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The Negroes of Cincinnati Prior to the Civil War

The study of the history of the Negroes of Cincinnati is unusually important for the reason that from no other annals do we get such striking evidence that the colored people generally thrive when encouraged by their white neighbors. This story is otherwise significant when we consider the fact that about a fourth of the persons of color settling in the State of Ohio during the first half of the last century made their homes in this city. Situated on a north bend of the Ohio where commerce breaks bulk, Cincinnati rapidly developed, attracting both foreigners and Americans, among whom were not a few Negroes. Exactly how many persons of color were in this city during the first decade of the nineteenth century is not yet known. It has been said that there were no Negroes in Hamilton County in 1800.[1] It is evident, too, that the real exodus of free Negroes and fugitives from the South to the Northwest Territory did not begin prior to 1815, although their attention had been earlier directed to this section as a more desirable place for colonization than the shores of Africa.[2] As the reaction following the era of good feeling toward the Negroes during the revolutionary period had not reached its climax free persons of color had been content to remain in the South.[3] The unexpected immigration of these Negroes into this section and the last bold effort made to drive them out marked epochs in their history in this city. The history of these people prior to the Civil War, therefore, falls into three periods, one of toleration from 1800 to 1826, one of persecution from 1826 to 1841, and one of amelioration from 1841 to 1861.

In the beginning the Negroes were not a live issue in Cincinnati. The question of their settlement in that community was debated but resulted in great diversity of opinion rather than a fixedness of judgment among the citizens. The question came up in the Constitutional Convention of 1802 and provoked some discussion, but reaching no decision, the convention simply left the Negroes out of the pale of the newly organized body politic, discriminating against them together with Indians and foreigners, by incorporating the word white into the fundamental law.[4] The legislature to which the disposition of this question was left, however, took it up in 1804 to calm the fears of those who had more seriously considered the so-called menace of Negro immigration. This body enacted a law, providing that no Negro or mulatto should be allowed to remain permanently in that State, unless he could furnish a certificate of freedom issued by some court in the United States. Negroes then living there had to be registered before the following June, giving the names of their children. No man could employ a Negro who could not show such a certificate. Hiring a delinquent black or harboring or hindering the capture of a runaway was punishable by a fine of $50 and the owner of a fugitive thus illegally employed could recover fifty cents a day for the services of his slave.[5]

As the fear of Negro immigration increased the law of 1804 was found to be inadequate. In 1807, therefore, the legislature enacted another measure providing that no Negro should be permitted to settle in Ohio unless he could within twenty days give a bond to the amount of $500, guaranteeing his good behavior and support. The fine for concealing a fugitive was raised from $50 to $100, one half of which should go to the informer. Negro evidence against the white man was prohibited.[6] This law together with that of 1830 making the Negro ineligible for service in the State militia, that of 1831 depriving persons of color of the privilege of serving upon juries, and that of 1838 prohibiting

[1] Quillin, "The Color Line in Ohio," 18.

[2] "Tyrannical Libertymen," 10-11; Locke, "Antislavery," 31-32; Branagan, "Serious Remonstrance," 18.

[3] Woodson, "The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861," 230-231.

[4] Constitution, Article I, Sections 2, 6.

[5] Laws of Ohio, II, 63.

[6] Laws of Ohio, V, 53.

the education of colored children at the expense of the State, constituted what were known as the "Black Laws."[7]

Up to 1826, however, the Negroes of Cincinnati had not become a cause of much trouble. Very little mention of them is made in the records of this period. They were not wanted in this city but were tolerated as a negligible factor. D. B. Warden, a traveler through the West in 1819, observed that the blacks of Cincinnati were "good-humoured, garrulous, and profligate, generally disinclined to laborious occupations, and prone to the performance of light and menial drudgery." Here the traveler was taking effect for cause. "Some few," said he, "exercise the humbler trades, and some appear to have formed a correct conception of the objects and value of property, and are both industrious and economical. A large proportion of them are reputed, and perhaps correctly, to be habituated to petit larceny." But this had not become a grave offence, for he said that not more than one individual had been corporally punished by the courts since the settlement of the town.[8]

When, however, the South reached the conclusion that free Negroes were an evil, and Quakers and philanthropists began to direct these unfortunates to the Northwest Territory for colonization, a great commotion arose in Southern Ohio and especially in Cincinnati.[9] How rapid this movement was, may be best observed by noticing the statistics of this period. There were 337 Negroes in Ohio in 1800; 1,890 in 1810; 4,723 in 1820; 9,586 in 1830; 17,342 in 1840; and 25,279 in 1850.[10] Now Cincinnati had 410 Negroes in 1819;[11] 690 in 1826;[12] 2,255 in 1840;[13] and 3,237 in 1850.[14]

It was during the period between 1826 and 1840 that Cincinnati had to grapple with the problem of the immigrating Negroes and the poor whites from the uplands of Virginia and Kentucky. With some ill-informed persons the question was whether that section should be settled by white men or Negroes. The situation became more alarming when the Southern philanthropic minority sometimes afforded a man like a master of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, who settled 70 freedmen in Lawrence County, Ohio, in one day.[15] It became unusually acute in Cincinnati because of the close social and commercial relations between that city and the slave States. Early in the nineteenth century Cincinnati became a manufacturing center to which the South learned to look for supplies of machinery, implements, furniture, and food.[16] The business men prospering thereby were not advocates of slavery but rather than lose trade by acquiring the reputation of harboring fugitive slaves or frightening away whites by encouraging the immigration of Negroes, they began to assume the attitude of driving the latter from those parts.

From this time until the forties the Negroes were a real issue in Cincinnati. During the late twenties they not only had to suffer from the legal disabilities provided in the "Black Laws," but had to withstand the humiliation of a rigid social ostracism.[17] They were regarded as intruders and denounced as an idle, profligate and criminal class with whom a self-respecting white man could not afford to associate. Their children were not permitted to attend the public schools and few persons braved the inconveniences of living under the stigma of teaching a "nigger school." Negroes were not welcome in the white churches and when they secured admission thereto they had to go to the "black pew." Colored ministers were treated with very little consideration by the white clergy as they feared

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[7] Hickok, "The Negro in Ohio," 41, 42.

[8] Warden, "Statistical, Political and Historical Account of the United States of North America," 264.

[9] Quillin, "The Color Line in Ohio," 32.

[10] The Census of the United States, from 1800 to 1850.

[11] Flint's Letters in Thwaite's "Early Western Travels," IX, 239.

[12] Cist, "Cincinnati in 1841," 37; *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, Sept. 14, 1841.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] United States Census, 1850.

[15] *Ohio State Journal*, May 3, 1827; *African Repository*, III, 254.

[16] Abdy, "Journal of a Tour in the United States," III, 62.

[17] Jay, "Miscellaneous Writings on Slavery," 27, 373, 385, 387; Minutes of the Convention of the Colored People of Ohio, 1849.

that they might lose caste and be compelled to give up their churches. The colored people made little or no effort to go to white theaters or hotels and did not attempt to ride in public conveyances on equal footing with members of the other race. Not even white and colored children dared to play together to the extent that such was permitted in the South.[18]

This situation became more serious when it extended to pursuits of labor. White laborers there, as in other Northern cities during this period, easily reached the position of thinking that it was a disgrace to work with Negroes. This prejudice was so much more inconvenient to the Negroes of Cincinnati than elsewhere because of the fact that most of the menial labor in that city was done by Germans and Irishmen. Now, since the Negroes could not follow ordinary menial occupations there was nothing left them but the lowest form of "drudgery," for which employers often preferred colored women. It was, therefore, necessary in some cases for the mother to earn the living for the family because the father could get nothing to do. A colored man could not serve as an ordinary drayman or porter without subjecting his employer to a heavy penalty.[19]

The trades unions were then proscribing the employment of colored mechanics. Many who had worked at skilled labor were by this prejudice forced to do drudgery or find employment in other cities. The president of a "mechanical association" was publicly tried in 1830 by that organization for the crime of assisting a colored youth to learn a trade.[20] A young man of high character, who had at the cabinet-making trade in Kentucky saved enough to purchase his freedom, came to Cincinnati about this time, seeking employment. He finally found a position in a shop conducted by an Englishman. On entering the establishment, however, the workmen threw down their tools, declaring that the Negro had to leave or that they would. The unfortunate "intruder" was accordingly dismissed. He then entered the employ of a slaveholder, who at the close of the Negro's two years of service at common labor discovered that the black was a mechanic. The employer then procured work for him as a rough carpenter. By dint of perseverance and industry this Negro within a few years became a master workman, employing at times six or eight men, but he never received a single job of work from a native-born citizen from a free State.[21]

The hardships of the Negroes of this city, however, had just begun. The growth of a prejudiced public opinion led not only to legal proscription and social ostracism but also to open persecution. With the cries of the Southerners for the return of fugitives and the request of white immigrants for the exclusion of Negroes from that section, came the demand to solve the problem by enforcing the "Black Laws." Among certain indulgent officials these enactments had been allowed to fall into desuetude. These very demands, however, brought forward friends as well as enemies of the colored people. Their first clash was testing the constitutionality of the law of 1807. When the question came up before the Supreme Court, this measure was upheld.[22] Encouraged by such support, the foes of the Negroes forced an execution of the law. The courts at first hesitated but finally took the position that the will of the people should be obeyed. The Negroes asked for ninety days to comply with the law and were given sixty. When the allotted time had expired, however, many of them had not given bonds as required. The only thing to do then was to force them to leave the city. The officials again hesitated but a mob quickly formed to relieve them of the work. This was the riot of 1829. Bands of ruffians held sway in the city for three days, as the police were unable or unwilling to restore order. Negroes were insulted on the streets, attacked in their homes, and even killed. About a thousand

[18] Barber, "A Report on the Condition of the Colored People of Ohio," 1840.

[19] Proceedings of the Ohio Antislavery Convention, 1835, 19.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] Proceedings of the Ohio Antislavery Convention, 1835, 19.

[22] *African Repository*, V, 185.

or twelve hundred of them found it advisable to leave for Canada West where they established the settlement known as Wilberforce.[23]

This upheaval, though unusually alarming, was not altogether a bad omen. It was due not only to the demands which the South was making upon the North and the fear of the loss of Southern trade, but also to the rise of the Abolition Societies, the growth of which such a riotous condition as this had materially fostered. In a word, it was the sequel of the struggle between the proslavery and the anti-slavery elements of the city. This was the time when the friends of the Negroes were doing most for them. Instead of frightening them away a group of respectable white men in that community were beginning to think that they should be trained to live there as useful citizens. Several schools and churches for them were established. The Negroes themselves provided for their own first school about 1820; but one Mr. Wing had sufficient courage to admit persons of color to his evening classes after their first efforts had failed. By 1834 many of the colored people were receiving systematic instruction.[24] To some enemies of these dependents it seemed that the tide was about to turn in favor of the despised cause. Negroes began to raise sums adequate to their elementary education and the students of Lane Seminary supplemented these efforts by establishing a colored mission school which offered more advanced courses and lectures on scientific subjects twice a week. These students, however, soon found themselves far in advance of public opinion.[25] They were censured by the faculty and to find a more congenial center for their operations they had to go to Oberlin in the Western Reserve where a larger number of persons had become interested in the cause of the despised and rejected of men.

During the years from 1833 to 1836 the situation in Cincinnati grew worse because of the still larger influx of Negroes driven from the South by intolerable conditions incident to the reaction against the race. To solve this problem various schemes were brought forth. Augustus Wattles tells us that he appeared in Cincinnati about this time and induced numbers of the Negroes to go to Mercer County, Ohio, where they took up 30,000 acres of land.[26] Others went to Indiana and purchased large tracts on the public domain.[27] Such a method, however, seemed rather slow to the militant proslavery leaders who had learned not only to treat the Negroes as an evil but to denounce in the same manner the increasing number of abolitionists by whom it was said the Negroes were encouraged to immigrate into the State.

The spirit of the proslavery sympathizers was well exhibited in the upheaval which soon followed. This was the riot of July 30, 1836. It was an effort to destroy the abolition organ, *The Philanthropist*, edited by James G. Birney, a Southerner who had brought his slaves from Huntsville, Alabama, to Kentucky and freed them. The mob formed in the morning, went to the office of *The Philanthropist*, destroyed what printed matter they could find, threw the type into the street, and broke up the press. They then proceeded to the home of the printer, Mr. Pugh, but finding no questionable matter there, they left it undisturbed. The homes of James G. Birney, Mr. Donaldson and Dr. Colby were also threatened. The next homes to be attacked were those of Church Alley, the Negro quarter, but when two guns were fired upon the assailants they withdrew. It was reported that one man was shot but this has never been proved. The mob hesitated some time before attacking these houses again, several of the rioters declaring that they did not care to endanger their lives. A second onset was made, but it was discovered that the Negroes had deserted the quarter. On finding the houses empty the assailants destroyed their contents.[28]

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[23] *African Repository*, V, 185.

[24] For a lengthy account of these efforts see Woodson's "The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861," 245, 328, 329; and Hickok, "The Negro in Ohio," 83, 88.

[25] Fairchild, "Oberlin: Its Origin, Progress and Results."

[26] Howe, "Historical Collections of Ohio," 356.

[27] *The Southern Workman*, XXXVII, 169.

[28] For a full account see Howe, "Historical Collections of Ohio," 225-226.

Yet undaunted by this persistent opposition the Negroes of Cincinnati achieved so much during the years between 1835 and 1840 that they deserved to be ranked among the most progressive people of the world.[29] Their friends endeavored to enable them through schools, churches and industries to embrace every opportunity to rise. These 2,255 Negroes accumulated, largely during this period, $209,000 worth of property, exclusive of personal effects and three churches valued at $19,000. Some of this wealth consisted of land purchased in Ohio and Indiana. Furthermore, in 1839 certain colored men of the city organized "The Iron Chest Company," a real estate firm, which built three brick buildings and rented them to white men. One man, who a few years prior to 1840 had thought it useless to accumulate wealth from which he might be driven away, had changed his mind and purchased $6,000 worth of real estate. Another Negro, who had paid $5,000 for himself and family, had bought a home worth $800 or $1,000. A freedman, who was a slave until he was twenty-four years old, then had two lots worth $10,000, paid a tax of $40 and had 320 acres of land in Mercer County. Another, who was worth only $3,000 in 1836, had seven houses in Cincinnati, 400 acres of land in Indiana, and another tract in the same county. He was worth $12,000 or $15,000. A woman who was a slave until she was thirty was then worth $2,000. She had also come into potential possession of two houses on which a white lawyer had given her a mortgage to secure the payment of $2,000 borrowed from this thrifty woman. Another Negro, who was on the auction block in 1832, had spent $2,600 purchasing himself and family and had bought two brick houses worth $6,000 and 560 acres of land in Mercer County, said to be worth $2,500.[30]

This unusual progress had been promoted by two forces, the development of the steamboat as a factor in transportation and the rise of the Negro mechanic. Negroes employed on vessels as servants to the travelling public amassed large sums received in the form of "tips." Furthermore, the fortunate few, constituting the stewards of these vessels, could by placing contracts for supplies and using business methods realize handsome incomes. Many Negroes thus enriched purchased real estate and went into business in Cincinnati.[31] The other force, the rise of the Negro mechanic, was made possible by overcoming much of the prejudice which had at first been encountered. A great change in this respect had taken place in Cincinnati by 1840. Many who had been forced to work as menial laborers then had the opportunity to show their usefulness to their families and to the community. Colored mechanics were then getting as much skilled labor as they could do. It was not uncommon for white artisans to solicit employment of colored men because they had the reputation of being better paymasters than master workmen of the more favored race.[32] White mechanics not only worked with colored men but often associated with them, patronized the same barber shop, and went to the same places of amusement.[33]

In this prosperous condition the Negroes could help themselves. Prior to this period they had been unable to make any sacrifices for charity and education. Only $150 of the $1,000 raised for Negro education in 1835 was contributed by persons of color. In 1839, however, the colored people raised $889.30 for this purpose, and thanks to their economic progress, this task was not so difficult as that of raising the $150 in 1835. They were then spending considerable amounts for evening and writing schools, attended by seventy-five persons, chiefly adults. In 1840 Reverend Mr. Denham and Mr. Goodwin had in their schools sixty-five pupils each paying $3 per quarter, and Miss Merrill a school of forty-seven pupils paying the same tuition. In all, the colored people were paying these teachers about $1,300 a year. The only help the Negroes were then receiving was that from the Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, which employed one Miss Seymour at a salary of $300 a year to instruct fifty-

[29] Barber, "Report on the Condition of the Colored People in Ohio," 1840, and *The Philanthropist*, July 14 and 21, 1840.

[30] These facts are taken from A. D. Barber's "Report on the Condition of the Colored People in Ohio" and from other articles contributed to *The Philanthropist* in July, 1840.

[31] In this case I have taken the statements of Negroes who were employed in this capacity.

[32] *The Philanthropist*, July 14 and 24, 1840; and May 26, 1841.

