderers and traitors.

The evidence before your committee is sufficient to show the existence, in a number of Northern States, of a wide-spread conspiracy, not merely against Virginia, but against the peace and security of all the Southern States. But the careful erasure of names and dates from many of the papers found in Brown's possession, renders it difficult to procure legal evidence of the guilt of the parties implicated. The conviction of the existence of such a conspiracy is deepened by the sympathy with the culprits, which has been manifested by large numbers of persons in the Northern States, and by the disposition which your committee are satisfied did exist, to rescue them from the custody of the law.

Near 500 letters, addressed to Governor Wise, after the arrest of Brown and his confederates, have been inspected by your committee. Many of these were anonymous, and evidently written in bad faith, but the greater number were genuine letters, apparently from respectable sources. In some instances, the authors professed to state, from their own knowledge, and in others, from information which they credited, that there were organizations on foot, in various States and neighborhoods, to effect the rescue of Brown and his associates; and they therefore urged the Governor to concentrate a sufficient military force about Charlestown (the county seat of Jefferson,) to frustrate all such purposes. Several ministers of the gospel, and other citizens, who valued the peace and harmony of the country, appealed to Governor Wise, as a measure of humanity, and to save the effusion of blood, to assemble such a body of troops around the prison, as would intimidate the sympathisers from attempting a rescue. They justly foresaw, that even an abortive attempt, attended with loss of life, would, in all probability, be followed by disastrous consequences to the peace of the country.

Pending the trials, and after the conviction of the prisoners, a great many letters were received by the Governor, from citizens of Northern States, urging him to pardon the offenders, or to commute their punishment. Some of them were written in a spirit of menace, threatening his life, and that of members of his family, if he should fail to comply with their demands. Others gave notice of the purpose of resolute bands of desperadoes to fire the principal towns and cities of Virginia, and thus obtain revenge by destroying the property and lives of our citizens. Others appealed to his clemency, to his magnanimity, and to his hopes of future political promotion, as presenting motives for his intervention in behalf of the convicted felons. Another class (and among these were letters from men of national reputation,) besought him to pardon them on the ground of public policy. The writers professed to be thoroughly informed as to the condition of public sentiment in the North, and represented it as so favorable to the pardon or commutation of punishment of the prisoners, as to render it highly expedient, if not necessary, to interpose the executive prerogative of mercy, to conciliate this morbid popular opinion in the North.

The testimony before the committee amply vindicates the conduct of the Executive in assembling a strong military force at the scene of excitement; and the promptness and energy with which he discharged his duty merit, and doubtless will receive the commendation of the Legislature and the people of the State.

Your committee do not deem it necessary to prosecute their investigations as to the facts of this iniquitous outrage on the peace and sovereignty of our State, further at this time. They have full confidence in the zeal and ability of the Committee of the Senate

of the United States, and doubt not that they will employ their more ample powers for the elimination of every fact connected with the transaction. Should their investigation lead to new disclosures, it will be competent for the Legislature, hereafter, to adopt such measures as may be deemed advisable. In the judgment of the committee, enough is exhibited by the testimony before them to justify the legislative action which they propose.

This invasion of a sovereign State by citizens of other States, confederated with subjects of a foreign government, presents matter for grave consideration. It is an event without a parallel in the history of our country. And when we remember that the incursion was marked by distinct geographical features; that it was made by citizens of Northern States on a Southern State; that all the countenance and encouragement which it received, and all the material aid which was extended to it, were by citizens of Northern States; and that its avowed object was to make war upon and overthrow an institution intimately interwoven with all the interests of the Southern States, and constituting an essential element of their social and political systems—an institution which has existed in Virginia for more than two centuries, and which is recognized and guaranteed by the mutual covenants between the North and the South, embodied in the Constitution of the United States—every thoughtful mind must be filled with deep concern and anxiety for the future peace and security of the country.

The subject of slavery has, from time to time, constituted a disturbing element in our political system, from the foundation of our confederated republic. At the date of the declaration of our national independence, slavery existed in every colony of the confederation. It had been introduced by the mother country, against the wishes and remonstrances of the colonies. It is true that in the more Northern members of the confederation, the number of slaves was small, but the institution was recognized and protected by the laws of all the colonies. If, then, there be anything in the institution of slavery at war with the laws of God or the rights of humanity, (which we deny,) the sin attaches to Great Britain as its founder, and to all the original thirteen States of the confederacy, as having given to it their sanction and support.

Shortly after the declaration of independence, the Northern States adopted prospective measures to relieve themselves of the African population. But it is a great mistake to suppose that their policy, in this particular, was prompted by any spirit of philanthropy or tender regard for the welfare of the negro race. On the contrary, it was dictated by an enlightened self-interest, yielding obedience to overruling laws of social economy. Experience had shown that the African race were not adapted to high Northern latitudes, and that slave labor could not compete successfully with free white labor in those pursuits to which the industry of the North was directed. This discovery having been made, the people of the North, at an early day, began to dispose of their slaves, by sale to citizens of the Southern States, whose soil, climate and productions were better adapted to their habits and capacities; and the legislation of the Northern States, following the course of public opinion, was directed not to emancipation, but to the removal of the slave population beyond their limits. To effect this object, they adopted a system of laws which provided, prospectively, that all children born of female slaves, within their jurisdiction, after certain specified dates, should be held free when they attained a given age. No law can be found on the statute book of any Northern State, which conferred the boon of freedom on a single slave in being. All who were slaves remained slaves. Freedom was secured only to the children of slaves, born after the

days designated in the laws; and it was secured to them only in the contingency that the owner of the female slave should retain her within the jurisdiction of the State until after the child was born. To secure freedom to the afterborn child, therefore, it was necessary that the consent of the master, indicated by his permitting the mother to remain in the State, should be superadded to the provisions of the law. Without such consent the law would have been inoperative, because the mother, before the birth of the child, might, at the will of the master, be removed beyond the jurisdiction of the law. There was no legal prohibition of such removal—for such a prohibition would have been at war with the policy of the law, which was obviously removal and not emancipation. The effect of this legislation was, as might have readily been foreseen, to induce the owners of female slaves to sell them to the planters of the South before the time arrived when the forfeiture of the offspring would accrue. By these laws a wholesale slave trade was inaugurated, under which a large proportion of the slaves of the Northern States were sold to persons residing south of Pennsylvania; and it is an unquestionable fact, that a large number of the slaves of the Southern States are the descendants of those sold by Northern men to citizens of the South, with covenants of general warranty of title to them and their increase.

