

THE CHURCH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

PHILADELPHIA, JANUARY, 1887.

On account of the inability of Rev. Henry A. Nelson, D.D., to assume immediate control of the magazine, the work was assigned to different members of the Committee. The order of the Assembly to issue the first number on the first of January would not permit delay.

INTRODUCTION.

The committee appointed by the last General Assembly to arrange and issue the consolidated magazine now present the result of their work. The Assembly decided only the question of consolidation, leaving to the committee all details, including the question of editorship and the selection of an editor if deemed expedient to appoint one.

The magazine is to be devoted to the benevolent work of the Presbyterian Church, at home and abroad, not omitting, however, information upon the work of other branches of the Church of Christ. It will, therefore, not be concerned with current general topics, or with questions of theology or ecclesiastical polity. It is intended to represent all the departments of the Church's work, giving to each a fair and full exhibit, and to be, in a special sense, the organ of the Boards.

At the same time, such a periodical has an opportunity and a function outside the lines of the Boards. Presbyterians, both as individuals and as churches, are largely engaged in certain great works of Christian beneficence not represented on the tables of the General Assembly. Into these go a large amount of money and of consecrated energy, and our denominational magazine may very properly and profitably bestow a share of attention upon these. There is, for instance, the vast city mission work of the churches in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and elsewhere, the magnitude and details of which are comparatively unknown outside of the large cities. The great hospitals

furnish another interesting field. Medical missionary institutions, like that of Dr. Dowkonnt in New York, are beginning to attract the attention which their importance demands; and the work of individual churches, in schools for the Chinese, is raising interesting practical questions and yielding blessed results. With these and other beautiful and fruitful charities the whole Church should be made acquainted. Description and discussion of the principles and methods of the larger city organizations will set the patterns for similar work elsewhere, and details of their results will go to promote both enthusiasm and efficiency at smaller centres. Such representation will necessarily be limited, and subordinate to the distinctive work of the denomination; but even general outlines and salient facts will do much toward dissipating the spirit of pessimism which is threatening to undermine the faith of not a few Christians in the progress and prospects of Christ's kingdom.

If the magazine shall be only an inventory of facts, or an aggregate of statistics and correspondence, it will fail of its purpose. The ideal of the rank and file of the Church has been shaped by the current secular magazines, which are at once instructive and entertaining; and the popular demand insists that, in religious no less than in secular periodicals, the matter shall be thoroughly worked up and attractively presented. Mere facts, however interesting, will neither instruct nor inspire. Like soldiers, they

FREEDMEN.

A CALM VIEW OF THE FREEDMEN'S CASE.

REV. B. B. WARFIELD, D.D.

We already recognize it as a commonplace to say that the greatest work before the American people to-day is the elevation and civilization of the seven millions of blacks that form so large a section of its fifty millions of souls. But, like so many other commonplaces, it is easier to bandy this phrase from mouth to mouth than thoroughly to realize the very serious meaning that lies in it. Some appear to think that they have done all that can be required of them when they have yielded their assent to the assertion; though, at that rate, we cannot hope that the great work thus acknowledged will be soon overtaken. Almost nowhere, however, is its magnitude adequately appreciated, although it is difficult to see how any one who has had much contact with the masses of the blacks, with his eyes and heart open to see and feel, can have escaped a certain amount of deep anxiety as to their future. He sees adequate capacities for rising in them; but he sees also great obstacles to their rising; and he asks himself, in doubt, whether any capacities can avail to lift a people upward on whom rests so great a weight of prejudice, evil custom and sad fate.