[33] Hickok, "The Negro in Ohio," 89.

four pupils. Moreover, the colored people were giving liberally to objects of charity. Some Negroes burned out in 1839 were promptly relieved by members of their own race. A white family in distress was befriended by a colored woman. The Negroes contributed also to the support of missionaries in Jamaica and during the years from 1836 to 1840 assisted twenty-five emancipated slaves on their way from Cincinnati to Mercer County, Ohio.[34]

During this period they had made progress in other than material things. Their improvement in religion and morals was remarkable. They then had four flourishing Sabbath Schools with 310 regular attendants, one Baptist and two Methodist churches with a membership of 800, a "Total Abstinence Temperance Society" for adults numbering 450, and a "Sabbath School or Youth's Society" of 180 members. A few of these violated their pledges, but when we consider the fact that one fourth of the entire colored population belonged to temperance organizations while less than one tenth of the whites were thus connected, we must admit that this was no mean achievement. Among the Negroes public sentiment was then such that no colored man could openly sell intoxicating drinks. This growing temperance was exhibited, too, in the decreasing fondness for dress and finery. There was less tendency to strive merely to get a fine suit of clothes and exhibit one's self on the streets. Places of vice were not so much frequented and barber shops which on Sundays formerly became a rendezvous for the idle and the garrulous were with few exceptions closed by 1840. This influence of the religious organizations reached also beyond the limits of Cincinnati. A theological student from the State of New York said after spending some time in New Orleans, that the influence of the elevation of the colored people of Cincinnati was felt all the way down the river. Travelers often spoke of the difference in the appearance of barbers and waiters on the boats.[35]

It was in fact a brighter day for the colored people. In 1840 an observer said that they had improved faster than any other people in the city. The *Cincinnati Gazette* after characterizing certain Negroes as being imprudent and vicious, said of others: "Many of these are peaceable and industrious, raising respectable families and acquiring property."[36] Mr. James H. Perkins, a respectable citizen of the city, asserted that the day school which the colored children attended had shown by examination that it was as good as any other in the city. He said further: "There is no question, I presume, that the colored population of Cincinnati, oppressed as it has been by our state laws as well as by prejudice, has risen more rapidly than almost any other people in any part of the world."[37] Within three or four years their property had more than doubled; their schools had become firmly established, and their churches and Sunday Schools had grown as rapidly as any other religious institutions in the city. Trusting to good conduct and character, they had risen to a prosperous position in the eyes of those whose prejudices would "allow them to look through the skin to the soul."[38]

The colored people had had too many enemies in Cincinnati, however, to expect that they had overcome all opposition. The prejudice of certain labor groups against the Negroes increased in proportion to the prosperity of the latter. That they had been able to do as well as they had was due to the lack of strength on the part of the labor organizations then forming to counteract the sentiment of fair play for the Negroes. Their labor competed directly with that of the whites and began again to excite "jealousy and heart burning."[39] The Germans, who were generally toiling up from poverty, seemed to exhibit less prejudice; but the unfortunate Irish bore it grievously that even a few Negroes should outstrip some of their race in the economic struggle.

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[34] *The Philanthropist*, July 14 and 21, 1840.

[35] *The Philanthropist*, July 21, 1840.

[36] *The Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, September 14, 1841.

[37] *The Philanthropist*, July 21, 1840.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] *The Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, September 14, 1841.

In 1841 there followed several clashes which aggravated the situation. In the month of June one Burnett referred to as "a mischievous and swaggering Englishman running a cake shop," had harbored a runaway slave. When a man named McCalla, his reputed master, came with an officer to reclaim the fugitive, Burnett and his family resisted them. The Burnetts were committed to answer for this infraction of the law and finally were adequately punished. The proslavery mob which had gathered undertook to destroy their home but the officials prevented them. Besides, early in August according to a report, a German citizen defending his blackberry patch near the city was attacked by two Negroes and stabbed so severely that he died. Then about three weeks thereafter, according to another rumor, a very respectable lady was insultingly accosted by two colored men, and when she began to flee two others rudely thrust themselves before her on the sidewalk. But in this case, as in most others growing out of rumors, no one could ever say who the lady or her so-called assailants were. At the same time, too, the situation was further aggravated by an almost sudden influx of irresponsible Negroes from various parts, increasing the number of those engaged in noisy frolics which had become a nuisance to certain white neighbors.[40]

Accordingly, on Tuesday, the twenty-ninth of August, there broke out on the corner of Sixth and Broadway a quarrel in which two or three persons were wounded. On the following night the fracas was renewed. A group of ruffians attacked the Dumas Hotel, a colored establishment, on McCallister Street, demanding the surrender of a Negro, who, they believed, was concealed there. As the Negroes of the neighborhood came to the assistance of their friends in the hotel the mob had to withdraw. On Thursday night there took place another clash between a group of young men and boys and a few Negroes who seriously wounded one or two of the former. On Friday evening the mob incited to riotous acts by an influx of white ruffians, seemingly from the steamboats and the Kentucky side of the river, openly assembled in Fifth Street Market without being molested by the police, armed themselves and marched to Broadway and Sixth Street, shouting and swearing. They attacked a colored confectionery store near by, demolishing its doors and windows. James W. Piatt, an influential citizen, and the mayor then addressed the disorderly persons, vainly exhorting them to peace and obedience to the law. Moved by passionate entreaties to execute their poorly prepared plan, the assailants advanced and attacked the Negroes with stones. The blacks, however, had not been idle. They had secured sufficient guns and ammunition to fire into the mob such a volley that it had to fall back. The aggressors rallied again, however, only to be in like manner repulsed. Men were wounded on both sides and carried off and reported dead. The Negroes advanced courageously, and according to a reporter, fired down the street into the mass of ruffians, causing a hasty retreat. This mélée continued until about one o'clock when a part of the mob secured an iron six pounder, hauled it to the place of combat against the exhortations of the powerless mayor, and fired on the Negroes. With this unusual advantage the blacks were forced to retreat, many of them going to the hills. About two o'clock the mayor of the city brought out a portion of the "military" which succeeded in holding the mob at bay.[41]

On the next day the colored people in the district under fire were surrounded by sentinels and put under martial law. Indignation meetings of law-abiding citizens were held on Saturday to pass resolutions, denouncing abolitionists and mobs and making an appeal to the people and the civil authorities to uphold the law. The Negroes also held a meeting and respectfully assured the mayor and citizens that they would use every effort to conduct themselves orderly and expressed their readiness to give bond according to the law of 1807 or leave the city quietly within a specified time. But these steps availed little when the police winked at this violence. The rioters boldly occupied the streets without arrest and continued their work until Sunday. The mayor, sheriff and marshal went to the battle ground about three o'clock but the mob still had control. The officers could not even

[40] A detailed account of these clashes is given in *The Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, September 14, 1841.

[41] *The Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, September, 1841.

remove those Negroes who complied with the law of leaving. The authorities finally hit upon the scheme of decreasing the excitement by inducing about 300 colored men to go to jail for security after they had been assured that their wives and children would be protected. The Negroes consented and were accordingly committed, but the cowardly element again attacked these helpless dependents like savages. At the same time other rioters stormed the office of *The Philanthropist* and broke up the press. The mob continued its work until it dispersed from mere exhaustion. The Governor finally came to the city and issued a proclamation setting forth the gravity of the situation. The citizens and civil authorities rallied to his support and strong patrols prevented further disorder.[42]

It is impossible to say exactly how many were killed and wounded on either side. It is probable that several were killed and twenty or thirty variously wounded, though but few dangerously. Forty of the mob were arrested and imprisoned. Exactly what was done with all of them is not yet known. It seems that few, if any of them, however, were severely punished. The Negroes who had been committed for safe keeping were thereafter disposed of in various ways. Some were discharged on certificates of nativity, others gave bond for their support and good behavior, a few were dismissed as non-residents, a number of them were discharged by a justice of the Court of Common Pleas, and the rest were held indefinitely.[43]

This upheaval had two important results. The enemies of the Negroes were convinced that there were sufficient law-abiding citizens to secure to the refugees protection from mob violence; and because of these riots their sympathizers became more attached to the objects of their philanthropy. Abolitionists, Free Soilers and Whigs fearlessly attacked the laws which kept the Negroes under legal and economic disabilities. Petitions praying that these measures be repealed were sent to the legislature. The proslavery element of the State, however, was equally militant. The legislators, therefore, had to consider such questions as extradition and immigration, State aid and colonization, the employment of colored men in the militia service, the extension of the elective franchise, and the admission of colored children to the public schools.[44] Most of these "Black Laws" remained until after the war, but in 1848 they were so modified as to give the Negroes legal standing in courts and to provide for their children such education as a school tax on the property of colored persons would allow[45] and further changed in 1849[46] so as to make the provision for education more effective.

The question of repealing the other oppressive laws came up in the Convention of 1850. It seemed that the cause of the Negroes had made much progress in that a larger number had begun to speak for them. But practically all of the members of the convention who stood for the Negroes were from the Western Reserve. After much heated discussion the colored people were by a large majority of votes still left under the disabilities of being disqualified to sit on juries, unable to obtain a legal residence so as to enter a charitable institution supported by the State, and denied admission to public schools established for white children.[47]

The greatest problem of the Negroes, however, was one of education. There were more persons interested in furnishing them facilities of education than in repealing the prohibitive measures, feeling that the other matters would adjust themselves after giving them adequate training. But it required some time and effort yet before much could be effected in Cincinnati because of the sympathizers with the South. The mere passing of the law of 1849 did not prove to be altogether a victory. Complying with the provisions of this act the Negroes elected trustees, organized a system, and

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[42] A very interesting account of this riot is given in Howe's "Historical Collections of Ohio," pages 226-228.

[43] It was discovered that not a few of the mob came from Kentucky. About eleven o'clock on Saturday night a bonfire was lighted on that side of the river and loud shouts were sent up as if triumph had been achieved. "In some cases." says a reporter, "the directors were boys who suggested the point of attack, put the vote, declared the result and led the way."–Cin. Daily Gaz., Sept. 14, 1841.

[44] Hickok, "The Negro in Ohio," 90 et seq.

[45] Laws of Ohio, XL, 81.

[46] *Ibid.*, LIII, 118.

[47] The Convention Debates.

employed teachers, relying on the money allotted them by the law on the basis of a per capita division of the school fund received by the board of education. So great was the prejudice of people of the city that the school officials refused to turn over the required funds on the grounds that the colored trustees were not electors and, therefore, could not be office-holders, qualified to receive and disburse funds. Under the leadership of John I. Gaines, therefore, the trustees called an indignation meeting and raised sufficient money to employ Flamen Ball, an attorney, to secure a writ of mandamus. The case was contested by the city officials, even in the Supreme Court, which decided against the officious whites.[48]

This decision did not solve the whole problem in Cincinnati. The amount raised was small and even had it been adequate to employ teachers, they were handicapped by another decision that no portion of it could be used for building schoolhouses. After a short period of accomplishing practically nothing the law was amended in 1853[49] so as to transfer the control of such schools to the managers of the white system. This was taken as a reflection on the blacks of the city and tended to make them refuse to cooperate with the white board. On account of the failure of this body to act effectively prior to 1856, the people of color were again given power to elect their own trustees.[50]

During this contest certain Negroes of Cincinnati were endeavoring to make good their claim to equal rights in the public schools. Acting upon this contention a colored man sent his son to a public school which, on account of his presence, became a center of unusual excitement. Isabella Newhall, the teacher, to whom he went, immediately complained to the board of education, requesting that he be expelled because of his color. After "due deliberation" the board of education decided by a vote of 15 to 10 that the colored pupil would have to withdraw. Thereupon two members of that body, residing in the district of the timorous teacher, resigned.[51]

Many Negroes belonging to the mulatto class, however, were more successful in getting into the white schools. In 1849 certain parents complained that children of color were being admitted to the public schools, and in fact there were in one of them two daughters of a white father and a mulatto mother. On complaining about this to the principal of the school in question, the indignant patrons were asked to point out the undesirable pupils. "They could not; for," says Sir Charles Lyell, "the two girls were not only among the best pupils, but better looking and less dark than many of the other pupils."[52]

Thereafter, however, much progress in the education of the colored people among themselves was noted. By 1844 they had six schools of their own and before the war two well-supported public schools.[53] Among their teachers were such useful persons as Mrs. M. J. Corbin, Miss Lucy Blackburn, Miss Anne Ryall, Miss Virginia C. Tilley, Miss Martha E. Anderson, William H. Parham, William R. Casey, John G. Mitchell and Peter H. Clark.[54] The pupils were showing their appreciation by regular attendance, excellent deportment, and progress in the acquisition of knowledge. Speaking of these Negroes in 1855, John P. Foote said that they shared with the white citizens that respect for education and the diffusion of knowledge, which has been one of their "characteristics," and that they had, therefore, been more generally intelligent than free persons of color not only in other parts of this country but in all other parts of the world.[55] It was in appreciation of the worth of this class to the community that in 1844[56] Nicholas Longworth helped them to establish an orphan asylum and in

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[48] Special Report of the United States Commissioner of Education, 1871, page 372.

[49] Laws of Ohio.

[50] *Ibid.*, LIII, 118.

[51] *The New York Tribune*, February 19, 1855.

[52] Lyell, "A Second Visit to the United States of North America," II, 295, 296.

[53] *The Weekly Herald and Philanthropist*, June 26, 1844, August 6, 1844, and January 1, 1845.

[54] The Cincinnati Directory of 1860.

[55] Foote, "The Schools of Cincinnati," 92.

[56] *The Weekly Herald and Philanthropist*, August 23, 1844.

1858 built for them a comfortable school building, leasing it with a privilege of purchasing it within four years.[57] They met these requirements within the stipulated time and in 1859 secured through other agencies the construction of another building in the western portion of the city.

The most successful of these schools, however, was the Gilmore High School, a private institution founded by an English clergyman. This institution offered instruction in the fundamentals and in some vocational studies. It was supported liberally by the benevolent element of the white people and patronized and appreciated by the Negroes as the first and only institution offering them the opportunity for thorough training. It became popular throughout the country, attracting Negroes from as far South as New Orleans[58] Rich Southern planters found it convenient to have their mulatto children educated in this high school.[59]

The work of these schools was substantially supplemented by that of the colored churches. They directed their attention not only to moral and religious welfare of the colored people but also to their mental development. Through their well-attended Sunday-schools these institutions furnished many Negroes of all classes the facilities of elementary education. Such opportunities were offered at the Baker Street Baptist Church, the Third Street Baptist Church, the Colored Christian Church, the New Street Methodist Church, and the African Methodist Church. Among the preachers then promoting this cause were John Warren, Rufus Conrad, Henry Simpson, and Wallace Shelton. Many of the old citizens of Cincinnati often refer with pride to the valuable services rendered by these leaders.

In things economic the Negroes were exceptionally prosperous after the forties. Cincinnati had then become a noted pork-packing and manufacturing center. The increasing canal and river traffic and finally the rise of the railroad system tended to make it thrive more than ever. Many colored men grew up with the city. A Negro had in the East End on Calvert Street a large cooperage establishment which made barrels for the packers. Knight and Bell were successful contractors noted for their skill and integrity and employed by the best white people of the city. Robert Harlan made considerable money buying and selling race horses. Thompson Cooley had a successful pickling establishment. On Broadway A. V. Thompson, a colored tailor, conducted a thriving business. J. Pressley and Thomas Ball were the well-known photographers of the city, established in a handsomely furnished modern gallery which was patronized by some of the wealthiest people. Samuel T. Wilcox, who owed his success to his position as a steward on an Ohio River line, thereafter went into the grocery business and built up such a large trade among the aristocratic families that he accumulated $59,000 worth of property by 1859.[60]

A more useful Negro had for years been toiling upward in this city. This man was Henry Boyd, a Kentucky freedman, who had helped to overcome the prejudice against colored mechanics in that city by exhibiting the highest efficiency. He patented a corded bed which became very popular, especially in the Southwest. With this article he built up a creditable manufacturing business, employing from 18 to 25 white and colored men.[61] He was, therefore, known as one of the desirable men of the city. Two things, however, seemingly interfered with his business. In the first place, certain white men, who became jealous of his success, burned him out and the insurance companies refused to carry him any longer. Moreover, having to do chiefly with white men he was charged by his people with favoring the miscegenation of races. Whether or not this was well founded is not yet known, but his children and grandchildren did marry whites and were lost in the so-called superior race.

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[57] Special Report of the United States Commissioner of Education, 372.

[58] Simmons, "Men of Mark," 490.

[59] A white slaveholder, a graduate of Amherst, taught in this school. See *Weekly Herald and Philanthropist*, June 26, 1844.

[60] These facts were obtained from oral statements of Negroes who were living in Cincinnati at this time; from M. R. Delany's "The Condition of the Colored People in the United States"; from A. D. Barber's "Report on the Condition of the Colored People in Ohio," 1840; and from various Cincinnati Directories.

[61] Delany, "The Condition of the Colored People in the United States," 92.

A much more interesting Negro appeared in Cincinnati, however, in 1847. This was Robert Gordon, formerly the slave of a rich yachtsman of Richmond, Virginia. His master turned over to him a coal yard which he handled so faithfully that his owner gave him all of the slack resulting from the handling of the coal. This he sold to the local manufacturers and blacksmiths of the city, accumulating thereby in the course of time thousands of dollars. He purchased himself in 1846 and set out for free soil. He went first to Philadelphia and then to Newburyport, but finding that these places did not suit him, he proceeded to Cincinnati. He arrived there with $15,000, some of which he immediately invested in the coal business in which he had already achieved marked success. He employed bookkeepers, had his own wagons, built his own docks on the river, and bought coal by barges.[62]

Unwilling to see this Negro do so well, the white coal dealers endeavored to force him out of the business by lowering the price to the extent that he could not afford to sell. They did not know of his acumen and the large amount of capital at his disposal. He sent to the coal yards of his competitors mulattoes who could pass for white, using them to fill his current orders from his foes' supplies that he might save his own coal for the convenient day. In the course of a few months the river and all the canals by which coal was brought to Cincinnati froze up and remained so until spring. Gordon was then able to dispose of his coal at a higher price than it had ever been sold in that city. This so increased his wealth and added to his reputation that no one thereafter thought of opposing him.

Gordon continued in the coal business until 1865 when he retired. During the Civil War he invested his money in United States bonds. When these bonds were called in, he invested in real estate on Walnut Hills, which he held until his death in 1884. This estate descended to his daughter Virginia Ann Gordon who married George H. Jackson, a descendant of slaves in the Custis family of Arlington, Virginia. Mr. Jackson is now a resident of Chicago and is managing this estate.[63] Having lived through the antebellum and subsequent periods, Mr. Jackson has been made to wonder whether the Negroes of Cincinnati are doing as well to-day as Gordon and his colaborers were. This question requires some attention, but an inquiry as to exactly what forces have operated to impede the progress of a work so auspiciously begun would lead us beyond the limits set for this dissertation.

C. G. Woodson

[62] The Cincinnati Directory for 1860.

[63] For the leading facts concerning the life of Robert Gordon I have depended on the statements of his children and acquaintances and on the various directories and documents giving evidence concerning the business men of Cincinnati.