As early as 1778, Virginia, foreseeing the influx of slaves from the North, under the operation of natural causes and of anticipated legislation, sought to guard herself against its effects by stringent prohibitory enactments. With this view, in that year, she passed a law forbidding the importation of slaves into Virginia by land or sea, under penalty of £1,000 for each slave so imported, and the forfeiture of the right to the slave. The only exceptions made by the law, were in favor of *bona fide* immigrants bringing their slaves with them, and persons acquiring title to slaves in other States by descent, devise or marriage. See 9 Hen. Stat. 471-2. This law remained in force until the revisal of 1819, when it was dropped from the Code as unnecessary.

In the more northern States, slavery ceased to exist shortly after the Revolution. As early as 1774, it was provided by law in Rhode Island that all the offspring of female slaves born after 1784 should be free. Under the influence of natural causes, it also became practically extinct, about the date of the Revolution, in Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. A few slaves, however, lingered in those States until after the adoption of their respective Constitutions, when, under the operation of their declarations of rights, those who thought proper to assert a claim to freedom obtained it. The judicial decision of the supreme court of Massachusetts, by which slavery in that State became extinct, was pronounced in the case of *Littleton v. Tuttle*, in 1796. Chief Justice Parsons, in delivering the opinion of the court in *Winchedon v. Hatfield*, 4 Mass. R. 127, says, "Slavery was introduced into this country soon after its first settlement, and was tolerated until the ratification of the present Constitution (2d March, 1780). The slave was the property of his master, subject to his orders, to reasonable correction for misbehavior, was transferrable like a chattel by gift or sale, and was assets in the hands of his executor or administrator. If the master was guilty of a cruel or unreasonable castigation of his slave, he was liable to be punished for a breach of the peace, and I believe the slave was allowed to demand sureties of the peace from a violent and barbarous master; which generally caused a sale to another master. And the issue of the female slave, according to the maxim of the civil law, was the property of her master. Under these regulations the treatment of slaves was in general mild and humane, and they suffered hardships not greater than hired servants."

Notwithstanding the Massachusetts declaration of rights in 1780, slavery seems to



have continued for some years in that State. The following brief report of the case of *Littleton v. Tuttle* is appended to Judge Parsons' opinion in the case of *Winchedon v. Hatfield*:

"This was an action of assumpsit for money expended by the plaintiffs for the support and maintenance of Jacob, alias Cato, a negro and a pauper. Upon the general issue pleaded, the following facts were proved to the jury: Cato's father, named Scipio, was reputed a negro slave when Cato was born, and, according to the then general usage and opinion, was the property of Nathan Chase, an inhabitant of Littleton. Cato's mother, named Violet, was a negro in the same reputed condition, and the property of Joseph Harwood. Scipio and Violet were lawfully married and had issue, Cato, who was born in Littleton, January 18th, 1773, and was there, in the general opinion, a slave, the property of the said Harwood, as the owner of his mother. Harwood, on the 17th February, 1779, sold him to the defendant (*Tuttle*), who retained him in his service until he was 21 years old. He being then a cripple and unable to labor, the defendant delivered him to the overseers of the poor of Littleton, and left him with them, refusing to make any provision for him; whereupon, the overseers expended the money in his maintenance for which this action was brought.

"The court stopped the defendant's counsel from replying, and the chief justice charged the jury, as the unanimous opinion of the court, that Cato, being born in this country, was born free, and that the defendant was not chargeable for his support after he was 21 years of age."

It thus appears that slavery ceased to exist in Massachusetts, not by legislative action, but by the operation of a judicial decision rendered in 1796, by which a construction was placed on certain provisions of her declaration of rights, which is very different from the interpretation which similar provisions have received in other parts of the confederacy. The clause referred to is in these words: "All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential and unalienable rights; among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; and that of acquiring, possessing and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness." It is obvious, also, that this provision of the declaration of rights could not have been regarded as necessarily conferring the right to freedom on the slave population; for if such had been the opinion generally entertained, it would not have remained inoperative for sixteen years.

Pennsylvania passed her first act for the removal of slavery 1st March, 1780—New Jersey in 1784—Connecticut in 1784, and New York in 1788; but these laws were very gradual in their operation, for the census tables disclose the fact that in 1790 there were 158 slaves in New Hampshire and 17 in Vermont, and much larger numbers in the other States. As late as 1830 there were slaves in every New England State except Vermont.

It thus appears that each State has claimed and exercised the right to regulate its own domestic institutions, according to its own pleasure, without let or hindrance from the other States.

At the time the federal Constitution was adopted, the whole number of slaves, in all the States north of Delaware, was 40,370, of whom three-fourths were found in New York and New Jersey, and it was well known to every one, that in a few years the institution would cease to exist in all the Northern States.

At this date, the African slave trade existed in full vigor, and the importation of slaves

into some of the States was tolerated, whilst in others it was strictly prohibited under heavy penalties.

When, in pursuance of the invitation given by Virginia to her sister States, to send delegates to a convention, to form a more perfect Union, that body assembled, these diversities in the institutions and interests of the Northern and Southern States, which it was foreseen would tend progressively to increase, naturally attracted attention, and were the subject of grave and anxious deliberation.

The first form in which the slavery question presented itself to the framers of the Constitution, was in regard to the relation of the slave population to taxation and representation. This question was adjusted without much debate, to the satisfaction of all parties, in conformity with the rule previously establishment in the continental Congress, by a compromise which stipulated that three-fifths of the slave population should be counted in establishing the ratio of representation, and in the imposition of direct taxes. The vote by States on this proposition stood: Ayes—Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia—9. Nays—New Jersey and Delaware—2. Elliott's Debates, vol. 1, p. 203.

The next aspect in which the subject arose was in regard to the suppression of the African slave trade; and here again the subject of difference was settled in a wise spirit of conciliation and mutual concession.