We need not speculate as to the causes of so great an apathy in the face of so great a problem. Men are indifferent only because men are insufficiently acquainted with the true state of the case and have inadequately realized the difficulty of the task now set before the American people. For instance, the terrible legacy of evil which generations of slavery have left to our freedmen is scarcely appreciated by any of us. We are prone to represent the average slave to ourselves as a carefully nurtured and taught inmate of a Christian household, sent out at last into the world to care for himself with almost the same preparation in character and moral training that was given to the sons

of the house themselves. The foundation of this fancy is a no more than just recognition of the constant efforts of the slaveholders of the South to teach their bondmen the truths of religion and to frame within them a sound system of morals. But when we so state the results attained we forget two very important considerations: that the house-servants were but a small proportion of the whole body of slaves on the one side, and on the other that the very fact of slavery was the most potent of demoralizers.

The southern slaveholders did what they could to teach a true Christianity to their slaves, and the results attained by them, which, all things considered, are nothing less than marvellous, are the sufficient proof not only of their own vital and yearning piety, but also of the strenuousness of their efforts to indoctrinate the souls which were in their charge with the truths of religion. But the masses of plantation hands could be only partially reached by any efforts; and, as a mere matter of fact, here as always elsewhere the fruit of slavery was ingrained immorality. When we grieve over the odd divorce of religion and morality which is so frequently met with among the blacks, let us not indeed blame the slaveholders for it, as if their Christian teaching was at fault, but let us equally remember that slavery itself is responsible for it. I do not forget what contact with Christian masters of a higher race has done for the thousands of heathen savages which were being continually landed on our shores, up to the very outbreak of the war itself. Let any one simply compare the average self-respecting negro in America with the naked savage of the African forests, and thank God for the marvellous change. But I am concerned to have it clearly seen what the very conditions of slavery prevented this contact from accomplishing; and in what moral state it necessarily sent forth its millions of freedmen to cope with the world. Let us only remember that, by its very nature, slavery cannot allow

to its victim a will of his own; that it leaves him master of none of his deeds; that it permits him ownership in nothing, not even in his honor or virtue. Who need ask after the moral effect of such a state of things? How could the moral instruction of one member of the family hope to overcome the immoral compulsion of others? I could name some colored women who were nothing less than martyrs of chastity. But the masses are never martyrs, and the curse of slavery eats to the roots of all life.

This, it is to be observed, is not to deny that slavery did form and compact a moral character in the bondmen. It is to point out what kind of moral character it compacted. There is an honor among thieves; and there is a strict and binding morality among slaves. But as in the one case it is a different honor from that that obtains among honest men, so in the other it is a morality of a different stamp and of a separate standard from what obtains among freemen. What is virtue in the slave is vice in the freeman, and this reversal of all moral principle is one of the chief characteristics of the terrible institution of human slavery. The task now before us would be easier had slavery only demoralized. As a matter of fact it did worse: it moralized on a false and perverted system. The freedman has his code of morals, and in his way and from the slave's point of view he is an intensely moral man. He is not unmoral; he is an enthusiast for an immoral ethic—an ethic that now that he is a freedman will not range with his new position and his new duties. In a word, slavery, so far from fitting its victims for freedom, unfitted them for it. The task before the American people in dealing with the blacks is nothing less, then, than the uprooting and expulsion of a settled and ingrained system of immorality, in order that a true morality may be substituted for it.

It is another result of the state of things which I have tried to point to as the inevitable effect of generations of slavery, that the freedman's sons are, morally speaking, a distinct deterioration from the freedman himself. That this is a fact every careful observer at the South recognizes, though it must not be misunderstood, as if it involved a denial of the very rapid growth upwards of those who have had the op-

portunity of growth. Unfortunately, however, it is the few of the new generation who have received this opportunity, while the many thus far have been caught in the toils of necessity and are working out their own destruction without help from without. We do not share fully in the distress of many that the old type of negro is dying out with the generation which had the severe discipline of slavery; but it is a fact that it is dying out, and that, generally speaking, what it leaves behind it is something apparently worse. But the very reason of this sad phenomenon is that the old type was an artificial product. The slave was trained into and held in a bearing of dignity and self-respecting conduct by external pressure. He stood by virtue of props from without. When those props were removed he still stood by virtue of old habit. But there was no sufficient inner centripetal force to hold him together. He was like a barrel which has stood so long that its contents have solidified, and, when the hoops are knocked off, still retains its uprightness. The sons of the freedmen came into the world without hoops, and they simply betray to us the artificiality of the product which we have admired. Their morality is not only wrongly centred, but is in a fluid state; and it is our task to see that it crystallizes around some solid kernel of truth and righteousness. This were better than to gather it up and try, as of old, to tie it into shape by the pressure of outside institutions.