The Story of Maria Louise Moore and Fannie M. Richards [64]

The State of Virginia has been the home of distinguished persons of both sexes of the white and colored races. A dissertation on the noted colored women of Virginia would find a small circle of readers but would, nevertheless, contain interesting accounts of some of the most important achievements of the people of that State. The story of Maria Louise Moore-Richards would be a large chapter of such a narrative. She was born of white and Negro parentage in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1800. Her father was Edwin Moore, a Scotchman of Edinburgh. Her mother was a free woman of color, born in Toronto when it was called York. Exactly how they came to Fredericksburg is not known. It seems, however, that they had been well established in that city when Maria Louise Moore was born.

This woman was fortunate in coming into the world at that time. So general had been the efforts for the elevation of the colored people that free Negroes had many of the privileges later given only to white people. Virginia then and for a long time thereafter ranked among the commonwealths most liberal toward the Negro. The dissemination of information among them was not then restricted, private teaching of slaves was common, and progressive communities maintained colored schools.[65] In Fredericksburg such opportunities were not rare. The parents of Maria Louise Moore fortunately associated with the free Negroes who constituted an industrial class with adequate means to provide for the thorough training of their children. Miss Moore, therefore, easily acquired the rudiments of education and attained some distinction as a student of history.

In 1820 Miss Moore was married to Adolphe Richards, a native of the Island of Guadaloupe. He was a Latin of some Negro blood, had noble ancestry, and had led an honorable career. Educated in London and resident in Guadaloupe, he spoke both English and French fluently. Because of poor health in later years he was directed by his friends to the salubrious climate of Virginia. He settled at Fredericksburg, where he soon became captivated by the charms of the talented Maria Louise Moore. On learning of his marriage, his people and friends marveled that a man of his standing had married a colored woman or a Southern woman at all.

Adjusting himself to this new environment, Mr. Richards opened a shop for wood-turning, painting and glazing. It is highly probable that he learned these trades in the West Indies, but having adequate means to maintain himself, he had not depended on his mechanical skill. In Fredericksburg he had the respect and support of the best white people, passing as one of such well-to-do free Negroes as the Lees, the Cooks, the De Baptistes, who were contractors, and the Williamses, who were contractors and brickmakers. His success was in a large measure due to the good standing of the family of Mrs. Richards and to the wisdom with which she directed this West Indian in his new environment.

They had in all fourteen children, the training of whom was largely the work of the mother. All of them were well grounded in the rudiments of education and given a taste for higher things. In the course of time when the family grew larger the task of educating them grew more arduous. Some of them probably attended the school conducted by a Scotch-Irishman in the home of Richard De Baptiste. When the reaction against the teaching of Negroes effected the closing of the colored schools in Virginia, this one continued clandestinely for many years. Determined to have her children better educated, Mrs. Richards sent one of her sons to a school conducted by Mrs. Beecham, a remarkable English woman, assisted by her daughter. These women were bent on doing what they could to evade the law interpreted as prohibiting any one from either sitting or standing to teach a black to read. They,

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[64] For many of the facts set forth in this article the writer is indebted to Miss Fannie M. Richards, Robert A. Pelham, and C. G. Woodson.

[65] Woodson, The Ed. of the Negro Prior to 1861, pp. 92, 217, 218.

therefore, gathered the colored children around them while they lay prostrate on the couch to teach them. For further evasion they kept on hand splinters of wood which they had the children dip into a match preparation and use with a flint for ignition to make it appear that they were showing them how to make matches. When this scheme seemed impracticable, one of the boys was sent to Washington in the District of Columbia to attend the school maintained by John F. Cook, a successful educator and founder of the Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church. This young man was then running the risk of expatriation, for Virginia had in 1838 passed a law, prohibiting the return to that State of those Negroes, who after the prohibition of their education had begun to attend schools in other parts.[66]

It was because of these conditions that in 1851 when her husband died Mrs. Richards sold out her property and set out to find a better home in Detroit, Michigan. Some of the best white people of Fredericksburg commended her for this step, saying that she was too respectable a woman to suffer such humiliation as the reaction had entailed upon persons of her race.[67] She was followed by practically all of the best free Negroes of Fredericksburg. Among these were the Lees, the Cooks, the Williamses and the De Baptistes. A few years later this group attracted the Pelham family from

[66] The law was as follows: Be it enacted by the General Assembly that if any free person of color, whether infant or adult, shall go or be sent or carried beyond the limits of this Commonwealth for the purpose of being educated, he or she shall be deemed to have emigrated from the State and it shall not be lawful for him or her to return to the same; and if any such person shall return within the limits of the State contrary to the provisions of this act, he or she being an infant shall be bound out as an apprentice until the age of 21 years, by the overseers of the poor of the county or corporation where he or she may be, and at the expiration of that period, shall be sent out of the State agreeably to the provisions of the laws now in force, or which may hereafter be enacted to prohibit the migration of free persons of color to this State; and if such person be an adult, he or she shall be sent in like manner out of the Commonwealth; and if any persons having been so sent off, shall hereafter return within the State, he or she so offending shall be dealt with and punished in the same manner as is or may be prescribed by law in relating to other persons of color returning to the State after having been sent therefrome. Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia, 1838, p. 76.

[67] The following enactments of the Virginia General Assembly will give a better idea of the extent of this humiliation:4. Be it further enacted that all meetings of free Negroes or mulattoes at any school house, church, meeting-house or other place for teaching them reading or writing, either in the day or night, under whatsoever pretext, shall be deemed and considered as an unlawful assembly; and any justice of the county or corporation, wherein such assemblage shall be, either from his own knowledge, or on the information of others, of such unlawful assemblage or meeting, shall issue his warrant directed to any sworn officer or officers, authorizing him or them to enter the house or houses where such unlawful assemblage or meeting may be, for the purpose of apprehending or dispersing such free Negroes or mulattoes and to inflict corporal punishment on the offender or offenders at the discretion of any justice of the peace, not exceeding 20 lashes. 5. Be it further enacted that if any white person or persons assemble with free Negroes or mulattoes, at any school house, church, meeting-house, or other place for the purpose of instructing such free Negroes or mulattoes to read or write, such person or persons shall, on conviction thereof, be fined in a sum not exceeding fifty dollars, and moreover may be imprisoned at the discretion not exceeding two months. 6. Be it further enacted that if any white persons for pay or compensation, shall assemble with any slaves for the purpose of teaching and shall teach any slave to read or write, such persons or any white person or persons contracting with such teacher so to act, who shall offend as aforesaid, shall for each offence, be fined at the discretion of a jury in a sum not less than ten nor exceeding one hundred dollars, to be recovered on an information or indictment. Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia, 1831, p. 107. I. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia that no slave, free Negro or mulatto, whether he shall have been ordained or licensed or otherwise, shall hereafter undertake to preach, exhort or conduct or hold any assembly or meeting, for religious or other purposes, either in the day time or at night; and any slave, free Negro or mulatto so offending shall for every such offence be punished with stripes at the discretion of any justice of the peace, not exceeding 39 lashes; and any person desiring so to do, shall have authority without any previous written precept or otherwise, to apprehend any such offender and carry him before such justice. II. Any slave, free Negro or mulatto who shall hereafter attend any preaching, meeting or other assembly, held or pretended to be held for religious purposes, or other instruction, conducted by any slave, free Negro or mulatto preacher, ordained or otherwise; any slave who shall hereafter attend any preaching in the night time although conducted by a white minister, without a written permission from his or her owner, overseer or master or agent of either of them, shall be punished by stripes at the discretion of any justice of the peace, not exceeding 39 lashes, and may for that purpose be apprehended by any person, without any written or other precept: *Provided*, That nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to prevent the master or owner of slaves or any white person to whom any free Negro or mulatto is bound, or in whose employment, or on whose plantation or lot such free Negro or mulatto lives, from carrying or permitting any such slave, free Negro or mulatto, to go with him, her or them, or with any part of his, her, or their white family to any place of worship, conducted by a white minister in the night time: And provided also, That nothing in this or any former law, shall be construed as to prevent any ordained or licensed white minister of the gospel, or any layman licensed for that purpose by the denomination to which he may belong, from preaching or giving religious instruction to slaves, free Negroes and mulattoes in the day time; nor to deprive any masters or owners of slaves of the right to engage, or employ any free white person whom they think proper to give religious instruction to their slaves; nor to prevent the assembling of slaves of any one owner or master together at any time for religious devotion. Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia, 1831-1832, pp. 20-21.

Petersburg. They too had tired of seeing their rights gradually taken away and, therefore, transplanted themselves to Detroit.

The attitude of the people of Detroit toward immigrating Negroes had been reflected by the position the people of that section had taken from the time of the earliest settlements. Slavery was prohibited by the Ordinance of 1787. In 1807 there arose a case in which a woman was required to answer for the possession of two slaves. Her contention was that they were slaves on British territory at the time of the surrender of the post in 1796 and that Jay's Treaty assured them to her. Her contention was sustained.[68] A few days later a resident of Canada attempted under this ruling to secure the arrest and return of some mulatto and Indian slaves who had escaped from Canada. The court held that slavery did not exist in Michigan except in the case of slaves in the possession of the British settlers within the Northwest Territory July 11, 1796, and that there was no obligation to give up fugitives from a foreign jurisdiction. An effort was made to take the slaves by force but the agent of the owner was tarred and feathered.[69]

Generally speaking, Detroit adhered to this position.[70] In 1827 there was passed an act providing for the registry of the names of all colored persons, requiring the possession of a certificate showing that they were free and a bond in the sum of $500 for their good behavior.[71] This law was obnoxious to the growing sentiment of freedom in Detroit and was not enforced until the Riot of 1833. This uprising was an attack on the Negroes because a courageous group of them had effected the rescue and escape of one Thornton Blackburn and his wife, who had been arrested by the sheriff as alleged fugitives from Kentucky.[72] The anti-slavery feeling considerably increased thereafter. The Detroit Anti-Slavery Society was formed in 1837, other societies to secure the relief and escape of slaves quickly followed and still another was organized to find employment and purchase homes for refugees.[73] This change of sentiment is further evidenced by the fact that in 1850 it was necessary to call out the three companies of volunteers to quell an incipient riot occasioned by the arrest and attempt to return a runaway slave in accordance with the Fugitive Slave Law. Save the general troubles incident to the draft riots of the Northern cities of 1863,[74] Detroit maintained this benevolent attitude toward Negroes seeking refuge.

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[68] Campbell, Political History of Michigan, 246.

[69] Campbell, Political History of Michigan, 246.

[70] Slavery did not immediately cease, however. The number of slaves in the vicinity of Detroit in 1773 were ninety-six; 127 in 1778; and 175 in 1783. Detroit had a colored population of 15 in 1805 and two years later a number had sufficiently increased for Governor Hull to organize a company of militia among them. The increase had been due to the coming of refugees from Canada. The Census of 1810 showed 17 slaves in Detroit; that of 1830 shows 32 in Michigan and an enumeration subsequent to 1836 shows that all were dead or manumitted. See Census of the United States.

[71] Laws of Michigan, 1827.

[72] This riot occurred on June 14, 1833. Thornton Blackburn and his wife, the alleged runaways from Kentucky, were lodged in jail pending the departure of a boat. A crowd of colored men and women, armed with clubs, stones and pistols, gathered in the vicinity of the jail. Upon the pretext of visiting Blackburn's wife a colored woman was admitted to the jail and by an exchange of clothing effected the escape of the prisoner who immediately crossed into Canada. Some time thereafter the sheriff attempted to take his other prisoner to the boat, but was knocked down and badly beaten. During the encounter the sheriff fired into the mob, but Blackburn was rescued and carried to Canada. This caused a great disturbance among the white people. They armed themselves and attacked the blacks wherever they could be found. The city council convened and undertook to dispose of the trouble by enforcing the law of 1827 requiring that colored people should stay off the streets at night. Utley, Byron and McCutcheon, "Michigan as a Province and State," II, 347.

[73] Five years after the organization of the Detroit Anti-Slavery Society Henry Bibb, an ex-slave, came to the city and lectured for two years under the auspices of the Liberty Association, which was promoting the election of anti-slavery candidates. Public sentiment against slavery was becoming such that the Legislature of Michigan passed a law prohibiting the use of jails to detain fugitives. Frederick Douglass and John Brown found many friends of their cause in Detroit. Of the many organized efforts made to circumvent the law and assist fugitives one society purchased land and established homes for as many as 50 families between 1850 and 1872. Farmer, "History of Detroit and Michigan," I, Chapter XLVIII.

[74] The immediate cause of the riot in Detroit was the arrest, conviction, and imprisonment of a colored man called William Faulkner charged with committing an assault on a little girl. Feeling that the prisoner was guilty, bands of ruffians swept through the streets and mercilessly beat colored people. Seven years later it was discovered that Faulkner was innocent and to reimburse him for his losses and humiliation the same ruffians raised a handsome sum to set him up in business. See Farmer's History of Detroit and Michigan, Chapter XLVIII.

In this favorable community the Richards colony easily prospered. The Lees well established themselves in their Northern homes and soon won the respect of the community. Most of the members of the Williams family confined themselves to their trade of bricklaying and amassed considerable wealth. One of Mr. Williams's daughters married a well-to-do Waring living then at Wauseon, Ohio; another became the wife of one Chappée, who is now a stenographer in Detroit; and the third united in matrimony with James H. Cole, who became the head of a well-to-do family of Detroit. Then there were the Cooks descending from Lomax B. Cook, a broker of no little business ability. Will Marion Cook, the musician, belongs to this family. The De Baptistes, too, were among the first to get a foothold in this new environment and prospered materially from their experience and knowledge acquired in Fredericksburg as contractors.[75] From this group came Richard De Baptiste, who in his day was the most noted colored Baptist preacher in the Northwest. The Pelhams were no less successful in establishing themselves in the economic world. They enjoyed a high reputation in the community and had the sympathy and cooperation of the influential white people in the city. Out of this family came Robert A. Pelham, for years editor of a weekly in Detroit, and from 1901 to the present time an employee of the Federal Government in Washington.[76]

The children of Mrs. Richards were in no sense inferior to the descendants of the other families. She lived to see her work bear fruit in the distinguished services they rendered and the desirable connections which they made after the Civil War. Her daughter Julia married Thomas F. Carey who, after conducting a business for some years in New York, moved to Toronto, where he died. From this union came the wife of D. Augustus Straker. Her daughter Evalina married Dr. Joseph Ferguson who, prior to 1861, lived in Richmond, Virginia, uniting the three occupations of leecher, cupper and barber. This led to his coming to Detroit to study medicine. He was graduated there and practiced for many years in that city. Before the Civil War her son John D. Richards was sent to Richmond to learn a trade. There he met and became the lifelong friend of Judge George L. Ruffin, who was then living in that city.[77]

The most prominent and the most useful person to emerge from this group of pioneering Negroes was her daughter Fannie M. Richards. She was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia, October 1, 1841. As her people left that State when she was quite young she did not see so much of the intolerable conditions as did the older members of the family. Miss Richards was successful in getting an early start in education. Desiring to have better training than what was then given to persons of color in Detroit, she went to Toronto. There she studied English, history, drawing and needlework. In later years she attended the Teachers Training School in Detroit. Her first thought was to take up teaching that she might do something to elevate her people. She, therefore, opened a private school in 1863, doing a higher grade of work than that then undertaken in the public schools. About 1862, however, a colored public school had been opened by a white man named Whitbeck. Miss Richards began to think that she should have such a school herself.

Her story as to how she realized her ambition is very interesting. Going to her private school one morning, she saw a carpenter repairing a building. Upon inquiry she learned that it was to be opened as Colored School Number 2. She went immediately to William D. Wilkins, a member of the board of education, who, impressed with the personality of the young woman, escorted her to the office of superintendent of schools, Duane Dotty. After some discussion of the matter Miss Richards filed an application, assured that she would be notified to take the next examination. At the appointed time she presented herself along with several other applicants who hoped to obtain the position. Miss Richards ranked highest and was notified to report for duty the following September. Early one

[75] A study of the directories of Detroit shows that a considerable number of Negroes had entered the higher pursuits of labor. See especially the Detroit Directory for 1865.

[76] Simmons, "Men of Mark," 356.

[77] In 1853 Judge Ruffin moved with his parents from Richmond to Boston, where he became judge of the Charleston District. Simmons, "Men of Mark," 469.

morning she proceeded to her private school in time to inform her forty pupils of the desirable change and conducted them in a body to their new home.

Miss Richards taught in this building until 1871, when by a liberal interpretation of the courts, the schools were mixed by ignoring race distinction wherever it occurred in the school laws of Michigan. She was then transferred to the Everett School where she remained until last June when she was retired on a pension after having served that system half a century. Although she taught very few colored children she said to a reporter several years ago:

> "I have never been made to feel in any way that my race has been a handicap to me. Neither my pupils nor the teachers have ever shown prejudice; I do not doubt that it exists; I shall be in Heaven long before it has all disappeared, but I say it is with a colored teacher as it is with a white one. Her work is the only thing that counts. I have never been called before the board for a reprimand in all my years of teaching. The methods have changed a good deal since the time that I started in and it would be easy to lag behind, but I try not to. It means continual reading and study to keep up with the modern way of doing things, but I manage to do it, and when the time comes that I cannot do my work in a satisfactory manner I want the Board of Education to discharge me and get some one else."

In testimony to these facts one of the daily papers of Detroit wrote her up in 1910, saying that she had kept her interest in modern pedagogic methods, maintained a high standard of scholarship in her school, and retained her sympathy with little children, who had rewarded her devotion to her work with their appreciation and love. To show how well she is loved by her pupils the writer was careful to state that these children as a gay group often surrounded her on her way to school, clinging to her hands, crowding about her as best they may, all chattering and pouring out accounts of their little doings. "Frequently," says this writer, "she is stopped on the street by grown men and women who long ago were her pupils and who have remembered her, though with the passing of the years, and the new classes of little ones who come to her every term, she has forgotten them."[78] Many have been accustomed to bring their children to the Everett School and speak of how glad they will be when these little ones will be under the care of their parents' former teacher.