The proposition originally reported to the convention was in these words: "The migration or importation of such persons as the several States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Legislature prior to the year 1800, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such migration or importation at a rate not exceeding the average of the duties levied on imports." Elliott's Debates, vol. 1, p. 292. On the 25th of August, 1787, it was moved to amend the report, by striking out the words "the year eighteen hundred" and inserting the words "the year eighteen hundred and eight," which passed in the affirmative: Yeas—New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia—7. Nays—New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Virginia—4. Rhode Island and New York did not vote on the question. Thus it appears that New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut voted to prolong the period during which the slave trade should be allowed.

On the question to agree to the first part of the report as amended, viz: "The migration or importation of such persons as the several States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Legislature prior to the year 1808," it passed in the affirmative: Yeas—New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia—7. Nays—New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Virginia—4. Elliott's Debates, vol. 1, p. 295-6.

The course of Virginia on this subject, it is well known, was dictated by no friendly feeling to the African slave trade. She had prohibited it by her own laws as early as 1778, and George Mason, one of her delegates to the federal convention, refused to give his sanction to the Constitution, among other reasons, because it failed to place an immediate interdict on the African trade.

The third and last form in which the subject of slavery was considered by the convention, was in reference to the surrender of fugitive slaves. The provision on this subject came up for consideration on the 29th of August, 1787. It was in these words: "If



any person be bound to service or labor in any of the United States, and shall escape into another State, he or she shall not be discharged from such service or labor, in consequence of any regulation subsisting in the State to which they shall escape, but shall be delivered up to the person justly claiming their service or labor."

The propriety and justice of this provision were so obvious, that it was adopted by the unanimous vote of the convention. Elliott's Debates, vol. 1. p. 303.

Your committee have thus reviewed the history of all the provisions of the Constitution of the United States, which have a direct bearing on the subject of slavery, and it will be seen that on every point they are of the most distinct and imperative character. They are in the nature of formal covenants. These covenants constituted the consideration for which the Southern States agreed to make concessions on their part, intended for the public good. Without these covenants on the part of the Northern States, the Constitution could not have been formed or adopted. A wise and patriotic conciliation pervaded the councils of the convention, which secured harmony in all their deliberations, and a unanimous vote in favor of the Constitution.

When their work was accomplished, by order of the convention it was submitted to the Continental Congress, accompanied by a letter from George Washington, which is so replete with just and patriotic sentiments, and so instructive as to the motives by which the convention was guided, that your committee cannot forbear to make some extracts from it. This letter, addressed to his excellency, the President of Congress, was approved September 17, 1787, by unanimous order of the convention.

"It is obviously impracticable," writes this wisest and most patriotic of statesman, "in the federal government of these States, to secure all rights of independent sovereignty to each, and yet provide for the interest and safety of all. Individuals entering into society must give up a share of liberty to preserve the rest. The magnitude of the sacrifice must depend as well on situation and circumstance as on the object to be obtained. It is at all times difficult to draw, with precision, the line between those rights which must be surrendered and those which may be reserved; and on the present occasion, this difficulty was increased by a difference among the several States as to their situation, extent, habits and particular interests.

"In all our deliberations on this subject, we kept steadily in our view that which appears to us the greatest interest of every true American—the consolidation of our Union—in which is involved our property, felicity, safety, perhaps our national existence. This important consideration, seriously and deeply impressed on our minds, led each State in the convention to be less rigid on points of inferior magnitude than might have been otherwise expected; and thus the constitution which we now present is the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession which the peculiarity of our political situation rendered indispensable.

"That it will meet the full and entire approbation of every State, is not, perhaps, to be expected; but each will doubtless consider that, had her interest been alone consulted, the consequences might have been particularly disagreeable or injurious to others; that it is liable to as few exceptions as could reasonably have been expected, we hope and believe; that it may promote the lasting welfare of that country so dear to us all, and secure her freedom and happiness, is our most ardent wish."

It is doubtless true, that the Constitution was not, in all its details, acceptable to a

single State represented in the convention. But it embodied the results of their joint counsels, governed by a spirit of concord and amity, in obedience to which each State agreed to make some concessions for the common good.

The first census was taken in the year 1790, and from that time to the present the constitutional covenant in regard to the computation of three-fifths of the slave population, in ascertaining the ratio of representation, has been faithfully and honestly observed.

In 1807, a law was passed by Congress, in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution, prohibiting the slave trade after the 1st of January, 1808. No attempt was made to pass such a law before the day indicated by the Constitution, and therefore that covenant was also performed with scrupulous fidelity.

In 1793, Congress, in obedience to the mandate of the Constitution, enacted a law providing for the rendition of fugitives from labor. This act was defective in many of its provisions, but in consequence of the spirit of fraternity and justice which pervaded the minds of the people of all portions of the Union, in the earlier and better days of the republic, no practical inconvenience resulted from the imperfections in the law. As a striking illustration of the just sentiments which prevailed shortly after the government of the United States went into practical operation, your committee take pleasure in referring to the patriotic action of the State of Vermont. In 1786, that State had passed a penal law to prevent the sale and transportation of negroes and mulattoes out of the State. See Haswell ed. 117. But immediately upon her admission into the Union she repealed it, because it was supposed to be in conflict with the section of the Constitution of the United States in regard to the surrender of fugitives from labor.

In 1802, the subject of the duty of the States under the federal Constitution was referred to in the supreme court of Vermont, and the judges availed themselves of the occasion to give expression to sentiments which deserve to be deeply impressed on the hearts of the people of all sections. Judge Tyler remarked, "With respect to what has been observed on the Constitution and laws of the Union, I will observe that whoever views attentively the Constitution of the *United States*, while he admires the wisdom which framed it, will perceive that in order to unite the interests of a numerous people, inhabiting a broad extent of territory, and possessing, from education and habits, different modes of thinking on important subjects, it was necessary to make numerous provisions in favor of local prejudices, and so to construct the Constitution, and so to enact the laws made under it, that the rights or supposed rights of all should be secured throughout the whole national domain. In compliance with the spirit of this Constitution, upon our admission into the federal Union, the statute laws of this State were revised, and a penal act, which was supposed to militate against the third member of the second section of the 4th article of the Constitution of the *United States*, was repealed; and if cases shall happen in which our local sentiments and feelings may be violated, yet I trust that the good people of *Vermont* will, on all such occasions, submit with cheerfulness to the national Constitution and laws, which if we may wish in some particular more congenial to our modes of thinking, yet we must be sensible are productive of numerous and rich blessings to us as individuals, and to the State as an integral part of the Union."