And here we are face to face with our problem; for it is with the sons of the freedmen that our generation has especially to deal. And we are face to face with the knottiest part of the task. What pressure can we bring to bear on these wandering souls to draw them within the formative influences of a true and sound morality? The strongest motive with most men is the hope of rising. The most degraded immigrant that reaches our shores is under this spell: the lure of hope dances ever before his eyes. However high above him others may stand, he has but to lift his eyes to see that the plain pathway runs from his feet to theirs, and it is only a question as to whether he is willing to climb—whether he will not stand by their sides to-morrow. If he has no ambition for

himself, he has for his children; and it is rare indeed that the civilizing influence of this single hope is not the sufficient excitement to endeavor, self-respect and growth. But this is lost for the African. The class to which he belongs by birth is the class with which he must make his home until death sets him free. He bears a brand on his brow that closes all avenues of advance before him, and the despondency of his heart, that makes him reckless of public opinion as to his deeds, is but the inward answer to the stern outward fact that, become what he individually may, he cannot rise into the classes above him. It is probably impossible for any of us to realize the deadening burden of this hopelessness. It clips the wings of every soaring spirit, and drives every ambition back to gnaw its own tongue in unavailing pain. Yet an adequate appreciation of it is one of the conditions of our understanding the gravity of the problem that is before us, in our efforts to raise and educate the blacks to take their proper place in our Christian civilization.

Those who expect, in such circumstances, the freedmen to elevate themselves are building castles in Spain with a vengeance. And it is but little less unreasonable to expect the South to take the whole burden of their training for the important duties of free men and women. To go no further, the South has not the means in men or money for the task. Apparently illiteracy is increasing among the blacks, even now; and it is certain that were northern aid removed the burden would be so hopeless that it could not even be undertaken. It must be sorrowfully added (for I too am a southerner, in birth, training and affiliations) that the southern people are not thoroughly awake either to the necessity of, or to their duty in, this matter. Many individuals are already alive to it; the Christian South has not lost its pity for these suffering and ignorant claimants to its aid; and multitudes there are ready for any personal sacrifice for their elevation and improvement—as they understand what their elevation and improvement ought to be. But the spirit of caste (for it cannot be called by any milder name) is practically universal, and colors the opinions and paralyzes the efforts

of the whole South to such an extent as to render it unfit for much useful work in this field. For it cannot be too strongly emphasized that it is not he who feels persuaded that the negro was made a little lower than man, and who is graciously willing to train him into fitness for such a position, who can educate him into true and self-centred manhood. It is only he who is thoroughly persuaded that God has made of one blood all the nations of the earth, that has the missionary spirit, or that can serve as the hand of the Most High in elevating the lowly and rescuing the oppressed.

I am not saying that the spirit of caste is confined to the South; I have met with it in full bloom in the North also. But it is practically universal in the South. And the community is so entirely imbued with it that it can scarcely believe any other sentiment possible to self-respecting people, and gravely asserts it when intending to deny it. "It has been charged," said a Mississippi delegate only the other day, to the General Conference of the Protestant Episcopal Church, held at Chicago, "that the colored race has been expelled from attending church by the white members. This is not so; they would be gladly welcomed, *and seats have been set aside for them in all the churches.*" The saddest thing about it is that the good brother actually seemed to suppose that he had made out his point. "Only such a prejudice" exists against the colored people "as would exist against any uneducated and unrefined people," indeed! In what community are special seats set aside "in all the churches" for the "uneducated and unrefined"? It would be a marvellously instructive sight to see *this* division carried through by some sure touchstone! Ah, no! we are hand to hand here with the pure spirit of caste; a caste which we cannot call unnatural when all the circumstances are taken into consideration, and which I should be one of the last too sharply to blame the South for entertaining, but none the less a caste the existence of which we must explicitly and calmly recognize if we are ever to grasp all the contents of the problem of the elevation of the colored population of the South, and which it is painful to see in this nineteenth century anywhere out of India. I