Miss Richards estimates that in the years of school work, she has had in her room an average of fifty pupils a term, although sometimes the attendance overflowed to a much greater number. With eighty-eight terms of teaching to her credit, the number of pupils who owe part of their education to "this gentle and cultured woman" amounts well up into the tens of thousands, enough to populate a fair-sized city.

We can not close this article with a better testimonial than the following letter from one of her former pupils, the Honorable Charles T. Wilkins, a lawyer and an influential white citizen, who addressed her on the occasion of her retirement last June.

"*My dear Miss Richards*: The friendship of so long standing between your family and mine, and the high esteem in which, as an educator, a woman, and a Christian, you were always held by my father the late Colonel William D. Wilkins, lead me to take the liberty of writing to *congratulate* you upon the well-earned retirement from active work, which I have just learned from the press that you contemplate after so many years well spent in faithful service to our community. As a citizen and one who has always been most interested in the education of our youth, I wish to add my thanks to those which are felt, if not expressed by the many who know of your devotion to and success in leading the young in the way in which they should go.

"Though your active participation in this work is about to cease, may you long be spared as an example to those who follow you is the earnest hope of

[78] This information was obtained from newspaper clippings in the possession of Miss Fannie M. Richards.

"Yours very sincerely and respectfully,
(Signed) "Charles T. Wilkins"

W. B. Hartgrove

The Passing Tradition and the African Civilization

A close examination shows that what we know about the Negro both of the present and the past vitally affects our opinions concerning him. Men's beliefs concerning things are to a large extent determined by where they live and what has been handed down to them. We believe in a hell of roaring flames where in the fiercest of heat the souls of the wicked are subject to eternal burnings. This idea of hell was evolved in the deserts of the Arabian Peninsula where heat is one of the greatest forces of nature with which man has to contend. Among the native tribes of Northern Siberia dwelling in the regions of perpetual ice and snow, hell is a place filled with great chunks of ice upon which the souls of the wicked are placed and there subjected to eternal freezings. This idea of hell was evolved in the regions where man is in a continual battle with the cold.

The beliefs of Negroes concerning themselves have to a large extent been made for them. The reader no doubt will be interested to know that the prevailing notions concerning the inferiority of the Negro grew up to a large extent as the concomitant to Negro slavery in this country. The bringing of the first Negroes from Africa as slaves was justified on the grounds that they were heathen. It was not right, it was argued, for Christians to enslave Christians, but they could enslave heathen, who as a result would have an opportunity to become Christians. These Negro slaves did actually become Christians and as a result the colonists were forced to find other grounds to justify their continuation of the system. The next argument was that they were different from white people. Here we have a large part of the beginnings of the doctrine of the inferiority of the Negro.

When, about 1830, anti-slavery agitation arose in this country, a new set of arguments were brought forward to justify slavery. First in importance were those taken from the Bible. Science also was called upon and brought forward a large number of facts to demonstrate that by nature the Negro was especially fitted to be a slave. It happened that about this time anthropology was being developed. Racial differences were some of the things which especially interested scientists in this field. The races were defined according to certain physical characteristics. These, it was asserted, determined the superiority or inferiority of races. The true Negro race, said the early anthropologists, had characteristics which especially indicated its inferiority. Through our geographies, histories and encyclopedias we have become familiar with representations of this so-called true Negro, whose chief characteristics were a black skin, woolly hair, protuberant lips and a receding forehead. Caricaturists seized upon these characteristics and popularized them in cartoons, in songs and in other ways. Thus it happened that the Negro, through the descriptions that he got of himself, has come largely to believe in his inherent inferiority and that to attain superiority he must become like the white man in color, in achievements and, in fact, along all lines.

In recent years it has been asked, "Why cannot the Negro attain superiority along lines of his own," that is, instead of simply patterning after what the white man has done, why cannot the Negro through music, art, history, and science, make his own special contributions to the progress of the world? This question has arisen because in the fields of science and history there have been brought forward a number of facts which prove this possibility. First of all, the leading scientists in the field of anthropology are telling us that while there are differences of races, there are no characteristics which per se indicate that one race is inferior or superior to another. The existing differences are differences in kind not in value. On the other hand, whatever superiority one race has attained over another has been largely due to environment.

A German writer in a discussion of the origin of African civilizations said some time ago "What bold investigators, great pioneers, still find to tell us in civilizations nearer home, proves more and more clearly that we are ignorant of hoary Africa. Somewhat of its present, perhaps, we know, but of its past little. Open an illustrated geography and compare the 'Type of the African Negro,' the bluish-black fellow of the protuberant lips, the flattened nose, the stupid expression and the short

curly hair, with the tall bronze figures from Dark Africa with which we have of late become familiar, their almost fine-cut features, slightly arched nose, long hair, etc., and you have an example of the problems pressing for solution. In other respects, too, the genuine African of the interior bears no resemblance to the accepted Negro type as it figures on drug and cigar store signs, wearing a shabby stovepipe hat, plaid trousers, and a vari-colored coat. A stroll through the corridors of the Berlin Museum of Ethnology teaches that the real African need by no means resort to the rags and tatters of bygone European splendor. He has precious ornaments of his own, of ivory and plumes, fine plaited willow ware, weapons of superior workmanship. Justly can it be demanded 'What sort of civilization is this? Whence does it come?'"

It is also pointed out that one of the most important contributions to the civilization of mankind was very probably made by the Negro race. This was the invention of the smelting of iron. The facts brought forward to support this view are: that no iron was smelted in Europe before 900 B.C.; that about 3000 B.C., there began to appear on the Egyptian monuments pictures of Africans bringing iron from the South to Egypt; that at a time considerably later than this iron implements began to appear in Asia; that there is no iron ore in Egypt; and that in Negro Africa iron ore is abundant. In many places it is found on top of the ground and in some parts it can be melted by simply placing a piece of ore in the fire very much as you would a potato to be roasted.

Studies in the fields of ancient and medieval history are also showing that in the past there were in Negro Africa civilizations of probable indigenous origin which attained importance enough to be mentioned in the writings of the historians and poets of those periods. The seat of one of the highest of these civilizations was Ethiopia. Here the Negro nation attained the greatest fame. As early as 2,500 years before the birth of Christ the Ethiopians appeared to have had a considerable civilization. It was well known to the writers of the Bible and is referred to therein some forty-nine times. In Genesis we read of Cush, the eldest son of Ham. Cush is the Hebrew word for black and means the same as Ethiopia. One of the most famous sons of Cush was Nimrod, whom the Bible mentions as being "a mighty hunter before the Lord; whereof it is said, like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord." The Bible refers to Ethiopia as being far distant from Palestine. In the book of Isaiah we read "the land of the rustling of wings which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia that sendeth ambassadors by the sea." The rivers of Ethiopia mentioned in Isaiah are the upper tributaries of the Nile, the Atbara, the Blue Nile and the Sobat.

The later capital of Ethiopia was Meroe. Recent excavations have shown Meroe to have been a city larger than Memphis. The Temple of Ammon, where kings were crowned, was one of the largest in the valley of the Nile. The great walls of cut stones were 15 feet thick and 30 feet high. Heaps of iron-slag and furnaces for smelting iron were discovered, and there were magnificent quays and landing places on the river side, for the export of iron. Excavations have also shown that for 150 years Egypt was a dependency of Ethiopia. The kings of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth Egyptian dynasties were really governors appointed by Ethiopian overlords, while the twenty-fifth dynasty was founded by the Ethiopian king, Sabako, in order to check Assyrian aggression. Palestine was enabled to hold out against Assyria by Ethiopian help. Sennacherib's attempt to capture Jerusalem and carry the Jews into captivity, was frustrated by the army of the Ethiopian king, Taharka. The nation and religion of Judah were thus preserved from being absorbed in heathen lands like the lost Ten Tribes. The Negro soldiers of the Sudan saved the Jewish religion.

The old Greek writers were well acquainted with Ethiopia. According to them in the most ancient times there existed to the South of Egypt a nation and a land designated as Ethiopia. This was the land where the people with the sunburnt faces dwelt. The Greek poet, Homer, mentions the Ethiopians as dwelling at the uttermost limits of the earth, where they enjoyed personal intercourse with the gods. In one place Homer said that Neptune, the god of the sea, "had gone to feast with the Ethiopians who dwell afar off, the Ethiopians who are divided into two parts, the most distant of

men, some at the setting of the sun, others at the rising." Herodotus, the Greek historian, described the Ethiopians as long lived and their country as extending to the Southern Sea.

The great fame of the Ethiopians is thus sketched by the eminent historian, Heeren, who in his historical researches says: "In the earliest traditions of nearly all the more civilized nations of antiquity, the name of this distant people is found. The annals of the Egyptian priests were full of them; the nations of inner Asia, on the Euphrates and Tigris, have interwoven the fictions of the Ethiopians with their own traditions of the conquests and wars of their heroes; and, at a period equally remote, they glimmer in Greek mythology. When the Greeks scarcely knew Italy and Sicily by name, the Ethiopians were celebrated in the verses of their poets; they spoke of them as the 'remotest nation,' the 'most just of men,' the 'favorites of the gods,' The lofty inhabitants of Olympus journey to them and take part in their feasts; their sacrifices are the most agreeable of all that mortals can offer them. And when the faint gleam of tradition and fable gives way to the clear light of history, the luster of the Ethiopians is not diminished. They still continue the object of curiosity and admiration; and the pens of cautious, clear-sighted historians often place them in the highest rank of knowledge and civilization."

Of these facts most modern historians know but little and Negroes in general almost nothing. For example, how many have ever heard of Al-Bekri, the Arab writer, who in the eleventh century wrote a description of the Western Sudan of such importance that it gained him the title of "The Historian of Negro Land"? How much, by means of research, might be learned of the town of Ghana situate on the banks of the Niger, which the historian Al-Bekri described as a meeting place for commercial caravans from all parts of the world? This town, he said, contained schools and centers of learning. It was the resort of the learned, the rich, and the pious of all nations. Likewise, most of us have never heard perhaps of another Arab writer, Iben Khaldun, who in writing about the middle of the fourteenth century of Melle, another of the kingdoms of the Sudan, reported that caravans from Egypt consisting of twelve thousand laden camels passed every year through one town on the eastern border of the empire on their way to the capital of the nation. The load of a camel was three hundred pounds. 12,000 camel loads amounted, therefore, to something like 1,600 tons of merchandise. At this time we are told that there was probably not a ship in any of the merchant navies of the world which could carry one hundred tons. 250 years later the average tonnage of the vessels of Spain was 300 tons and that of the English much less. The largest ship which Queen Elizabeth had in her navy, the *Great Mary*, had a capacity of a thousand tons; but it was considered an exception and the marvel of the age.

Another thing that is not generally known is the importance to which some of these Negro kingdoms of the Western Sudan attained during the middle ages and the first centuries of the modern era. In size and permanency they compared favorably with the most advanced nations of Europe. The kingdom of Melle of which the historian, Iben Khaldun, wrote, had an area of over 1,000 miles in extent and existed for 250 years. It was the first of the kingdoms of the Western Sudan to be received on equal terms with the contemporary white nations. The greatest of all the Sudan states was the kingdom of Songhay which, in its golden age, had an area almost equal to that of the United States and existed from about 750 A.D. to 1591. There is a record of the kings of Songhay in regular succession for almost 900 years. The length of the life of the Songhay empire coincides almost exactly with the life of Rome from its foundation as a republic to its downfall as an empire.

The greatest evidences of the high state of civilization which the Sudan had in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were the attention that was paid to education and the unusual amount of learning that existed there. The university of Sankore at Timbuctu was a very active center of learning. It was in correspondence with the universities of North Africa and Egypt. It was in touch with the universities of Spain. In the sixteenth century Timbuctu had a large learned class living at ease and busily occupied with the elucidation of intellectual and religious problems. The town swarmed with students. Law, literature, grammar, theology and the natural sciences were studied. The city of Melle

had a regular school of science. One distinguished geographer is mentioned, and allusions to surgical science show that the old maxim of the Arabian schools, "He who studies anatomy pleases God," was not forgotten. One of these writers mentions that his brother came from Jenne to Timbuctu to undergo an operation for cataract of the eyes at the hands of a celebrated surgeon there. It is said that the operation was wholly successful. The appearance of comets, so amazing to Europe of the Middle Ages and at the present time to the ignorant, was by these learned blacks noted calmly as a matter of scientific interest. Earthquakes and eclipses excited no great surprise.

The renowned writer of the Sudan was Abdurrahman Essadi. He was born in Timbuctu in 1596. He came of learned and distinguished ancestors. He is chief author of the history of Sudan. The book is said to be a wonderful document. The narrative deals mainly with the modern history of the Songhay Empire, and relates the rise of this black civilization through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and its decadence up to the middle of the seventeenth century. The noted traveller, Barth, was of the opinion that the book forms one of the most important additions that the present age has made to the history of mankind. The work is especially valuable for the unconscious light which it throws upon the life, manners, politics, and literature of the country. It presents a vivid picture of the character of the men with whom it deals. It is sometimes called the Epic of the Sudan.

From this brief sketch which I have given of the African in ancient and medieval times it is clear that Negroes should not despise the rock from which they were hewn. As a race they have a past which is full of interest. It is worthy of serious study. From it we can draw inspiration; for it appears that not all black men everywhere throughout the ages have been "hewers of wood and drawers of water." On the contrary, through long periods of time there were powerful black nations which have left the records of their achievements and of which we are just now beginning to learn a little. This little, however, which we have learned teaches us that the Negroes of today should work and strive. Along their own special line and in their own peculiar way they should endeavor to make contributions to civilization. Their achievements can be such that once more black will be dignified and the fame of Ethiopia again spread throughout the world.

Monroe N. Work

The Mind of the African Negro as Reflected in His Proverbs

As a study of folk literature of different races offers one way of understanding their mental attitude toward life and its problems, the folk literature of the Negro will reveal to us his inherent moral and intellectual bias and the natural trend of his philosophy. Let us therefore examine some phases of this subject, paying particular attention to that part which relates especially to the proverbs. The sources of such literature are abundant. A little research in a well-equipped library brings one into a curious and informing mass of knowledge, ever increasing in bulk, in the French, German and English languages, as well as in many strange and highly inflected African tongues.

A cursory reading of this literature discloses at once that our general knowledge of Africa has been based in the past mainly on those external facts that strike the sense of sight, such as the physical appearance of the population, native dress and handiwork, musical instruments, implements of warfare, and customs peculiar to the social and religious life of the people. Only through the folk literature, however, can we get a glimpse of the working of the mind of the African Negro. Professor Henry Drummond, although he had traveled in Africa and had written at length about it, still exhibited a longing for this insight when he observed: "I have often wished that I could get inside of an African for an afternoon and just see how he looked at things." At that time much of the folk literature of that continent was not as now available. A deeper and more extensive reading of it at present strengthens our belief in the ancient saying "Out of Africa there is always something new," a rather disquieting thought, if we have reached the conclusion that native culture on that continent has never risen above the zero point.

A critical examination of the content of this folk literature will result in a division somewhat similar to that found in the same type of literature of other races. Such a division discloses stories, poetry, riddles and proverbs. The African folk literature is especially rich in proverbs. So numerous are these proverbs that it has been said that there is scarcely an object presented to the eye, scarcely an idea excited in the mind, but it is accompanied by some sententious aphorism, founded on close observation of man and animals and in many cases of a decidedly moral tendency. Lord Bacon remarked many years ago that "the genius, wit and spirit of a nation are discovered in its proverbs." Cervantes in *Don Quixote* says "Methinks, Sancho, that there is no proverb that is not true, because they are all judgments drawn from the same experience which is the mother of all knowledge." If these sayings be true, then the proverbs of the African Negro should be examined in order to see if they approach these observations.

For convenience of the reader an effort has been made to arrange these sententious sayings under general subjects. These selected by no means exhaust the mine of African proverbial lore but are only a few nuggets that suggest the Negro's power to infer and generalize and to express himself in a graphic and concise way relative to life as he observed and experienced it.[79]

Anger

Anger does nobody good, but patience is the father of kindness.

Assistance

Not to aid one in distress is to kill him in your heart.

Birth

Birth does not differ from birth; as the free man was born so was the slave.

[79] Among the works which have been consulted in the preparation of this article are the following:R. F. Burton, Wit and Wisdom from West Africa. S. W. Koelle, African Native Literature. A. B. Ellis, The Yoruba Speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa. Heli Chatelin, Folk Tales of Angola.

In the beginning our Lord created all. With him there is neither slave nor free man, but every one is free.

Boasting

Boasting is not courage. He who boasts much cannot do much. Much gesticulation does not prove courage.

Borrowing

Borrowing is easy but the day of payment is hard.

Chance

He who waits for chance may wait for a year.

Character

Wherever a man goes to dwell his character goes with him. Every man's character is good in his own eyes.

Charity

Charity is the father of sacrifice.

Children

There is no wealth without children. It is the duty of children to wait on elders, not elders on children.

Condemnation

You condemn on hearsay evidence alone, your sins increase.

Contempt

Men despise what they do not understand.

Covetousness

If thou seeketh to obtain by force what our Lord did not give thee, thou wilt not get it.

Danger of Beauty

He who marries a beauty, marries trouble.

Danger of Poverty

Beg help and you will meet with refusals; ask for alms and you will meet with misers.

Danger of Wealth

It is better to be poor and live long than rich and die young.

Disposition

A man's disposition is like a mark in a stone, no one can efface it.

Doing Good

If one does good, God will interpret it to him for good.

Duty to One's Self

Do not repair another man's fence until you have seen to your own.

Effort

You cannot kill game by looking at it.

Evil Doer

The evil doer is ever anxious.

Experience

We begin by being foolish and we become wise by experience.

Familiarity

Familiarity induces contempt, but distance secures respect.

Faults

Faults are like a hill, you stand on your own and you talk about those of other people.