Chief Justice Jonathan Robinson spoke as follows: "I concur fully in opinion with the assistant judge. I shall always respect the Constitution and laws of the Union; and though it may sometimes be a reluctant, yet I shall always render a prompt obe-

dience to them, fully sensible that while I reverence a Constitution and laws which favor the opinions and prejudices of the citizens of other sections of the Union, the same Constitution and laws contain also provisions which are favorable to our peculiar opinions and prejudices, and which may possibly be equally irreconcilable with the sentiments of the inhabitants of other States, as the very idea of slavery is to us." See 2 Tyler's Rep. 199, 200.

As long as the States continued to be governed in their relations to the federal government and to each other by the wise and patriotic spirit which dictated these opinions, none but the most amicable feelings could exist between them. Up to this period, therefore, no disposition was manifested in any quarter to repudiate the guarantees of the Constitution.

The acquisition of Louisiana and Florida, embracing a large extent of territory adapted to slave labor, gave rise to some uneasiness in the northern mind in regard to the future ascendancy of the slave States in the national councils. This uneasiness continued to increase until 1820, when it developed itself practically by an attempt to impose restrictions on the State of Missouri, as conditions precedent to her admission into the Union. It is but just, however, to State, that the struggle on this question was marked not so much by hostility to slavery as by jealousy of the growing political power of the Southern States. The contest in regard to the terms on which Missouri should be admitted created deep feeling throughout the Union. It was the first occasion on which parties were arrayed according to geographical divisions, and it was at once perceived that a contest of that character was fraught with danger to the harmony and permanency of the Union. Fortunately, the restrictions on the State of Missouri were defeated. A line of partition was subsequently drawn through the unoccupied territory of the United States, along the parallel of 36° 30' to our western frontier, with an enactment that slavery was to be prohibited in all the territory north of that line, and permitted, if desired by the people, in all south of it. By this arrangement the two systems of civilization and labor were left to progress westward, side by side.

Under this compromise it was supposed that all causes of controversy, arising out of the irritating subject of slavery, would be banished from the halls of federal legislation. But in a few years an inconsiderable band of fanatics, instigated by a mischievous spirit, besieged the two Houses of Congress with petitions to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and to prohibit the slave trade between the States. The effect of these petitions was to create much irritation and ill feeling between different parts of the Union.

Such was the aspect of the slavery question in 1843-4, when Texas, which had recently established her independence after a gallant struggle with Mexico, sought admission into our Union. There was great diversity of opinion among the people of the United States, both in the Northern and Southern States, as to the policy of receiving her into our confederacy. Animated discussions ensued in all parts of the country on this great question; and finally, so absorbing was the interest which was felt in it, that the question of admission or non-admission became an important element in the presidential election of 1844. James K. Polk was the representative of those favorable to admission, and Henry Clay of those opposed to it. On this great issue the parties went before the country, and the verdict of public opinion was in favor of the admission of Texas as a slave State, and with a stipulation in the form of an irrevocable compact, that at a future day four more slave States might be carved out of her vast territory, as the convenience of her advancing population might require. The northern or non-

slaveholding States which voted for Mr. Polk were Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois and Michigan, giving 103 electoral votes. The slave States voting with them were Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Missouri and Arkansas—67 electoral votes.

This vast addition to the slave territory of the United States was therefore approved by the concurrent votes of the slaveholding and non-slaveholding States; and whatever responsibility belongs to the act, in a moral, social or political aspect, necessarily attaches itself to them in common.

The admission of Texas was soon followed by the war with Mexico, which, after a series of brilliant victories, resulted in the subjugation of her capital, and the ratification of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, by which she ceded to the United States Upper California, New Mexico, and other territory west of our ancient frontier. The *status* of these territories, in regard to slavery, was unsettled, and immediately after the ratification of the treaty of peace, an animated struggle on this question arose in the two branches of Congress.

The South promptly proposed a compromise, by which the line of partition along the parallel of 36° 30' should be extended to the Pacific ocean, and that the covenants of the Missouri compromise should be extended to all the newly acquired territory. This proposition was rejected by the North, and an angry contest ensued, which seriously endangered the peace and tranquillity of the Union. Peaceful counsels, however, prevailed. The most eminent men, of both political parties, and of all parts of the confederacy, labored together to effect an adjustment; and finally, in September, 1850, under the auspices of Clay, and Cass, and Webster, and Dickenson, and Douglas, and Foote, and other distinguished men, a series of measures was matured, sanctioned by both branches of Congress, and approved by the President.

Under this system of compromise, California, in conformity with her wishes, expressed through her State convention, which, though irregularly convened, was supposed to represent the sentiments of her people, was to be admitted as a free State, and the *status* of the residue of the territory ceded by Mexico was to be determined by the people of the territories when they sought admission into the Union. The system of adjustment also embraced two other important features, one of which was adopted in deference to the wishes of the North, and the other for the benefit of the South. The first was the abolition of the slave trade in the District of Columbia, and the second was the passage of a more efficient law for the rendition of fugitives from labor, to supply the defects of the act of 1793.

This series of measures, though passed in the form of separate bills, constituted substantially one system of pacification. The passage of one act was the consideration for the passage of the others. Neither could have passed without the assurance of the passage of the others. The provisions embraced by them were in the nature of mutually dependent covenants, and if it be possible to increase the sanctity and validity of a law by superadding the obligations of a compact and of plighted faith, no example can be found on our statute books better calculated to illustrate the principle than the fugitive slave law of 1850. All the covenants entered into by the South were of a nature which required that they should be performed without delay, while the compensating agreements of the North were to be executed in future.

The South acquiesced in the admission of California as a free State—permitted Texas

to be dismembered of a portion of her territory, in which, by her compact with her sister States, slavery was to exist—and allowed the slave trade to be prohibited in the district of Columbia. The price which the North agreed to pay for these concessions was nominal, being the recognition of the right of New Mexico and the other newly acquired territory to introduce or exclude slavery, as they might think proper, and the passage of a law which would faithfully fulfil all the constitutional requirements in regard to the surrender of fugitive slaves.