have myself known a negro woman who had, in anxiety for her soul, ventured to enter a crowded church during a series of revival meetings, to be asked out by the elders. It would be unfair to say it is the settled policy of the South towards the negro, but it is at least the inbred instinct of southern men and women, whether in church or state, to make the negro know what they are pleased to call "his place"—as if, forsooth, his place as a man was not side by side with men, and his place as a Christian was not in the midst of God's children. Are we to-day to reverse the inspired declaration that in Christ Jesus there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman?

The harm that caste does towards those whom we would elevate cannot be overestimated. It kills hope; it paralyzes effort; it cuts away all of those excitements to endeavor that come of intimacy with those above us, and the example of those who, having trodden where our feet now walk, have passed into the regions beyond, leaving footprints for us to follow. It is a marvel to me that its dangers too are not more fully appreciated. Apart from all question of religion and the kingdom of God, is it good public policy to compact a lower class, escape from which, by reason of the indelible stain of color, cannot be had, into a solid phalanx of opposition to the ruling class, and by heaping, year after year, petty injustices and insults upon it, to beget undying hatred in its heart and to perpetuate all the evils of race alienation into an indefinite future, if not even to treasure up for ourselves wrath against a day of wrath? For after a while this blind Samson must awake, and the issues which depend on these two things—that when he awakes he shall not be still unmoral, and that he shall not awake with a deep sore in his heart against his fellow citizens of another color—are simply tremendous, for the South and for the nation.

What I have said, I have said only with the purpose of outlining the seriousness of the problem now before the American people. But it seems to me that it will avail also to suggest the instrumentalities by which alone the problem can be successfully attacked. If it is a true moralization of the blacks that is needed,

this can be secured only by a careful moral teaching such as can be furnished only by religious organizations which will educate as well as preach. Secular training will do small good; simple preaching of the gospel does not reach deep enough. We must have Christian schools everywhere, where Christianity as a revealed system of truth and of practice is daily taught by men and women whose hearts are aglow with missionary fervor—who find in every creature of God the promise and potency of all higher life. Can the Presbyterian Church safely neglect to do her part in this great work?

EARNEST WORDS FROM A COLORED MISSIONARY.

REV. F. J. GRIMKE, JACKSONVILLE, FLA.

I read with interest the article in the July number of the *Record* entitled "The Negro Problem Viewed from the Standpoint of our Republic," and trust that it may have the desired effect in exciting a deeper interest in the intellectual, moral and spiritual elevation of the millions of the South. The Church is not doing the one-tenth of what it ought to do, or what is necessary to be done if these millions are to be saved for Christ. It is true something has been done, but what has been done is as nothing in comparison to what remains to be done. Our Church cannot allow this work to remain in its present condition without neglecting one of the most important trusts ever committed to it. Its contributions ought to be increased, and ought to be increased at once, in order that the work may be enlarged. Instead of the small sum contributed annually, a half million of dollars ought to be consecrated to the work. There is no class of people to-day in our land that has a stronger claim upon the sympathy and generosity of the Church, or that offers a more inviting field for Christian work, or where the Lord's money can be expended to a greater advantage. The fields are already ripe to the harvest, as those of us who are in this southern land know, and the prayer of our hearts is that the Lord will send forth more laborers into his harvest. But it is very evident that this can be done only by increased contributions on the part of the churches. The Board, we are sure,