Faults of the Rich

If thou art poor, do not make a rich man thy friend.
If thou goest to a foreign country, do not alight at a rich man's house.

Favor of the Great

To love the king is not bad, but a king who loves you is better.

Folly

After a foolish action comes remorse.

Forethought

A person prepared beforehand is better than after reflection.
The day on which one starts is not the time to commence one's preparation.

Forgiveness

He who forgives ends the quarrel.

Friends

There are three friends in this world–courage, sense, and insight.

Friendship

Hold a true friend with both of your hands.

Future

Thou knowest the past but not the future. As to what is future, even a bird with a long neck can not see it, but God only.

Gossip

Gossip is unbecoming an elder.

Gentleness

A matter dealt with gently is sure to prosper, but a matter dealt with violently causes vexation.

Hate

There is no medicine for hate.

Heart

It is the heart that carries one to heaven.

Heathen

He is a heathen who bears malice.

Hope

Hope is the pillar of the world.

Ignorance

Lack of knowledge is darker than night.
An ignorant man is always a slave.
Whoever works without knowledge works uselessly.

Immortality

Since thou hast no benefactor in this world, thy having one in the next world will be all the more pleasant.

Injury

He who injures another brings injury upon himself.

Laziness

Laziness lends assistance to fatigue.
A lazy man looks for light employment.

Love

One does not love another if one does not accept anything from him.
If you love the children of others, you will love your own even better.

Meekness

If one knows thee not or a blind man scolds thee, do not become angry.

Mother

Him whose mother is no more, distress carries off.

Necessity of Effort

The sieve never sifts meal by itself.

Old Age

There are no charms or medicine against old age.

Opportunity

The dawn does not come twice to wake a man.

Patience

At the bottom of patience there is heaven.
Patience is the best of qualities; he who possesses it possesses all things.

People

Ordinary people are as common as grass, but good people are dearer than the eye.

Politeness

Bowing to a dwarf will not prevent your standing erect again.
"I have forgotten thy name" is better than "I know thee not."

Poverty

A poor man has no friends.
He who has no house has no word in society.

Riches

Property is the prop of life.
A wealthy man always has followers.

Sleep

Sleep has no favorites.

Strife

Strife begets a gentle child.

Sun

The sun is the king of torches.

Trade

Trade is not something imaginary or descriptive, but something real and profitable.

Truth

Lies, however numerous, will be caught by truth when it rises up.
The voice of truth is easily known.

Unselfishness

If you love yourself others will hate you, if you humble yourself others will love you.

Valor

Boasting at home is not valor; parade is not battle; when war comes the valiant will be known.
The fugitive never stops to pick the thorn from his foot.

Wisdom

A man may be born to wealth, but wisdom comes only with length of days.
A man with wisdom is better off than a stupid man with any amount of charms and superstition.
Know thyself better than he who speaks of thee.
Not to know is bad, not to wish to know is worse.
A counsellor who understands proverbs soon sets matters right.

Proverbs Based on the Observation of Animals

Butterfly

The butterfly that brushes against thorns will tear its wings.

Dog

If the dog is not at home, he barks not.
A heedless dog will not do for the chase.
A lurking dog does not lie in the hyena's lair.

Elephant

He who can not move an ant, and yet tries to move an elephant, shall find out his folly.

The elephant does not find his trunk heavy.

Were no elephant in the jungle, the buffalo would be a great animal.

Fly

If the fly flies, the frog goes not supperless to bed.

Fox

When the fox dies, fowls do not mourn.

Goat

When the goat goes abroad, the sheep must run.

Rat

When the rat laughs at the cat, there is a hole. The rat has not power to call the cat to account. The rat does not go to sleep in the cat's bed.

Wolf

He who goes with the wolf will learn to howl.

A. O. Stafford

What the Negro Was Thinking During the Eighteenth Century

Essay on Negro Slavery [80]

No. 1

Amidst the infinite variety of moral and political subjects, proper for public commendation, it is truly surprising, that one of the most important and affecting should be so generally neglected. An encroachment on the smallest civil or political privilege, shall fan the enthusiastic flames of liberty, till it shall extend over vast and distant regions, and violently agitate a whole continent. But the cause of humanity shall be basely violated, justice shall be wounded to the heart, and national honor deeply and lastingly polluted, and not a breath or murmur shall arise to disturb the prevailing quiescence or to rouse the feelings of indignation against such general, extensive, and complicated iniquity.–To what cause are we to impute this frigid silence–this torpid indifference–this cold inanimated conduct of the otherwise warm and generous Americans? Why do they remain inactive, amidst the groans of injured humanity, the shrill and distressing complaints of expiring justice and the keen remorse of polluted integrity?–Why do they not rise up to assert the cause of God and the world, to drive the fiend injustice into remote and distant regions, and to exterminate oppression from the face of the fair fields of America?

When the united colonies revolted from Great Britain, they did it upon this principle, "that all men are by nature and of right ought to be free."–After a long, successful, and glorious struggle for liberty, during which they manifested the firmest attachment to the rights of mankind, can they so soon forget the principles that then governed their determinations? Can Americans, after the noble contempt they expressed for tyrants, meanly descend to take up the scourge? Blush, ye revolted colonies, for having apostatized from your own principles.

Slavery, in whatever point of light it is considered, is repugnant to the feelings of nature, and inconsistent with the original rights of man. It ought therefore to be stigmatized for being unnatural; and detested for being unjust. Tis an outrage to providence and an affront offered to divine Majesty, who has given to man his own peculiar image.–That the Americans after considering the subject in this light–after making the most manly of all possible exertions in defence of liberty–after publishing to the world the principle upon which they contended, viz.: "that all men are by nature and of right ought to be free," should still retain in subjection a numerous tribe of the human race merely for their own private use and emolument, is, of all things the strongest inconsistency, the deepest reflexion on our conduct, and the most abandoned apostasy that ever took place, since the almighty fiat spoke into existence this habitable world. So flagitous a violation can never escape the notice of a just Creator whose vengeance may be now on the wing, to disseminate and hurl the arrows of destruction.

In what light can the people of Europe consider America after the strange inconsistency of her conduct? Will they not consider her as an abandoned and deceitful country? In the hour of calamity she petitioned heaven to be propitious to her cause. Her prayers were heard. Heaven pitied her distress, smiled on her virtuous exertions, and vanquished all her afflictions. The ungrateful creature forgets this timely assistance–no longer remembers her own sorrows–but basely commences oppression in her turn.–Beware America! pause–and consider the difference between the mild effulgence of approving providence and the angry countenance of incensed divinity!

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[80] "Othello," the author of these two essays, was identified as a Negro by Abbé Gregoire in his "De la litterature des Nègres."

The importation of slaves into America ought to be a subject of the deepest regret, to every benevolent and thinking mind.–And one of the greatest defects in the federal system, is the liberty it allows on this head. Venerable in every thing else, it is injudicious here; and it is to be much deplored, that a system of so much political perfection, should be stained with any thing that does an outrage to human nature. As a door, however, is open to amendment, for the sake of distressed humanity, of injured national reputation, and the glory of doing so benevolent a thing, I hope some wise and virtuous patriot will advocate the measure, and introduce an alteration in that pernicious part of the government.–So far from encouraging the importation of slaves, and countenancing that vile traffic in human flesh; the members of the late continental convention[81] should have seized the happy opportunity of prohibiting for ever this cruel species of reprobated villainy.–That they did not do so, will for ever diminish the luster of their other proceedings, so highly extolled, and so justly distinguished for their intrinsic value. Let us for a moment contrast the sentiments and actions of the Europeans on this subject, with those of our own countrymen. In France the warmest and most animated exertions are making, in order to introduce the entire abolition of the slave trade; and in England many of the first characters of the country advocate the same measure, with an enthusiastic philanthropy. The prime minister himself is at the head of that society; and nothing can equal the ardour of their endeavours, but the glorious goodness of the cause.[82]--Will the Americans allow the people of England to get the start of them in acts of humanity? Forbid it shame!

The practice of stealing, or bartering for human flesh is pregnant with the most glaring turpitude, and the blackest barbarity of disposition.–For can any one say, that this is doing as he would be done by? Will such a practice stand the scrutiny of this great rule of moral government? Who can without the complicated emotions of anger and impatience, suppose himself in the predicament of a slave? Who can bear the thoughts of his relatives being torn from him by a savage enemy; carried to distant regions of the habitable globe, never more to return; and treated there as the unhappy Africans are in this country? Who can support the reflexion of his father–his mother–his sister–or his wife–perhaps his children–being barbarously snatched away by a foreign invader, without the prospect of ever beholding them again? Who can reflect upon their being afterwards publicly exposed to sale–obliged to labor with unwearied assiduity–and because all things are not possible to be performed, by persons so unaccustomed to robust exercise, scourged with all the rage and anger of malignity, until their unhappy carcasses are covered with ghastly wounds and frightful contusions? Who can reflect on these things when applying the case to himself, without being chilled with horror, at circumstances so extremely shocking?–Yet hideous as this concise and imperfect description is, of the sufferings sustained by many of our slaves, it is nevertheless true; and so far from being exaggerated, falls infinitely short of a thousand circumstances of distress, which have been recounted by different writers on the subject, and which contribute to make their situation in this life, the most absolutely wretched, and completely miserable, that can possibly be conceived.–In many places in America, the slaves are treated with every circumstance of rigorous inhumanity, accumulated hardship, and enormous cruelty.–Yet when we take them from Africa, we deprive them of a country which God hath given them for their own; as free as we are, and as capable of enjoying that blessing. Like pirates we go to commit devastation on the coast of an innocent country, and among a people who never did us wrong.

An insatiable, avaricious desire to accumulate riches, cooperating with a spirit of luxury and injustice, seems to be the leading cause of this peculiarly degrading and ignominious practice. Being once accustomed to subsist without labour, we become soft and voluptuous; and rather than

[81] The writer refers here to the Convention of 1787 which framed the Constitution of the United States.

[82] Here the writer has in mind the organization of the English Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade and the support given the cause by Wilberforce, Pitt, Fox and Burke in England and by Brissot, Clavière and Montmorin in France.

afterwards forego the gratification of our habitual indolence and ease, we countenance the infamous violation, and sacrifice at the shrine of cruelty, all the finer feelings of elevated humanity.

Considering things in this view, there surely can be nothing more justly reprehensible or disgusting than the extravagant finery of many country people's daughters. It hath not been at all uncommon to observe as much gauze, lace and other trappings, on one of those country maidens as hath employed two or three of her father's slaves, for twelve months afterwards, to raise tobacco to pay for. Tis an ungrateful reflexion that all this frippery and effected finery, can only he supported by the sweat of another person's brow, and consequently only by lawful rapine and injustice. If these young females could devote as much time from their amusements, as would be necessary for reflexion; or was there any person of humanity at hand who could inculcate the indecency of this kind of extravagance, I am persuaded that they have hearts good enough to reject with disdain, the momentary pleasure of making a figure, in behalf of the rational and lasting delight of contributing by their forbearance to the happiness of many thousand individuals.

In Maryland where slaves are treated with as much lenity, as perhaps they are any where, their situation is to the last degree ineligible. They live in wretched cots, that scarcely secure them from the inclemency of the weather; sleep in the ashes or on straw, wear the coarsest clothing, and subsist on the most ordinary food that the country produces. In all things they are subject to their master's absolute command, and, of course, have no will of their own. Thus circumstanced, they are subject to great brutality, and are often treated with it. In particular instances, they may be better provided for in this state, but this suffices for a general description. But in the Carolinas and the island of Jamaica, the cruelties that have been wantonly exercised on those miserable creatures, are without a precedent in any other part of the world. If those who have written on the subject, may be believed, it is not uncommon there, to tie a slave up and whip him to death.

On all occasions impartiality in the distribution of justice should be observed. The little state of Rhode Island has been reprobated by other states, for refusing to enter into measures respecting a new general government; and so far it is admitted that she is culpable.[83] But if she is worthy of blame in this respect, she is entitled to the highest admiration for the philanthropy, justice, and humanity she hath displayed, respecting the subject I am treating on. She hath passed an act prohibiting the importation of slaves into that state, and forbidding her citizens to engage in the iniquitous traffic. So striking a proof of her strong attachment to the rights of humanity, will rescue her name from oblivion, and bid her live in the good opinion of distant and unborn generations.

Slavery, unquestionably, should be abolished, particularly in this country; because it is inconsistent with the declared principles of the American Revolution. The sooner, therefore, we set about it, the better. Either we should set our slaves at liberty, immediately, and colonize them in the western territory;[84] or we should immediately take measures for the gradual abolition of it, so that it may become a known, and fixed point, that ultimately, universal liberty, in these united states, shall triumph.–This is the least we can do in order to evince our sense of the irreparable outrages we have committed, to wipe off the odium we have incurred, and to give mankind a confidence again in the justice, liberality, and honour of our national proceedings.

It would not be difficult to show, were it necessary, that America would soon become a richer and more happy country, provided the step was adopted. That corrosive anguish of persevering in anything improper, which now embitters the enjoyments of life, would vanish as the mist of a foggy morn doth before the rising sun; and we should find as great a disparity between our present situation, and that which would succeed to it, as subsists between a cloudy winter, and a radiant spring.–Besides, our lands would not be then cut down for the support of a numerous train of useless inhabitants–useless, I mean, to themselves, and effectually to us, by encouraging sloth and voluptuousness among

[83] Rhode Island had failed to ratify the Constitution of the United States.

[84] During the first forty years of the republic there was much talk about colonizing the Negroes in the West.

our young farmers and planters, who might otherwise know how to take care of their money, as well as how to dissipate it.–In all other respects, I conceive them to be as valuable as we are–as capable of worthy purposes, and to possess the same dignity that we do, in the estimation of providence; although the value of their work apart, for which we are dependent on them, we generally consider them as good for nothing, and accordingly, treat them with greatest neglect.

But be it remembered, that this cause is the cause of heaven; and that the father of them as well as of us, will not fail, at a future settlement, to adjust the account between us, with a dreadful attention to justice.

Othello Baltimore, May 10, 1788.

–-*American Museum*, IV, 412-415.

Essay on Negro Slavery

No. II

Upon no better principle do we plunder the coasts of Africa, and bring away its wretched inhabitants as slaves than that, by which the greater fish swallows up the lesser. Superior power seems only to produce superior brutality; and that weakness and imbecility, which ought to engage our protection, and interest the feelings of social benevolence in behalf of the defenceless, seems only to provoke us to acts of illiberal outrage and unmanly violence.

The practice which has been followed by the English nation, since the establishment of the slave trade–I mean that of stirring up the natives of Africa, against each other, with a view of purchasing the prisoners mutually taken in battle, must strike the humane mind with sentiments of the deepest abhorrence, and confer on that people a reproach, as lasting as time itself. It is surprising that the eastern world did not unite, to discourage a custom so diabolical in its tendency, and to exterminate a species of oppression which humbles the dignity of all mankind. But this torpid inattention can only be accounted for, by adverting to the savage disposition of the times, which countenanced cruelties unheard of at this enlightened period. What rudeness of demeanor and brutality of manner, which had been introduced into Europe, by those swarms of barbarians, that overwhelmed it from the north, had hardly begun to dissipate before the enlivening sun of civilization, when this infernal practice first sprang up into existence. Before this distinguished era of refined barbarity, the sons of Africa were in possession of all the mild enjoyments of peace–all the pleasing delights of uninterrupted harmony–and all the diffusive blessings of profound tranquility. Boundless must be the punishment, which irritated providence will inflict on those whose wanton cruelty has prompted them to destroy this fair arrangement of nature–this flowery prospect of human felicity. Engulphed in the dark abyss of never ending misery, they shall in bitterness atone for the stab thus given to human nature; and in anguish unutterable expiate crimes, for which nothing less than eternal sufferings can make adequate retribution!–Equally iniquitous is the practice of robbing that country of its inhabitants; and equally tremendous will be the punishment. The voice of injured thousands, who have been violently torn from their native country, and carried to distant and inhospitable climes–the bitter lamentations of the wretched, helpless female–the cruel agonizing sensations of the husband, the father and the friend–will ascend to the throne of Omnipotence, and, from the elevated heights of heaven, cause him, with the whole force of almighty vengeance, to hurl the guilty perpetrators of those inhuman beings, down the steep precipice of inevitable ruin, into the bottomless gulph of final, irretrievable, and endless destruction!

Ye sons of America, forbear!–Consider the dire consequences, that will attend the prosecution, against which the all-powerful God of nature holds up his hands, and loudly proclaims, desist!

In the insolence of self-consequence, we are accustomed to esteem ourselves and the Christian powers of Europe, the only civilized people on the globe; the rest without distinction, we presumptuously denominate barbarians. But, when the practices above mentioned, come to be deliberately considered–when added to these, we take a view of the proceedings of the English in the East Indies, under the direction of the late Lord Clive, and remember what happened in the streets of Bengal and Calcutta–when we likewise reflect on our American mode of driving, butchering and exterminating the poor defenceless Indians, the native and lawful proprietors of the soil–we shall acknowledge, if we possess the smallest degree of candor, that the appellation of barbarian does not belong to them alone. While we continue those practices the term christian will only be a burlesque expression, signifying no more than that it ironically denominates the rudest sect of barbarians that ever disgraced the hand of their Creator. We have the precepts of the gospel for the government of our moral deportment, in violation of which, those outrageous wrongs are committed; but they have no such meliorating influence among them, and only adhere to the simple dictates of reason, and natural religion, which they never violate.

Might not the inhabitants of Africa, with still greater justice on their side, than we have on ours, cross the Atlantic, seize our citizens, carry them into Africa, and make slaves of them, provided they were able to do it? But should this be really the case, every corner of the globe would reverberate with the sound of African oppression; so loud would be our complaint, and so "feeling our appeal" to the inhabitants of the world at large. We should represent them as a lawless, piratical set of unprincipled robbers, plunderers and villains, who basely prostituted the superior power and information, which God had given them for worthy purposes to the vilest of all ends. We should not hesitate to say that they made use of those advantages only to infringe upon every dictate of justice; to trample under foot every suggestion of principle, and to spurn, with contempt, every right of humanity.