Under this compromise the South has performed everything that was incumbent on her. California has been admitted as a free State—Texas has been dismembered—and the slave trade in the district of Columbia has been abolished.

The South now asks the fulfilment of the compensating covenants on the part of the North. It is true that the fugitive slave law has passed through all the forms of legislation, and now has a place among the acts of Congress. But it is a fact, notorious to the world, that the law is a dead letter—that while it keeps the promise to the ear, it hath broken it to the hope. From the time of its passage to the present hour, the people, the legislative assemblies and the judicial tribunals of the Northern States, have manifested the most determined purpose to set it at naught. Although it has been adjudged by the highest court of the United States to be in conformity with the Constitution, and therefore to be a part of the supreme law of the land, the legislatures of almost all the Northern States have passed acts to nullify or evade its practical execution. Many of their courts have interposed every obstacle in their power to its enforcement, and mobs have risen in most of the Northern cities to resist the law, and to rescue the fugitives from labor by force of arms, and several Southern citizens have been murdered whilst engaged in attempts to arrest their slaves.

From the compendium of the census of 1850, it appears that the number of slaves who escaped from their masters in the year 1849–50 was 1,011, whose aggregate value was near one million of dollars.

This condition of things furnishes a striking evidence of the growth of a spirit unfriendly to the guarantees of the Constitution, and at war with all the obligations of national faith, which is in painful contrast with the patriotic conduct of Vermont in the better days of the republic, which has already been adverted to.

The compromise measures of 1850 were by no means acceptable, in all their features, either to the North or the South. But patriotic men of both sections were willing to sacrifice their opinions and wishes for the public good; and in 1852 both the great political parties which then divided the country, and contended for the power to guide its policy, through their respective national conventions, declared their purpose to abide by the compromises of 1850, and to discountenance the further agitation of the slavery question in or out of Congress. President Pierce having been elected on this platform, availed himself of the earliest appropriate occasion, in his first annual message to Congress in December, 1853, to announce his purpose to conform to the pledges given in his behalf by those who elected him.

In 1854 a bill was introduced into Congress, under the auspices of a distinguished senator from Illinois, for the organization of territorial governments in Kansas and Nebraska. As originally reported, the bill was silent in regard to slavery. Subsequently, the bill was modified so as to embrace a clause which declared the law of 1820, commonly known as the Missouri compromise act, inoperative and void, and in this form it

became a law. The avowed object of the mover and friends of the bill was to remove the slavery agitation from the halls of Congress, and to localize it, by confining it to the territories as they should respectively be in a condition to establish their own municipal institutions. The bill declared on its face that its true intent and meaning was "not to legislate slavery into any territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States."

The passage of this law furnished the pretext for the revival, with increased bitterness, of all the sectional feuds which had been temporarily allayed by the measures of 1850. Throughout the Northern States, old party lines were almost obliterated, and a new Northern political organization sprang into existence, under the designation of the republican party. This organization was distinctly sectional in its character, and it soon acquired the ascendancy in almost every Northern State. The ostensible object of this party was to organize public opinion in opposition to the repeal of the Missouri compromise, and to the extension of slavery into new territories. But it soon became evident, from the sectional character of the party, the doctrines which it inculcated, and the policy which it pursued, that its real purpose was to make war upon the institution of slavery itself. Your committee have no doubt that the ulterior designs of the leaders of the party were carefully concealed from the great body of those who enlisted under its banner, and who would have then recoiled from the idea of invading the acknowledged rights of the Southern States, and trampling under foot the solemn compacts of the Constitution. The object was to obtain the co-operation of the Northern people, by the specious pretenses of opposition to the repeal of the Missouri compromise and to the extension of slavery, and then, by the force of party affinities and discipline, to lead or drive them into open warfare on the institution itself.

The first evidence of the true design of the Republican party, is to be found in their failure to seek the assistance and co-operation of those citizens of the Southern States who were equally opposed with themselves to the repeal of the Missouri compromise, and the whole policy of the government in regard to Kansas and Nebraska. If their purposes had been such as they represented them to be at the outset, they would naturally have sought the alliance of all who concurred with them in sentiment, without reference to geographical divisions. This they declined to do, and for the first time in the history of our country, the spectacle was exhibited of a party organized on a strictly sectional basis. The dangers likely to result from the formation of such parties were foreseen by the Father of his country, and constituted the subject of one of his most solemn admonitions to his countrymen in his Farewell Address. These are his impressive words:

"In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as a matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations, *Northern* and *Southern*, *Atlantic* and *Western*, whence designing men may endeavor to incite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence with particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings which spring from these misrepresentations. They tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection."

The purposes of the party were still farther disclosed, when they assembled in their

national convention, to give formal and authentic expression to their political creed, and to select their candidate for the presidency. In one of the resolutions adopted by that body, they avow the opinion that slavery stands on the same level with polygamy, and denounce both as "twin relics of barbarism." By this declaration they seek to place all the Southern States outside of the pale of civilization, and to cover with obloquy and reproach the memory of Washington, Jefferson, Henry, Madison, Marshall, Clay, Calhoun, Lowndes, and the whole host of Southern patriots, whose illustrious names constitute the brightest jewels in the treasury of our national fame.

When it was supposed that public opinion was sufficiently prepared for the announcement, we find the doctrine openly proclaimed in various parts of the North, by the representative men of the Republican party, that there exists an irrepressible conflict between the social systems of the North and the South, which must progress until one or the other is exterminated.

Such is the organization, and such are the cardinal doctrines of the Republican party, as derived from the legitimate exponents of their faith and policy.

If we turn to the legislative action of the Northern States, in which that party has obtained the ascendancy, we find that it is in strict conformity with their mischievous dogmas. Their statute books are filled with enactments conceived in a spirit of hostility to the institutions of the South, at war with the true intent and meaning of the federal compact, and adopted for the avowed purpose of rendering nugatory some of the express covenants of the Constitution of the United States.