The Algerines are reprobated all the world over, for their unlawful depredations; and stigmatized as pirates, for their unreasonable exactions from foreign nations. But, the Algerines are no greater pirates than the Americans; nor are they a race more destructive to the happiness to mankind. The depredations of the latter on the coast of Africa, and upon the Indians' Territory make the truth of this assertion manifest. The piratical depredations of the Algerines appear to be a judgment from heaven upon the nations, to punish their perfidy and atrocious violations of justice; and never did any people more justly merit the scourge than Americans, on whom it seems to fall with peculiar and reiterated violence. When they yoke our citizens to the plow, and compel them to labour in that degraded manner, they only retaliate on us for similar barbarities. For Algiers is a part of the same country, whose helpless inhabitants we are accustomed to carry away. But the English and Americans cautiously avoid engaging with a warlike people, whom they fear to attack in a manner so base and unworthy; whilst the Algerines, more generous and courageous plunderers, are not afraid to make war on brave and well-disciplined enemies, who are capable of making a gallant resistance.

Whoever examines into the conditions of the slaves in America will find them in a state of the most uncultivated rudeness. Not instructed in any kind of learning, they are grossly ignorant of all refinement, and have little else about them, belonging to the nature of civilized man, than mere form. They are strangers to almost every idea, that doth not relate to their labour or their food; and though naturally possessed of strong sagacity, and lively parts, are, in all respects, in a state of most deplorable brutality.–This is owing to the iron-hand of oppression, which ever crushes the bud of genius and binds up in chains every expansion of the human mind.–Such is their extreme ignorance that they are utterly unacquainted with the laws of the world–the injunctions of religion–their own natural rights, and the forms, ceremonies and privileges of marriage originally established by the Divinity. Accordingly they lived in open violation of the precepts of christianity and with as little formality or restrictions as the brutes of the field, unite for the purposes of procreation. Yet this is a civilized country and a most enlightened period of the world! The resplendent glory of the gospel is at hand, to conduct us in safety through the labyrinths of life. Science hath grown up to maturity, and

is discovered to possess not only all the properties of solidity of strength, but likewise every ornament of elegance, and every embellishment of fancy. Philosophy hath here attained the most exalted height of elevation; and the art of government hath received such refinements among us, as hath equally astonished our friends, our enemies and ourselves. In fine, no annals are more brilliant than those of America; nor do any more luxuriantly abound with examples of exalted heroism, refined policy, and sympathetic humanity. Yet now the prospect begins to change; and all the splendor of this august assemblage, will soon be overcast by sudden and impenetrable clouds; and American greatness be obliterated and swallowed up by one enormity. Slavery diffuses the gloom, and casts around us the deepest shade of approaching darkness. No longer shall the united states of America be famed for liberty. Oppression pervades their bowels; and while they exhibit a fair exterior to the other parts of the world, they are nothing more than "painted sepulchres," containing within them nought but rottenness and corruption.

Ye voluptuous, ye opulent and great, who hold in subjection such numbers of your fellow-creatures, and suffer these things to happen–beware! Reflect on this lamentable change, that may, at a future period, take place against you. Arraigned before the almighty Sovereign of the universe, how will you answer the charge of such complicated enormity? The presence of these slaves, who have been lost, for want of your instruction, and by means of your oppression, shall make you dart deeper into the flames, to avoid their just reproaches, and seek out for an asylum, in the hidden corners of perdition.

Many persons of opulence in Virginia, and the Carolinas, treat their unhappy slaves with every circumstance of coolest neglect, and the most deliberate indifference. Surrounded with a numerous train of servants, to contribute to their personal ease, and wallowing in all the luxurious plenitude of riches, they neglect the wretched source, whence they draw this profusion. Many of their negroes, on distant estates, are left to the entire management of inhuman overseers, where they suffer for the want of that sustenance, which, at the proprietors seat of residence, is wastefully given to the dogs. It frequently happens, on these large estates, that they are not clothed, 'till winter is nearly expired; and then, the most valuable only are attended to; the young, and the labour-worn, having no other allowance, in this respect, than the tattered garments, thrown off by the more fortunate. A single peck of corn a week, or the like measure of rice, is the ordinary quantity of provision for a hard working slave; to which a small quantity of meat is occasionally, tho' rarely, added. While those miserable degraded persons thus scantily subsist, all the produce of their unwearied toil, is taken away to satiate their rapacious master. He, devoted wretch! thoughtless of the sweat and toil with which his wearied, exhausted dependents procure what he extravagantly dissipates, not contented with the ordinary luxuries of life, is, perhaps, planning, at the time, some improvement on the voluptuous art.–Thus he sets up two carriages instead of one; maintains twenty servants, when a fourth part of that number are more than sufficient to discharge the business of personal attendance; makes every animal, proper for the purpose, bleed around him, in order to supply the gluttonous profusion of his table; and generally gives away what his slaves are pining for;–those very slaves, whose labour enables him to display this liberality!–No comment is necessary, to expose the peculiar folly, ingratitude, and infamy of such execrable conduct.

But the custom of neglecting those slaves, who have been worn out in our service, is unhappily found to prevail, not only among the more opulent but thro' the more extensive round of the middle and inferior ranks of life. No better reason can be given for this base inattention, than that they are no longer able to contribute to our emoluments. With singular dishonor, we forget the faithful instrument of past enjoyment, and when, by length of time, it becomes debilitated, it is, like a withered stalk, ungratefully thrown away.

Our slaves unquestionably have the strongest of all claims upon us, for protection and support; we having compelled them to involuntary servitude, and deprived them of every means of protecting or supporting themselves. The injustice of our conduct, and barbarity of our neglect, when this

reflexion is allowed to predominate, becomes so glaringly conspicuous, as even to excite, against ourselves, the strongest emotion of detestation and abhorrence.

To whom are the wretched sons of Africa to apply for redress, if their cruel master treats them with unkindness? To whom will they resort for protection, if he is base enough to refuse it to them? The law is not their friend;–alas! too many statutes are enacted against them. The world is not their friend;–the iniquity is too general and extensive. No one who hath slaves of his own, will protect those of another, less the practice should be retorted. Thus when their masters abandon them, their situation is destitute and forlorn, and God is their only friend!

Let us imitate the conduct of a neighboring state, and immediately take measures, at least, for the gradual abolition of slavery.[85] Justice demands it of us, and we ought not to hesitate in obeying its inviolable mandates.–All the feelings of pity, compassion, affection, and benevolence–all the emotions of tenderness, humanity, philanthropy, and goodness–all the sentiments of mercy, probity, honour, and integrity, unite to solicit for their emancipation. Immortal will be the glory of accomplishing their liberation; and eternal the disgrace of keeping them in chains.

But, if the state of Pennsylvania is to be applauded for her conduct, that of South Carolina can never be too strongly execrated.[86] The legislature of that state, at no very remote period, brought in a bill for prohibiting the use of letters to their slaves, and forbidding them the privilege of being taught to read!–This was a deliberate attempt to enslave the minds of those unfortunate objects, whose persons they already held in arbitrary subjection:–Detestable deviation from the becoming rectitude of man.

One more peculiarly distressing circumstance remains to be recounted, before I take my final leave of the subject.–In the ordinary course of the business of the country, the punishment of relatives frequently happens on the same farm, and in view of each other:–The father often sees his beloved son–the son his venerable sire–the mother her much-loved daughter–the daughter her affectionate parent–the husband the wife of his bosom, and she the husband of her affection, cruelly bound up without delicacy or mercy, and punished with all extremity of incensed rage, and all the rigour of unrelenting severity, whilst these unfortunate wretches dare not even interpose in each other's behalf. Let us reverse the case and suppose it ours:–all is silent horror!

Othello Maryland, May 23, 1788.

—*American Museum*, IV, 509-512.

Letter on Slavery by a Negro

I am one of that unfortunate race of men, who are distinguished from the rest of the human species, by a black skin and wooly hair–disadvantages of very little moment in themselves, but which prove to us a source of greatest misery, because there are men, who will not be persuaded that it is possible for a human soul to be lodged within a sable body. The West Indian planters could not, if they thought us men, so wantonly spill our blood; nor could the natives of this land of liberty, deeming us of the same species with themselves, submit to be instrumental in enslaving us, or think us proper subjects of a sordid commerce. Yet, strong as the prejudices against us are, it will not, I hope on this side of the Atlantic, be considered as a crime, for a poor African not to confess himself a being of an inferior order to those, who happen to be of a different colour from himself; or be thought very presumptuous, in one who is but a negro, to offer to the happy subjects of this free government, some reflections upon the wretched condition of his countrymen. They will not, I trust, think worse of my brethren, for being discontented with so hard a lot as that of slavery; nor disown me for their fellow-creature, merely because I deeply feel the unmerited sufferings which my countrymen endure.

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[85] The writer refers here to the acts of Pennsylvania, providing for the abolition of slavery.

[86] In 1740 South Carolina enacted a law prohibiting any one from teaching a slave to read or employing one in "any manner of writing." Georgia enacted the same law in 1770.

It is neither the vanity of being an author, nor a sudden and capricious gust of humanity, which has prompted this present design. It has long been conceived and long been the principal subject of my thoughts. Ever since an indulgent master rewarded my youthful services with freedom and supplied me at a very early age with the means of acquiring knowledge, I have laboured to understand the true principles, on which the liberties of mankind are founded, and to possess myself of the language of this country, in order to plead the cause of those who were once my fellow slaves, and if possible to make my freedom, in some degree, the instrument of their deliverance.

The first thing then, which seems necessary, in order to remove those prejudices, which are so unjustly entertained against us, is to prove that we are men–a truth which is difficult of proof, only because it is difficult to imagine, by what argument it can be combatted. Can it be contended that a difference of colour alone can constitute a difference of species?–if not in what single circumstance are we different from the rest of mankind? what variety is there in our organization? what inferiority of art in the fashoning of our bodies? what imperfection in the faculties of our minds?–Has not a negro eyes? has not a negro hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?–fed with the same food; hurt with the same weapons; subject to the same diseases; healed by the same means; warmed and cooled by the same summer and winter as a white man? if you prick us, do we not bleed? if you poison us, do we not die? are we not exposed to all the same wants? do we not feel all the same sentiments–are we not capable of all the same exertions–and are we not entitled to all the same rights, as other men?

Yes–and it is said we are men, it is true; but that we are men, addicted to more and worse vices, than those of any other complexion; and such is the innate perverseness of our minds, that nature seems to have marked us out for slavery.–Such is the apology perpetually made for our masters, and the justification offered for that universal proscription, under which we labour.

But, I supplicate our enemies to be, though for the first time, just in their proceedings toward us, and to establish the fact before, they attempt to draw any conclusions from it. Nor let them imagine that this can be done, by merely asserting that such is our universal character. It is the character, I grant, that our inhuman masters have agreed to give us, and which they have so industriously and too successfully propagated, in order to palliate their own guilt, by blackening the helpless victims of it, and to disguise their own cruelty under the semblance of justice. Let the natural depravity of our character be proved–not by appealing to declamatory invectives, and interested representations, but by showing that a greater proportion of crimes have been committed by the wronged slaves of the plantation, than by the luxurous inhabitants of Europe, who are happily strangers to those aggravated provocations, by which our passions are every day irritated and incensed. Show us, that, of the multitude of negroes, who have within a few years transported themselves to this country,[87] and who are abandoned to themselves; who are corrupted by example, prompted by penury, and instigated by the memory of their wrongs to the commission of crime–shew us, I say (and the demonstration, if it be possible, cannot be difficult) that a greater proportion of these, than of white men have fallen under the animadversions of justice, and have been sacrificed to your laws. Though avarice may slander and insult our misery, and though poets heighten the horror of their fables, by representing us as monsters of vice–the fact is, that, if treated like other men, and admitted to a participation of their rights, we should differ from them in nothing, perhaps, but in our possessing stronger passions, nicer sensibility, and more enthusiastic virtue.

Before so harsh a decision was pronounced upon our nature, we might have expected–if sad experience had not taught us, to expect nothing but injustice from our adversaries–that some pains would have been taken, to ascertain, what our nature is; and that we should have been considered, as we are found in our native woods, and not as we now are–altered and perverted by an inhuman

[87] This letter was originally published in England, where the number of Negroes had considerably increased after the war in America.

political institution. But, instead of this, we are examined, not by philosophers, but by interested traders: not as nature formed us, but as man has depraved us–and from such an inquiry, prosecuted under such circumstances, the perverseness of our dispositions is said to be established. Cruel that you are! you make us slaves; you implant in our minds all the vices, which are in some degree, inseparable from that condition; and you then impiously impute to nature, and to God, the origin of those vices, to which you alone have given birth; and punish in us the crimes, of which you are yourselves the authors.

The condition of the slave is in nothing more deplorable, than in its being so unfavorable to the practice of every virtue. The surest foundation of virtue is love of our fellow creatures; and that affection takes its birth, in the social relations of men to one another. But to a slave these are all denied. He never pays or receives the grateful duties of a son–he never knows or experiences the fond solicitude of a father–the tender names of husband, of brother, and of friend, are to him unknown. He has no country to defend and bleed for–he can relieve no sufferings–for he looks around in vain, to find a being more wretched than himself. He can indulge no generous sentiment–for he sees himself every hour treated with contempt and ridiculed, and distinguished from irrational brutes, by nothing but the severity of punishment. Would it be surprising, if a slave, labouring under all these disadvantages–oppressed, insulted, scorned, trampled on–should come at last to despise himself–to believe the calumnies of his oppressors–and to persuade himself, that it would be against his nature, to cherish any honourable sentiment or to attempt any virtuous action? Before you boast of your superiority over us, place some of your own colour (if you have the heart to do it) in the same situation with us; and see, whether they have such innate virtue, and such unconquerable vigour of mind, as to be capable of surmounting such multiplied difficulties, and of keeping their minds free from the infection of every vice, even under the oppressive yoke of such a servitude.

But, not satisfied with denying us that indulgence, to which the misery of our condition gives us so just a claim, our enemies have laid down other and stricter rules of morality, to judge our actions by, than those by which the conduct of all other men is tried. Habits, which in all human beings, except ourselves, are thought innocent, are, in us, deemed criminal and actions, which are even laudable in white men, become enormous crimes in negroes. In proportion to our weakness, the strictness of censure is increased upon us; and as resources are withheld from us, our duties are multiplied. The terror of punishment is perpetually before our eyes; but we know not, how to avert it, what rules to act by, or what guides to follow. We have written laws, indeed, composed in a language we do not understand and never promulgated: but what avail written laws, when the supreme law, with us, is the capricious will of our overseers? To obey the dictates of our own hearts, and to yield to the strong propensities of nature, is often to incur severe punishment; and by emulating examples which we find applauded and revered among Europeans, we risk inflaming the wildest wrath of our inhuman tyrants.

To judge of the truth of these assertions, consult even those milder and subordinate rules for our conduct, the various codes of your West India laws–those laws which allow us to be men, whenever they consider us as victims of their vengeance, but treat us only like a species of living property, as often as we are to be the objects of their protection–those laws by which (it may be truly said) that we are bound to suffer, and be miserable under pain of death. To resent an injury, received from a white man, though of the lowest rank, and to dare to strike him, though upon the strongest and grossest provocation, is an enormous crime. To attempt to escape from the cruelties exercised upon us, by flight, is punished with mutilation, and sometimes with death. To take arms against masters, whose cruelties no submission can mitigate, no patience exhaust, and from whom no other means of deliverance are left, is the most atrocious of all crimes; and is punished by a gradual death, lengthened out by torments, so exquisite, that none, but those who have been long familiarized, with West Indian barbarity, can hear the bare recital of them without horror. And yet I learn from writers, whom the Europeans hold in the highest esteem, that treason is a crime, which cannot be committed by a slave against his master; that a slave stands in no civil relation towards his master, and owes him no

allegiance; that master and slave are in a state of war; and if the slave take up arms for his deliverance, he acts not only justifiably, but in obedience to a natural duty, the duty of self-preservation. I read in authors whom I find venerated by our oppressors, that to deliver one's self and one's countrymen from tyranny, is an act of the sublimest heroism. I hear Europeans exalted, as the martyrs of public liberty, the saviours of their country, and the deliverers of mankind–I see other memories honoured with statues, and their names immortalized in poetry–and yet when a generous negro is animated by the same passion which ennobled them,–when he feels the wrongs of his countrymen as deeply, and attempts to avenge them as boldly–I see him treated by those same Europeans as the most execrable of mankind, and led out, amidst curses and insults to undergo a painful, gradual and ignominious death: And thus the same Briton, who applauds his own ancestors for attempting to throw off the easy yoke, imposed on them by the Romans, punishes us, as detested parricides, for seeking to get free from the cruelest of all tyrannies, and yielding to the irresistible eloquence of an African Galgacus or Boadicea.

Are then the reason and morality, for which Europeans so highly value themselves, of a nature so variable and fluctuating, as to change with the complexion of those, to whom they are applied?–Do rights of nature cease to be such, when a negro is to enjoy them?–Or does patriotism in the heart of an African, rankle into treason?

A Free Negro

–-*American Museum*, V, 77 et seq., 1789.

Remarkable Speech of Adahoonzou, King of Dahomey, an Interior Nation of Africa, on Hearing What Was Passing in England Respecting the Slave Trade

I admire the reasoning of the white men; but with all their sense, it does not appear that they have thoroughly studied the nature of the blacks, whose disposition differs as much from that of the whites, as their colour. The same great Being formed both; and since it hath seemed convenient for him to distinguish mankind by opposite complexions, it is a fair conclusion to presume that there may be as a great a disagreement in the qualitie of their minds; there is likewise a remarkable difference between the countries which we inhabit. You, Englishmen, for instance, as I have been informed, are surrounded by the ocean, and by this situation seem intended to hold communication with the whole world, which you do, by means of your ships; whilst we Dahomans, being placed on a large continent, and hemmed in amidst a variety of other people, of the same complexion, but speaking different languages, are obliged by the sharpness of our swords, to defend ourselves from their incursions, and punish the depredations they make on us. Such conduct in them is productive of incessant wars. Your countrymen, therefore, who alledge that we go to war for the purpose of supplying your ships with slaves, are grossly mistaken.

You think you can work a reformation as you call it, in the manners of the blacks; but you ought to consider the disproportion between the magnitude of the two countries; and then you will soon be convinced of the difficulties that must be surmounted, to change the system of such a vast country as this. We know you are a brave people, and that you might bring over a great many of the blacks to your opinions, by points of your bayonets; but to effect this, a great many must be put to death and numerous cruelties must be committed, which we do not find to have been the practice of the whites; besides, that this would militate against the very principle which is professed by those who wish to bring about a reformation.

In the name of my ancestors and myself, I aver, that no Dahoman ever embarked in war merely for the sake of procuring wherewithal to purchase your commodities. I, who have not been long master of this country, have without thinking of the market, killed many thousands, and I shall kill many thousands more. When policy or justice requires that men be put to death, neither silk, nor

coral, nor brandy, nor cowries, can be accepted as substitutes for the blood that ought to be spilt for example sake: besides if white men chuse to remain at home, and no longer visit this country for the same purpose that has usually brought them thither, will black men cease to make war? I answer, by no means, and if there be no ships to receive their captives, what will become of them? I answer, for you, they will be put to death. Perhaps you may be asked, how will the blacks be punished with guns and powder? I reply by another question, had we not clubs, and bows, and arrows before we knew white men? Did not you see me make *custom*--annual ceremony–for Weebaigah, the third king of Dahomey? And did you not observe on the day such ceremony was performing, that I carried a bow in my hand, and a quiver filled with arrows on my back? These were the emblems of the times; when, with such weapons, that brave ancestor fought and conquered all his neighbors. God made war for all the world; and every kingdom, large or small, has practiced it, more or less, though perhaps in a manner unlike, and upon different principles. Did Weebaigah sell slaves? No; his prisoners were all killed to a man. What else could he have done with them? Was he to let them remain in this country to cut the throats of his subjects? This would have been wretched policy indeed; which, had it been adopted, the Dahoman name would have long ago been extinguished, instead of becoming as it is at this day, the terror of surrounding nations. What hurts me most is, that some of your people have maliciously misrepresented us in books, which never die; alledging that we sell our wives and children for the sake of procuring a few kegs of brandy. No! We are shamefully belied, and I hope you will contradict, from my mouth, the scandalous stories that have been propagated; and tell posterity that we have been abused. We do, indeed, sell to the white men a part of our prisoners, and we have a right to do so. Are not all prisoners at the disposal of their captors? and are we to blame, if we send delinquents to a far country? I have been told you do the same. If you want no more slaves from us, why cannot you be ingenious and tell the plain truth; saying that the slaves you have already purchased are sufficient for the country for which you bought them; or that the artists who used to make fine things, are all dead, without having taught anybody to make more? But for a parcel of men, with long heads, to sit down in England, and frame laws for us, and pretend to dictate how we are to live, of whom they know nothing, never having been in a black man's country during the whole course of their lives, is to me somewhat extraordinary! No doubt they must have been biased by the report of some one, who had had to do with us; who, for want of a due knowledge of the treatment of slaves, found that they died on his hands, and that his money was lost; and seeing that others thrived by the traffic, he envious of their good luck, has vilified both black and white traders.

You have seen me kill many men at the customs; and you have often observed delinquents at Grigwhee, and others of my provinces tied, and sent up to me. I kill them, but do I ever insist on being paid for them? Some heads I order to be placed at my door, others to be strewed about the market place, that the people may stumble upon them, when they little expect such a sight. This gives a grandeur to my customs, far beyond the display of fine things which I buy; this makes my enemies fear me, and gives me such a name in the Bush.[88] Besides, if I neglect this indispensable duty, would my ancestors suffer me to live? would they not trouble me day and night, and say, that I sent no body to serve them? that I was only solicitous about my own name, and forgetful of my ancestors? White men are not acquainted with these circumstances; but I now tell you that you may hear and know, and inform your countrymen, why customs are made, and will be made, as long as black men continue to possess their country; the few that can be spared from this necessary celebration, we sell to the white men; and happy, no doubt, are such, when they find themselves on the Grigwhee, to be disposed of to the Europeans. "We shall still drink water," say they to themselves; "white men will not kill us; and we may even avoid punishment, by serving our new masters with fidelity."

–-*The New York Weekly Magazine*, II, 430, 1792.

[88] The country expression for the woods was "Bush."

Letters Showing the Rise and Progress of the Early Negro Churches of Georgia and the West Indies [89]

An Account of Several Baptist Churches, Consisting Chiefly of Negro Slaves: Particularly of One at Kingston, in Jamaica; and Another at Savannah in Georgia

A letter from the late Rev. Mr. Joseph Cook of the Euhaw, upper Indian Land, South Carolina, bearing date Sept. 15, 1790, "A poor negro, commonly called, among his own friends, Brother George, has been so highly favoured of God, as to plant the first Baptist Church in Savannah, and another in Jamaica:" This account produced an earnest desire to know the circumstances of both these societies. Hence letters were written to the Rev. Mr. Cook at the Euhaw; to Mr. Jonathan Clarke, at Savannah; to Mr. Wesley's people at Kingston; with a view to obtain information, in which particular regard was had to the *character* of this poor but successful minister of Christ. Satisfactory accounts have been received from each of these quarters, and a letter from brother George himself, containing an answer to more than fifty questions proposed in a letter to him: We presume to give an epitome of the whole to our friends, hoping that they will have the goodness to let a plain unlettered people convey their ideas in their own simple way.

Brother George's words are distinguished by inverted commas, and what is not so marked, is either matter compressed or information received from such persons to whom application has been made of it.

George Liele, called also George *Sharp* because his owner's name was Sharp, in a letter dated Kingston, Dec. 18, 1791, says, "I was born in Virginia, my father's name was Liele, and my mother's name Nancy; I can not ascertain much of them, as I went to several parts of America when young, and at length resided in New Georgia; but was informed both by white and black people, that my father was the only black person who knew the Lord in a spiritual way in that country: I always had a natural fear of God from my youth, and was often checked in conscience with thoughts of death, which barred me from many sins and bad company. I knew no other way at that time to hope for salvation but only in the performance of my good works." *About two years before the late war*, "the Rev. Mr. Matthew Moore,[90] one Sabbath afternoon, as I stood with curiosity to hear him, he unfolded all my dark views, opened my best behaviour and good works to me which I thought I was to be saved by, and I was convinced that I was not in the way to heaven, but in the way to hell. This state I laboured under for the space of five or six months. The more I heard or read, the more I" saw that I "was condemned as a sinner before God; till at length I was brought to perceive that my life hung by a slender thread, and if it was the will of God to cut me off at that time, I was sure I should be found in hell, as sure as God was in Heaven. I saw my condemnation in my own heart, and I found no way wherein I could escape the damnation of hell, only through the merits of my dying Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; which caused me to make intercession with Christ, for the salvation of my poor immortal soul; and I full well recollect, I requested of my Lord and Master to give me a work, I did not care how mean it was, only to try and see how good I would do it." When he became acquainted with the method of salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, he soon found relief, particularly at a time when he was earnestly engaged in prayer; yea, he says, "I felt such love and joy as my tongue was not able to express. After this I declared before the congregation of believers the work which

[89] Most of these letters were written by two colored preachers, George Liele and Andrew Bryan.

[90] Mr. Moore was an ordained Baptist minister, of the county of Burke, in Georgia; he died, it seems, some time since. EDITOR.

God had done for my soul, and the same minister, the Rev. Matthew Moore, baptized me, and I continued in this church about four years, till the vacuation" of Savannah by the British. When Mr. Liele was called by grace himself, he was desirous of promoting the felicity of others. One who was an eyewitness of it, says, *That he began to discover his love to other negroes, on the same plantation with himself, by reading hymns among them, encouraging them to sing, and sometimes by explaining the most striking parts of them*. His own account is this, "Desiring to prove the sense I had of my obligations to God, I endeavoured to instruct" the people of "my own color in the word of God: the white brethren seeing my endeavours, and that the word of the Lord seemed to be blessed, gave me a call at a quarterly meeting to preach before the congregation." Afterwards Mr. Moore took the sense of the church concerning brother Liele's abilities, when it appeared to be their unanimous opinion, "that he was possessed of ministerial gifts," and according to the custom which obtains in some of the American churches, he was licensed as a probationer. He now exercised at different plantations, especially on those Lord's Day evenings when there was no service performed in the church to which he belonged; and preached "about three years at Brunton land, and at Yamacraw," which last place is about half a mile from Savannah. Mr. Henry Sharp, his master, being a deacon of the church which called George Liele to the work of the ministry, some years before his death gave him his freedom, only he continued in the family till his master's exit. Mr. Sharp in the time of the war was an officer, and was at last killed in the king's service, by a ball which shot off his hand. The author of this account handled the bloody glove, which he wore when he received the fatal wound. Some persons were at this time dissatisfied with George's liberation, and threw him into prison, but by producing the proper papers he was released; his particular friend in this business was colonel Kirkland. "At the vacuation of the country I was partly obliged to come to Jamaica, as an indented servant, for money I owed him, he promising to be my friend in this country. I was landed at Kingston, and by the colonel's recommendation to general Campbell, the governor of the Island, I was employed by him two years, and on leaving the island, he gave me a written certificate from under his own hand of my good behaviour. As soon as I had settled Col. Kirkland's demands on me, I had a certificate of my freedom from the vestry and governor, according to the act of this Island, both for myself and family. Governor Campbell left the Island. I began, about September 1784, to preach in Kingston, in a small private house, to a good smart congregation, and I formed the church with four brethren from America besides myself, and the preaching took very good effect with the poorer sort, especially the slaves. The people at first persecuted us both at meetings and baptisms, but, God be praised, they seldom interrupt us now. We have applied to the Honourable House of Assembly, with a petition of our distresses, being poor people, desiring to worship Almighty God according to the tenets of the Bible, and they have granted us liberty, and given us their sanction. Thanks be to God we have liberty to worship him as we please in the Kingdom. You ask about those who," in a judgment of charity, "have been converted to Christ. I think they are about four hundred and fifty. I have baptized four hundred in Jamaica. At Kingston I baptize in the sea, at Spanish Town in the river, and at convenient places in the country. We have nigh *three hundred and fifty members*; a few white people among them, one white brother of the first battalion of royals, from England, baptized by Rev. Thomas Davis. Several members have been dismissed to other churches, and twelve have died. I have sent enclosed" an account of "the conversion and death of some. A few of Mr. Wesley's people, after immersion, join us and continue with us. We have, together with well wishers and followers, in different parts of the country, about fifteen hundred people. We receive none into the church without a few lines from their owners of their good behaviour towards them and religion. The Creoles of the country, after they are converted and baptized, as God enables them, prove very faithful. I have deacons and elders, a few; and teachers of small congregations in the town and country, where convenience suits them to come together; and I am pastor. I preach twice on the Lord's Day, in the forenoon and afternoon, and twice in the week, and have not been absent six Sabbath Days since I formed the church in this country. I receive nothing for my services; I preach, baptize, administer the Lord's Supper, and travel

from one place to another to publish the gospel, and to settle church affairs, all freely. I have one of the chosen men, whom I baptized, a deacon of the church, and a native of this country, who keeps the regulations of church matters; and I promoted a *free school* for the instruction of the children, both free and slaves, and he is the schoolmaster.

"I cannot justly tell what is my age, as I have no account of the time of my birth, but I suppose I am about forty years old. I have a wife and four children. My wife was baptized by me in Savannah, at Brunton land, and I have every satisfaction in life from her. She is much the same age as myself. My eldest son is nineteen years, my next son seventeen, the third fourteen, and the last child, a girl of eleven years; they are all members of the church. My occupation is a farmer, but as the seasons in this part of the country, are uncertain, I also keep a team of horses, and waggons for the carrying goods from one place to another, which I attend to myself, with the assistance of my sons; and by this way of life have gained the good will of the public, who recommend me to business, and to some very principal work for government.

"I have a few books, some good old authors and sermons, and one large bible that was given to me by a gentleman; a good many of our members can read, and are all desirous to learn; they will be very thankful for a few books to read on Sundays and other days.

"The last accounts I had from Savannah were, that the Gospel had taken very great effect both there and in South Carolina. Brother Andrew Bryan, a black minister at Savannah, has two hundred members, in full fellowship and had certificates from their owners of one hundred more, who had given in their experiences and were ready to be baptized. Also I received accounts from Nova Scotia of a black Baptist preacher, Brother David George, who was a member of the church at Savannah; he had the permission of the Governor to preach in three provinces; his members in full communion were then *sixty*, white and black, the Gospel spreading. Brother Amos is at Providence, he writes me that the Gospel has taken good effect, and is spreading greatly; he has about three hundred members. Brother Jessy Gaulsing, another black minister, preaches near Augusta, in South Carolina, at a place where I used to preach; he was a member of the church at Savannah, and has *sixty members*; and a great work is going on there.

"I agree to election, redemption, the fall of Adam, regeneration, and perseverance, knowing the promise is to all who endure, in grace, faith, and good works, to the end, shall be saved.

"There is no Baptist church in this country but ours. We have purchased a piece of land, at the east end of Kingston, containing three acres for the sum of 155 l.[91] currency, and on it have begun a meeting-house fifty-seven feet in length by thirty-seven in breadth. We have raised the brick wall eight feet high from the foundation, and intend to have a gallery. Several gentlemen, members of the house of assembly, and other gentlemen, have subscribed towards the building about 40 l. The chief part of our congregation are slaves, and their owners allow them, in common, but three or four bits per week[92] for allowance to feed themselves; and out of so small a sum we cannot expect any thing that can be of service from them; if we did it would soon bring a scandal upon religion; and the free people in our society are but poor, but they are all willing, both free and slaves, to do what they can. As for my part, I am too much entangled with the affairs of the world to go on," as I would, "with my design, in supporting the cause: this has, I acknowledge, been a great hindrance to the Gospel in one way; but as I have endeavored to set a good example" of industry "before the inhabitants of the land, it has given general satisfaction another way.... And, Rev. Sir, we think the Lord has put it in the power of the Baptist societies in England to help and assist us in completing this building, which we look upon will be the greatest undertaking ever was in this country for the bringing of souls from darkness into the light of the Gospel.... And as the Lord has put it into your heart to enquire after us,

[91] 140 l. currency is 100 l. sterling.

[92] A bit was seven pence half-penny currency, or about five pence halfpenny sterling.

we place all our confidence in you, to make our circumstances known to the several Baptist churches in England; and we look upon you as our father, friend, and brother.

"Within the brick wall we have a shelter, in which we worship, until our building can be accomplished.

"Your … letter was read to the church two or three times, and did create a great deal of love and warmness throughout the whole congregation, who shouted for joy and comfort, to think that the Lord had been so gracious as to satisfy us in this country with the very same religion with … our beloved brethren in the old country, according to the scriptures; and that such a worthy … of London, should write in so loving a manner to such poor worms as we are. And I beg leave to say, That the whole congregation sang out that they would, through the assistance of God, remember you in their prayers. They altogether give their Christian love to you, and all the worthy professors of Jesus Christ in your church at London, and beg the prayers of your congregation, and the prayers of the churches in general, wherever it pleases you to make known our circumstances. I remain with the utmost love … Rev. Sir, your unworthy fellow-labourer, servant, and brother in Christ.

(Signed) George Liele

P.S. We have chosen twelve trustees, all of whom are members of our church, whose names are specified in the title; the title proved and recorded in the Secretary's office of this island.

I would have answered your letter much sooner, but am encumbered with business: the whole island under arms; several of our members and a deacon were obliged to be on duty; and I being trumpeter to the troop of horse in Kingston, am frequently called upon. And also by order of government I was employed in carrying all the cannon that could be found lying about this part of the country. This occasioned my long delay, which I beg you will excuse."

—*Baptist Annual Register*, 1790-3, pages 332-337.

To the Rev. Mr. John Rippon

Kingston in Jamaica, Nov. 26, 1791.

Reverend Sir,

The perusal of your letter of the 15th July last, gave me much pleasure–to find that you had interested yourself to serve the glorious cause Mr. Liele is engaged in. He has been for a considerable time past very zealous in the ministry; but his congregation being chiefly slaves, they had it not in their power to support him, therefore he has been obliged to do it from his own industry; this has taken a considerable part of his time and much of his attention from his labours in the ministry; however, I am led to believe that it has been of essential service to the cause of GOD, for his industry has set a good example to his flock, and has put it out of the power of enemies to religion to say, that he has been eating the bread of idleness, or lived upon the poor slaves. The idea that too much prevails here amongst the masters of slaves is, that if their minds are considerably enlightened by religion or otherwise, that it would be attended with the most dangerous consequences; and this has been the only cause why the Methodist ministers and Mr. Liele have not made a greater progress in the ministry amongst the slaves. Alas! how much is it to be lamented, that a full quarter of a million of poor souls should so long remain in a state of nature; and that masters should be so blind to their own interest as not to know the difference between obedience inforced by the lash of the whip and that which flows from religious principles. Although I much admire the *general doctrine* preached in the Methodist church, yet I by no means approve of their discipline set up by Mr. Wesley, that reverend man of God. I very early saw into the impropriety of admitting slaves into their societies *without permission of their owners*, and told them the consequences that would attend it; but they rejected my advice; and it has not only prevented the increase of their church, but has raised them many enemies. Mr. Liele has very wisely acted a different part. He has, I believe, admitted no slaves into society but those who had obtained permission from their owners, by which he has made many

friends; and I think the Almighty is now opening a way for another church in the capital, where the Methodists could not gain any ground: a short time will determine it, of which I shall advise you.–I really have not time to enter so fully on this subject as I wish, being very much engaged in my own temporal affairs, and at present having no clerk.–The love I bear to the cause of God, and the desire I have of being any ways instrumental to the establishing of it in this land of darkness, has led me to write this: but before I conclude, I have some very interesting particulars to lay before you:–Mr. Liele has by the aid of the congregation and the assistance of some few people, raised the walls of a church ready to receive the roof, but has not the means to lay it on and finish it; nor do I see any prospect of its going further, without he receives the aid of some religious institution from home. One hundred and fifty pounds, I think, would complete it; and if this sum could be raised, it would greatly serve the cause of GOD, and might be the means of bringing many hundred souls, who are now in a state of darkness, to the knowledge of our great Redeemer. If this could be raised the sooner the better. Our family contributed towards the purchase of the Methodist chapel; nor shall our mite be wanting to forward this work if it meets with any encouragement from home.–I am a stranger to you, but you may know my character from Daniel Shea, Esq.; and John Parker, Esq.; merchants in your city; or from Mr. Samuel Yockney, tea-dealer, in Bedford Row.