It would extend this report to an unreasonable length, if your committee should attempt to review this unfriendly legislation in detail. They will therefore content themselves with a brief reference to some of the most prominent features of these laws, copies of which will be found in the appendix.

#### *Maine.*

By the laws of this State it is provided, that if a fugitive slave shall be arrested, he shall be defended by the Attorney for the Commonwealth, and all expenses of such defence paid out of the public treasury. The use of all State and county jails, and of all buildings belonging to the State, are forbidden the reception or securing fugitive slaves, and all officers are forbidden, under heavy penalties, from arresting or aiding in the arrest of such fugitives. If a slaveholder, or other person, shall unlawfully seize or confine a fugitive slave, he shall be liable to be imprisoned for not more than five years, or fined not exceeding \$1,000. If a slaveholder take a slave into the State, the slave is thereby made free; and if the master undertake to exercise any control over him, he is subjected to imprisonment for not less than one year, or fined not exceeding \$1,000.

The Dred Scott decision of the supreme court has been declared unconstitutional, and many offensive and inflammatory resolutions have been passed by the Legislature.

#### *New Hampshire.*

Your committee have not had access to a complete series of the laws of this State. But a general index, which has been consulted, shows that a law exists by which all slaves entering the State, either with or without the consent of their masters, are declared free; and any attempt to capture or hold them is declared to be a felony.



*Vermont.*

This State seems to have entirely forgotten the conservative and law-abiding sentiment which governed its action in the earlier period of her history.

Her law now forbids all citizens and officers of the State from executing or assisting to execute the fugitive slave law, or to arrest a fugitive slave, under penalty of imprisonment for not less than one year, or a fine not exceeding \$1,000. It also forbids the use of all public jails and buildings, for the purpose of securing such slaves. The Attorneys for the State are directed, at public expense, to defend, and procure to be discharged, every person arrested as a fugitive slave. The *habeas corpus* act also provides that fugitive slaves shall be tried by jury, and interposes other obstacles to the execution of the fugitive slave law.

The law further provides, that all persons unlawfully capturing, seizing or confining a person as a fugitive slave, shall be confined in the State prison not more than ten years, and fined not exceeding \$1,000. Every person held as a slave, who shall be brought into the State, is declared free, and all persons who shall hold, or attempt to hold as a slave, any person so brought into the State in any form, or for any time, however short, shall be confined in the State prison not less than one nor more than fifteen years, and fined not exceeding \$2,000. The Legislature has also passed sundry offensive resolutions.

*Massachusetts.*

The laws of this State forbid, under heavy penalties, her citizens, and State and county officers, from executing the fugitive slave law, or from arresting a fugitive slave, or from aiding in either; and denies the use of her jails and public buildings for such purposes.

The Governor is required to appoint commissioners in every county to aid fugitive slaves in recovering their freedom, when proceeded against as fugitive slaves, and all costs attending such proceedings are directed to be paid by the State.

Any person who shall remove, or attempt to remove, or come into the State with the intention to remove or assist in removing any person who is not a fugitive slave, within the meaning of the Constitution, is liable to punishment by fine not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$5,000, and imprisonment not less than one nor more than five years.

Their *habeas corpus* act gives trial by jury to fugitive slaves, and interposes other unlawful impediments to the execution of the fugitive slave law. Her Legislature has also passed violent and offensive resolutions.

*Connecticut.*

This State, which as late as 1840 tolerated slavery within her own borders, as appears by the census of that year, prohibits, under severe penalties, all her officers from aiding in executing the fugitive slave law, and vacates all official acts which may be done by them in attempting to execute that law.

By the act of 1854, sec. 1, it is provided, that every person who shall falsely and maliciously declare, represent or pretend that any person entitled to freedom is a slave, or owes service or labor to any person or persons, with intent to procure or to aid or assist in procuring the forcible removal of such free person from this State as a slave, shall pay a fine of \$5000, and shall be imprisoned five years in the State prison.



“Sec. 2. In all cases arising under this act, the truth of any declaration, representation or pretence that any person being or having been in this State, is or was a slave, or owes or did owe service or labor to any other person or persons, shall not be deemed proved, except by the testimony of at least two credible witnesses testifying to facts directly tending to the truth of such declaration, pretence or representation, or by legal evidence equivalent thereto.”

Sec. 3 subjects to a fine of \$5000 and imprisonment in the State prison for five years, all who shall seize any person entitled to freedom, with intent to have such person held in slavery.

Sec. 4 prohibits the admission of depositions in all cases under this act, and provides that if any witness testifies falsely *in behalf of the party accused* and prosecuted under this act, he shall be fined \$5,000 and imprisoned five years in the State prison. This law is, in the opinion of your committee, but little short of an invitation to perjury, by imposing no penalties on false swearing *against* the party accused.

The resolutions of the Legislature are offensive and disorganizing.

#### *Rhode Island.*

The statutes of Rhode Island provide that any one who transports, or causes to be transported by land or water, any person lawfully inhabiting therein, to any place without the limits of the State, except by due course of law, shall be imprisoned not less than one nor more than ten years. They also prohibit all officers from aiding in executing the fugitive slave law, or arresting a fugitive slave, and deny the use of her jails and public buildings for securing any such fugitive.

#### *New York.*

This State has enacted that every person who shall, without lawful authority, remove or attempt to remove from this State any fugitive slave, shall forfeit, to the party aggrieved, five hundred dollars, and be imprisoned not exceeding ten years in the State prison; and all accessories after the fact are also liable to imprisonment.

The *habeas corpus* act provides that fugitive slaves shall be entitled to trial by jury, and makes it the duty of all Commonwealth's Attorneys to defend fugitive slaves at the expense of the State.

New York has a fugitive law of her own, which is of no practical use, and has forbidden her judicial officers from proceeding under any other law.

Prior to 1841, persons not inhabitants of the State were allowed to take their slaves with them, and keep them in the State for a limited time; but the law has been repealed.

#### *New Jersey.*

Her law provides that if any person shall forcibly take away from this State any man, woman or child, bond or free, into another State, he shall be fined not exceeding \$1,000, or by imprisonment at hard labor not exceeding five years, or both.

The *habeas corpus* act gives a trial by jury to fugitive slaves, and all judicial officers are prohibited from acting under any other than the law of New Jersey.

#### *Pennsylvania.*

Prior to 1847, non-resident owners of slaves were allowed to retain them in Pennsyl-

vania not exceeding six months. In 1847, this privilege was revoked. Slaves are also allowed to testify in all cases in the courts of Pennsylvania. It is further provided by law, that any person "who violently and tumultuously seizes upon any negro or mulatto, and carries such negro away to any place, either with or without the intention of taking such negro before a district or circuit judge, shall be fined not exceeding \$1,000, and imprisoned in the county jail not exceeding three months. The law also punishes, with heavy fine and imprisonment in the penitentiary, any person who may forcibly carry away, or attempt to carry away, any free negro or mulatto from the State. The sale of fugitive slaves is prohibited under heavy penalties, and a trial by jury is secured to fugitive slaves, in violation of the laws of the United States.

*Illinois.*

Illinois has prohibited, under pain of imprisonment of not less than one nor more than seven years, any person from stealing or arresting any slave, with the design of taking such slave out of the State, without first having established his claim thereto, according to the laws of the United States. These penalties will be incurred by the master who pursues his slave across the border, and apprehends him without waiting for the action of commissioner or courts.

*Indiana.*

Some of the laws of this State are favorable to the recovery of fugitives from labor. But the law as to kidnapping is similar to that of Illinois, as above noted, except that the penalties are greater. The fine is not less than \$100 nor more than \$5,000, and the term of imprisonment not less than two nor more than fourteen years.

*Ohio.*

In 1858, the most offensive parts of the laws of this State were repealed. It is understood, however, that measures are in contemplation, if they have not been already initiated, to re-enact them.

*Michigan.*

The laws of this State are peculiarly obnoxious to criticism. They not only deny the use of the jails and public buildings to secure fugitive slaves, and require the Attorneys for the Commonwealth to defend them at the expense of the State, but the law of Connecticut in relation to the punishment of persons falsely alleging others to be slaves, is adopted, with the addition that any person who carries a slave into this State, claiming him as such, shall be punished by imprisonment in the State prison for a period not exceeding ten years, or by a fine not exceeding \$1,000.

The *habeas corpus* act provides for trial by jury of claims to fugitive slaves.

Resolutions have also been adopted by the Legislature, urging the repeal of the fugitive slave law, and the prohibition of slavery in the District of Columbia and the territories.

*Wisconsin.*

Following the example of her sister States of the North, in parts of their hostile legislation, this State has, in some particulars, gone beyond all the rest. She has directed her district attorneys, in all cases of fugitive slaves, to appear for and defend them at the expense of the State. She has required the issue of the writ of *habeas corpus*, on the

mere statement of the district attorney that a person in custody is detained as a fugitive slave, and directs all her judicial and executive officers who have reason to believe that a person is about to be arrested or claimed on such ground, to give notice to the district attorney of the county where the person resides. If a judge, in vacation, fails to discharge the arrested fugitive slave on *habeas corpus*, an appeal is allowed to the next circuit court. Trial by jury is to be granted at the election of either party, and all costs of trial, which would otherwise fall on the fugitive, are assumed by the State. A law has also been enacted, similar to that of Connecticut, for the punishment of one who shall falsely and maliciously declare a person to be a fugitive slave, with intent to aid in procuring the forcible removal of such person from the State as a slave. A section is added to the provisions of this Connecticut law, for the punishment, by imprisonment in the State prison, of any person who shall obstruct the execution of a warrant issued under it, or aid in the escape of the person accused. Another section forbids the enforcement of a judgment recovered for violation of the "fugitive slave act," by the sale of any real or personal property in the State, and makes its provisions applicable to judgments theretofore rendered.

The law relative to kidnapping punishes the forcible seizure, without lawful authority, of any person of color, with intent to cause him to be sent out of the State or sold as a slave, or in any manner to transfer his service or labor, or the actual selling or transferring the service of such person, by imprisonment in the State prison from one to two years, or by fine from five hundred to one thousand dollars. The consent of the person seized, sold or transferred, not to be a defence, unless it appear to the jury that it was not obtained by fraud, nor extorted by duress or by threats.

#### *Iowa.*

The law of this State is similar to that of Indiana, except that here there seems to be no direct provision favoring the recovery of fugitive slaves. Like that of Indiana and Illinois, the law as to kidnapping may be so construed as greatly to obstruct the arrest of such fugitives. The maximum of punishment is, however, something less, being five years in the State prison, and a fine of \$1,000.

Offensive resolutions have also been adopted by its Legislature.

#### *Minnesota.*

What is to be objected to the legislation of this State is, that there is no sufficient recognition of the right of the master to recover his fugitive slave; and consequently, even if such was not the *design* of the omission, the way is left open for the perversion of the law relative to the writ of *habeas corpus*, to the injury of slave owners.

Such are some of the evidences derived from official sources, of the rapid growth of unkind feelings among the people of the North to their brethren of the South. But there are others, which are too significant to be entirely overlooked.

The recent debates in the Congress of the United States have disclosed the remarkable fact, that sixty-eight Republican members of Congress have united in a written endorsement and recommendation to public favor, of an atrocious libel on Southern institutions, prepared by a man who was openly denounced, on the floor of the Senate of the United States, by a Senator from his own State, as unworthy of trust and confidence. This

infamous publication, thus commended to public approval by the regularly accredited representatives of near six millions of Northern people, abounds in the most insidious appeals to the non-slaveholders of the Southern States, and seeks to inflame the minds of the slaves of the South, and to incite them to rise in rebellion against the authority of their masters; to murder them and their families, and to ravage the country with fire and sword. Yet, with a full knowledge of all these facts, one of the endorsers of this libel on fifteen States of the confederacy, has been nominated and persistently pressed by the members of the Republican party, for election to the Speakership of the House of Representatives of the United States; and not one of the members of that party has been restrained, by reason of that endorsement, from giving him a cordial support.

Thus, under a Constitution formed to "establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity," we behold a large number of the representatives of the people, who had sworn to support that Constitution, lending all their influence, personal and official, to defeat the great objects for which it was formed, to array section against section, and to fill the country with all the horrors of servile insurrection and intestine strife.

Your committee might also refer to the offensive tone of a portion of the Northern press and pulpit, and to the libellous resolutions of numerous popular assemblies in the Northern States, as evidences of the decline of that spirit of fraternity and unity which animated our fathers in the days of our revolutionary struggle. These are the ordinary channels through which public opinion makes itself heard and felt. But it would probably be uncharitable to the Northern people to hold them responsible for all the ravings of fanatical agitators; and we therefore prefer to rely on those authentic manifestations of unfriendly feeling proceeding from the official representatives of the people, and for which the constituent body is justly responsible.

Your committee cheerfully acquit a large number of the Northern people of any positive and active participation in these aggressions on Southern rights and interests. The recent demonstrations of popular feeling made in some of the Northern cities, are accepted in the spirit in which they were offered. But abstract resolutions in favor of the guarantees of the Constitution are of no avail, unless they are followed by corresponding action. As long as the conservative people of the North remain passive, and permit agitators and fanatics and enemies of the South to fill positions of public trust, and to speak and to act on behalf of their respective States, they cannot escape the responsibility which attaches to their declarations and acts. Those who have it in their power to prevent the perpetration of a wrong, and fail to exercise that power, must to a great extent be responsible for the wrong itself.

Thus the conservative men of the North are responsible for the organization and action of the Republican party. It was their duty to have prevented it, and they had the power to fulfil that duty. They preferred, however, to remain inactive, and thus permitted the Republican party to obtain the ascendancy in the state and national councils. They could not have been ignorant of the fact that such an organization must necessarily prove dangerous to the Union. They must have foreseen that a party organized on the basis of hostility to slavery extension, would very soon become a party opposed to slavery itself. The whole argument against the *extension* of slavery is soon, by a very slight deflection, made to bear against the *existence* of slavery, and thus the anti-extension idea is merged in that of abolition. Accordingly we find, notwithstanding the denial by the

Republican party of any purpose to interfere with slavery where it exists, that the tendency of its policy is to its extermination everywhere.

The logical consequences of their teachings have been exhibited in the recent raid at Harpers Ferry; and so long as that party maintains its present sectional organization, and inculcates its present doctrines, the South can expect nothing less than a succession of such traitorous attempts to subvert its institutions and to incite its slaves to rapine and murder. The crimes of John Brown were neither more nor less than practical illustrations of the doctrines of the leaders of the Republican party. The very existence of such a party is an offence to the whole South.

Whether the recent outrages perpetrated upon the soil and citizens of Virginia, will have the effect of awakening the conservative sentiment of the North into efficient action, remains to be seen. Your committee cannot relinquish the hope that such will be its effect, and that thus good may come out of evil. Your committee have no appeals or remonstrances to address to their fellow-citizens of the North. They doubtless comprehend their obligations under the Constitution to the people of the South. If they shall in future show a readiness to fulfil those obligations, Virginia and the other Southern States are prepared to bury the past in oblivion, and to respond with cordiality to every manifestation of a returning spirit of fraternity. As Virginia was among the foremost in the struggle for national independence, and contributed as much as any other State to the formation of the constitutional Union, she would be among the last to abandon it, provided its obligations be faithfully observed. Her sons having been educated to cherish "a cordial, habitual and immovable attachment to our national Union—accustomed to think and speak of it as the palladium of their political safety and prosperity, watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety, discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it may in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts."

But the Union which they have been taught to love and revere is the Union contemplated by the Constitution—a Union of communities having equal rights—a Union regulated and governed by the principles of the Constitution—a Union of sovereign States, entitled to regulate their domestic affairs in their own way, and bound to fulfil their obligations to each other with scrupulous fidelity. When it shall cease to be such a Union, it will have forfeited all claims to their respect and affection. Virginia feels that she has discharged her whole duty to her sister States, and she asks nothing from them that is not guaranteed to her by the plain terms of the federal compact. She has not sought officiously to intermeddle with the domestic concerns of other States, and she demands that they shall refrain from all interference with hers.

But it is clear, from the review of the condition of the public sentiment of the Northern States for the last five years, as indicated by their legislation and in other authentic forms, that many of their people have ceased to respect the rights of the Southern States, to recognize the obligations of the federal compact, or to cherish for us those friendly sentiments which gave birth to the Constitution of the United States. A proper sense of self-respect and the instinct of self-preservation therefore, require that we should adopt such measures as may be necessary to secure ourselves against future aggression, and to meet every emergency which may hereafter arise. We desire nothing but friendly relations with our sister States of the North. We ask of them nothing to which they have not solemnly bound themselves by the compact of the Constitution.

But we understand our rights, and we are resolutely determined to maintain them. We disclaim all aggressive purposes. But when we are threatened with the knife of the assassin and torch of the incendiary, we cannot fold our arms in blind security. We have no desire to rupture the political, commercial or social ties which bind us to the North, so long as our rights are respected; but admonished by the past, it is our duty to prepare for the future by placing ourselves in an attitude of defense, and by adopting such measures as may be necessary for our security and welfare.

Your committee therefore recommend to the General Assembly, the following resolutions for adoption:

1. *Resolved*, That the appropriate standing committees of the two Houses of the General Assembly be instructed to prepare and report such bills as in their judgment may be necessary to organize, arm and equip the militia of the State for active and efficient service.

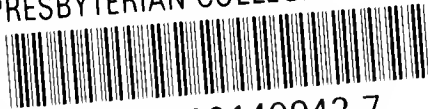
2. *Resolved*, That the committees on finance be instructed to prepare and report such bills as in their judgment may be most effectual (without violating the provisions of the Constitution of the United States) in encouraging the domestic manufactures of our own State, promoting direct trade with foreign countries, and establishing, as far as may be practicable, our commercial independence.

3. *Resolved*, That we earnestly invite the co-operation of our sister States of the South in carrying out the policy indicated in the foregoing resolutions.

4. *Resolved*, That the committees for courts of justice be instructed to report such bills as may be necessary to secure the more prompt and effectual punishment of all foreign emissaries and others, who may be found guilty of conspiring against the peace of our community, or seeking to incite our slaves to insurrection.

5. *Resolved*, That the course of the late Governor, in regard to the Harpers Ferry affair, is amply vindicated by the evidence before the committee, and entitles him to the emphatic commendation of the country.

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