Perhaps you may expect me to say something of Mr. Liele's character. He is a very industrious man–decent and humble in his manners, and, I think, a good man. This is my opinion of him. I love all Christians of every denomination, and remain, with respect and sincere regard,

Reverend Sir,

Your friend and servant,

(Signed) Stephen Cooke.

–-*Baptist Annual Register*, 1790-1793, pages 338 and 339.

Sketches of the Black Baptist Church at Savannah, in Georgia; and of Their Minister Andrew Bryan, Extracted from Several Letters

Savannah, July 19, 1790, &c.

Dear Brother,

"With pleasure I receive your favor of the 20th ult. more particularly, as I trust the correspondence may be of use to Brother Andrew's church; concerning the origin of which, I have taken from him the following account.

"Our Brother *Andrew* was one of the black hearers of *George Liele,"* of whom an account was given before; and was hopefully converted by his preaching from chapter III. of St. John's Gospel, and a clause of verse 7, *Ye must be born again*; prior to the departure of *George Liele* for Jamaica, he came up from Tybee River, where departing vessels frequently lay ready for sea, and baptized our Brother *Andrew*, with a wench of the name *Hagar*, both belonging to *Jonathan Bryan*, Esq.; these were the last performances of our Brother *George Liele* in this quarter. About eight or nine months after his departure, *Andrew* began to exhort his black hearers, with a few whites. Edward Davis, Esq.; indulged him and his hearers to erect a rough building on his land at *Yamacraw*, in the suburbs of Savannah for a place of worship, of which they have been very artfully dispossessed. In this their beginning of worship they had frequent interruptions from the whites; as it was at a time that a number of blacks had absconded, and some had been taken away by the British. This was a plausible excuse for their wickedness in their interruptions. The whites grew more and more inveterate; taking numbers of them before magistrates–they were imprisoned and whipped. *Sampson*, a brother of *Andrew,* belonging to the same master, was converted about a year after him, and continued with him in all their persecutions, and does until now. These, with many others, were twice imprisoned, and about *fifty* were severely whipped, particularly *Andrew, who was cut and bled abundantly*, while he was under their lashes; Brother *Hambleton* says, he held up his hand, and told his persecutors that

he rejoiced not only to be whipped, but *would freely suffer death for the cause of Jesus Christ*. "The chief justice *Henry Osborne,* Esq.; *James Habersham*, Esq.;[93] and *David Montague*, Esq.; were their examinants, and released them. Their kind *master* also interceded for them; and was much affected and grieved at their punishment." Brother *Hambleton* was also an advocate for them; and further says, that at one of their examinations *George Walton*, Esq.; spoke freely in favour of the sufferers, saying, that such treatment would be condemned even among barbarians. "The chief justice *Osborne* then gave them liberty to continue their worship between sunrising and sun set; and their indulgent *master* told the magistrate, that he would give them the liberty of his own *house or his barn*, at a place called Brampton, about three miles from town, and that they should not be interrupted in their worship. In consequence hereof, they made use of their masters *barn*, where they had a number of hearers, with little or no interruption, for about two years. During the time of worship at Brampton Brother Thomas Burton, an elderly baptist preacher, paid them a visit, examined and baptized about *eighteen* blacks: at another period while there they received a visit from our brother *Abraham Marshall*[94] who examined and baptized about forty and gave them two certificates from under his hand;" copies of which follow:

This is to *certify*, that upon examination into the experiences and characters of a number of *Ethiopians*, and adjacent to Savannah, it appears that God has brought them out of darkness into the light of the Gospel, and given them fellowship one with the other; believing it is the will of Christ, we have constituted them a church of Jesus Christ, to keep up his worship and ordinances.

(Signed) A. Marshall, V.D.M.

Jan. 19, 1788.

This is to certify, that the Ethiopian church of Jesus Christ at Savannah, have called their beloved *Andrew* to the work of the ministry. We have examined into his qualifications, and believing it to be the will of the great Head of the church, we have appointed him to preach the Gospel, and to administer the ordinances, as God in his providence may call.

(Signed) A. Marshall, V.D.M.

Jan. 20, 1788.

"After the death of their master his son, Dr. *William Bryan,* generously continued them the use of the *barn* for worship, until the estate was divided among the family. Our Brother *Andrew,* by consent of parties, purchased his freedom, bought a lot at Yamacraw, and built a residence near the dwelling house which their master had given *Sampson* liberty to build on his lot; and which have ever been made use of for worship. But by the division of their master's estate, the lot whereon *Sampson* had built a house to live in, and which until this time continues to be used for worship, by *Andrew*, fell into the hands of an attorney, who married a daughter of the deceased Mr. Bryan, and receives no less than 12 l. a year for it. *Sampson* serves as a clerk, but frequently exhorts in the absence of his brother who has his appointments in different places to worship.

"Brother *Andrew's* account of his number in full communion is two hundred and twenty-five, and about three hundred and fifty have been received as converted followers, many of whom have not permission" from their owners "to be baptized.–The whole number is judged to be about five hundred and seventy-five, from the towns being taken to this present July. I have consulted brother *Hambleton*, who thinks they have need of a few Bibles, the Baptist Confession of Faith, and Catechism; Wilson on Baptism, some of Bunyan's works, or any other that your wisdom may think useful to an illerate people. They all join in prayers for you and yours and beg your intercession at the throne of grace for them, as well as for the small number of whites that dwell here; and among them I hope you will not forget your poor unworthy brother, and believe me, with sincere affections and brotherly love, your in the bonds of the Gospel,

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[93] The Rev. Mr. George Whitefield's intimate friend.

[94] The Editor of the Baptist Annual Register said that he had not the honor of a correspondence with this respectable minister but that his name stood thus in the Georgia Association of 1788. At "Kioka, Abraham Marshall, 22 baptized, 230" members in all.

(Signed) Jonathan Clarke[95]

Concerning the church at Savannah, the late Rev. Mr. Joseph Cook, of the Euhaw, upper Indian land, thus writes: "From the enclosed you will see how it became a church, and what they have suffered, which is extremely affecting, but they now begin to rise from obscurity and to appear great. I have some acquaintance with their pastor, and have heard him preach; his *gifts are small*, but he is *clear in the grand doctrines* of the Gospel.–I believe him to be *truly pious* and he has been the instrument of doing more good among the poor slaves than all the learned doctors in America."

The friends of our adorable Redeemer will, no doubt, rejoice to find that this large body of Christians negroes, under the patronage of some of the most respectable persons in their city, "have opened a subscription for the erecting of a place of worship in the city of Savannah, for the society of black people of the Baptist denomination–the property to be vested in the hands of seven or more persons in trust for the church and congregation."

Their case[96] is sent to England, recommended by

J. Johnson,[97] Minister of the Union Church.
John Hamilton.
Ebenezer Hills.
Joseph Watts.
D. Moses Vallotton.
John Millene.
Abraham Leggett.

Since the preceding account has been in the press, other letters have been received, of which the following is an extract.

Kingston, Jamaica, May 18, 1792.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

In answer to yours I wrote December 18 last, and as I have not received a line from you since, I send this, not knowing but the other was miscarried. Mr. Green has called upon me, and very kindly offered his service to deliver a letter from me into your hands; he also advised me to send you a copy of our church covenant, which I have done: being a collection of some of the principal texts of scripture which we observe, both in America and this country, for the direction of our practice. It is read once a month here on sacrament meetings, that our members may examine if they live according to all those laws which they profess, covenanted and agreed to; by this means our church is kept in scriptural subjection. As I observe in my last the chiefest part of our society are poor illiterate slaves, some living on sugar estates, some on mountains, pens, and other settlements, that have no learning, no not to know so much as a letter in the book; but the reading this covenant once a month, when all are met together from the different parts of the island, keeps them in mind of the commandments of God. And by shewing the same to the gentlemen of the legislature, and the justices, and magistrates, when I applied for a sanction, it gave them general satisfaction; and wherever a negro servant is to be admitted, their owners, after the perusal of it, are better satisfied. We are this day raising the roof on the walls of our meeting house; the height of the walls from the foundation is seventeen feet. I have a right to praise God, and glorify him for the manifold blessings I have received, and do still receive from him. I have full liberty from *Spanish Town*, the capital of this country, to preach the Gospel throughout the Island: the Lord is blessing the work everywhere, and believers are added daily to the

[95] The character of Mr. Jonathan Clarke, according to the writer, might be learned at May and Hill's, merchants, Church-row, Fenchurch-street.

[96] It was committed to the care of the Editor of the Baptist Annual Register.

[97] The Rev. Mr. Johnson was well known in London; he sailed for America in the fall of 1790; and laboured in the *Orphan House* at Savannah, built by Mr. Whitefield, and assigned in trust to the countess of Huntingdon. On May 30, 1775, the orphan house building caught fire and was entirely consumed, except the two wings which still remained. Editor of the Baptist Annual Register.

church. My tongue is not able to express the goodness of the Lord. As our meeting house is out of town "(about a mile and a half)," I have a steeple on it, to have a bell to give notice to our people and more particularly to the owners of Slaves that are in our society, that they may know the hour on which we meet, and be satisfied that our servants return in due time; for which reason I shall be greatly obliged to you to send me out, as soon as possible, a bell that can be heard about two *miles* distance, with the price. I have one at present, but it is rather small. The slaves may then be permitted to come and return in due time, for at present we meet very irregular in respect to hours. I remain, with the utmost regards, love and esteem,

Rev. Sir, yours, &c.

George Liele.

Copy of a Recommendatory Letter of Hannah Williams, a Negro Woman, in London. It is all in print, except the part of it which now appears in Italics.

Kingston, Jamaica, we that are of the Baptist Religion, being separated from all churches, excepting they are of the same faith and order after Jesus Christ, according to the scriptures, do certify, that our beloved *Sister Hannah Williams, during the time she was a member of the Church at Savannah, until the evacuation, did walk as a* faithful, well-behaved Christian, and to recommend her to join any church of the same faith and order. Given under my hand this 21st day of *December*, in the year of our Lord, 1791.

George Liele.

—*Baptist Annual Register*, 1790-1793, pages 339-344.

Account of the Negro Church at Savannah, and of Two Negro Ministers

Savannah, Dec. 22, 1792.

Dear Brother Rippon,

By return of Capt. Parrot in the ship Hannah, opportunity offers to acknowledge receipt of your kind favour with two boxes of books agreeable to invoice, which were very thankfully acceptable to our Brother Andrew, as well as to myself, and were delivered agreeable to your request. Within a month past a few of our Christian friends providentially collected at my house, when it was thought necessary we should commence a subscription for the building of a Baptist Meeting-house in this city, as the corporation has given us a lot for that purpose. Mr. Ebenezer Hills and myself were appointed trustees, and we have subscribed £35. 6s. if we can get as much more, we intend to begin the work, please God to smile on our weak endeavours, and the place will be made sufficiently large to accommodate the black people: they have been frowned upon of late by some despisers of religion, who have endeavoured to suppress their meeting together on Thursday evening in the week which was their custom, but is now set aside; so that they only continue worship from the sun rise to sun set on Sabbath days.

I copied brother Andrew's last return of members for brother Silas Mercer, who was here since the association of Coosawhatchic, which is as follows: Return made to the Georgia Association,

Supposed to be two or three years past	250	
Baptized since (say 80 in this year 1792)	159	409
Excommunicated	8	
Dead	12	20
Total remaining Nov. 26, 1792		389

Brother Andrew lately brought me a letter from brother George Liele, of Jamaica, expressive of the great increase of his church in that island. Andrew is free only since the death of his old master, and purchased his freedom of one of their heirs at the rate of 50 l. He was born at Goose Creek, about 16 miles from Charleston, South Carolina; his mother was a slave, and died in the service of his old master: his father, a slave, yet living, but rendered infirm by age for ten years past. Andrew was married nine years since, which was about the time he and his wife were brought to the knowledge of their wretched state by nature: His wife is named Hannah and remains a slave to the heirs of his older master; they have no children; He was ordained by our Brother Marshall: he has no assistant preacher but his Brother Sampson, who continues a faithful slave, and occasionally exhorts. Some white ministers from the country preach in his church. Jesse Peter, another Negro (whose present master is Thomas Galphin), is now here, and has three or four places in the country where he attends preaching alternately; a number of white people admire him. While he is here, I propose to be informed more particularly of his situation, etc. Although a slave his master indulges him in his profession and gives him uncommon liberty. To return to Andrew, he has four deacons appointed, but not regularly introduced. He supports himself by his own labour. There are no white people that particularly belong to his church, but we have reason to hope that he has been instrumental in the conviction and converting of some whites. Amos, the other Negro minister, mentioned by Brother George, resides at one of the Bahama Islands, which is called New Providence, and is about four days sail towards the southeast. There is one white church at Ogeechee, and another at Effingham; each of these are about twenty miles from this, which are the nearest and only ones. Perhaps fifty of Andrew's church can read, but only three can write.

For the present, accept of the sincere love and kind respects of the Black Society, with Andrew's particular thanks. My ears have heard their petitions to the throne of grace for you particularly, which no doubt they will continue; and let me entreat your prayers for them, and for the connected societies of this State.

Your brother in the Lord Jesus,

Jonathan Clarke.

–-*Baptist Annual Register*, 1790-1793, pages 540-541.

Kingston, Jamaica, Jan. 12, 1793.

Our Meeting-house is now covered in and the lower floor was completed the 24th of last month. We supposed we are indebted for lumber, lime, bricks, &c. between 4 and 500 l. I am not able to express the thanks I owe for your kind attention to me, and the cause of God. The Schoolmaster, together with the members of our church, return their sincere thanks for the books you have been pleased to send them, being so well adapted to the society, they have given great satisfaction.

I hope shortly to send you a full account of the number of people in our societies in different parts of this island. I have baptized near 500.

I have purchased a piece of land in Spanish Town, the capital of this Island, for a burying ground, with a house upon it, which serves for a Meeting-house. James Jones, Esq., one of the

magistrates of this town, and Secretary of the Island, told me, that the Hon. William Mitchell, Esq., the Gustos, had empowered him to grant me license to preach the Gospel, and they have given me liberty to make mention of their names in any congregation where we are interrupted. Mr. Jones has given permission for all his negroes to be taught the word of God. The gospel is taking great effect in this town. My brethren and sisters in general, most affectionately give their Christian love to you, and all the dear lovers of Jesus Christ in your church at London, and beg that they, and all the other churches, will remember the poor Ethiopian Baptists of Jamaica in their prayers, I remain, dear Sir and brother, your unworthy fellow labourer in Christ.

George Liele.

—*Baptist Annual Register*, 1790-1793, page 542.

Kingston, Jamaica, April 12, 1793.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I am one of the poor, unworthy, helpless creatures born in this island, whom our glorious master Jesus Christ was graciously pleased to call from a state of darkness to the marvelous light of the gospel and since our Lord has bestowed his mercy on my soul, our beloved minister, by consent of the church, appointed me deacon, schoolmaster, and his principal helper.

We have great reason in this island to praise and glorify the Lord for his goodness and loving kindness, in sending his blessed Gospel amongst us by our well-beloved minister, Brother Liele. We were living in slavery to sin and satan, and the Lord hath redeemed our souls to a state of happiness to praise his glorious and ever blessed name; and we hope to enjoy everlasting peace by the promise of our Lord and master Jesus Christ. The blessed Gospel is spreading wonderfully in this island; believers are daily coming into the church and we hope, in a little time, to see Jamaica become a Christian country.

I remain respectfully, Rev. and Dear Sir,

Your poor Brother in Christ,

Thomas Nichols Swigle.

Mr. George Gibbs Bailey, of Bristol, now at Kingston, in Jamaica, writes thus, under date May 9, 1793. "I have inquired of all those who I thought could give me an account of Mr. Liele's conduct without prejudice, and I can say with pleasure, what Pilate said, I can *find no fault in this man*. The Baptist church abundantly thrives among the Negroes, more than any denomination in Jamaica; but I am very sorry to say the Methodist church is declining greatly."

Another sensible Gentleman, of Kingston, in Jamaica, much attached to Mr. Wesley's interest, also says, "I will be very candid with you and tell you that I think the Baptist church is the church that will spread the Gospel among the poor Negroes and I hope and trust, as there is reason to believe that your church will be preferred before all others by the Negroes, that those of you who are in affluence will contribute and send out a minister and support him," &c.

—*Baptist Annual Register*, 1790-1793, pages 542-543.

From the Rev. Abraham Marshall, Who Formed the Negro Church at Savannah, to Mr. Rippon

Kioka, Georgia, May 1, 1793.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Yours came safe to hand, and gave singular satisfaction. Neither spreading plains, nor rolling oceans, can prevent us from weeping with those that weep, and rejoicing with those that rejoice. I have had it in contemplation for some time to open a correspondence with our dear friend on the other side of the flood, but my constant travelling has hitherto prevented; I am highly pleased that you have opened the way....

As to the Black Church in Savannah, of which you had a particular account by Mr. Clarke, I baptized forty-five of them in one day, assisted in the constitution of the church, and ordination of the minister. They have given repeated proofs, by their sufferings, of their zeal for the cause of God and religion; and, I believe, are found in the faith, and strict in discipline.

I am also intimately acquainted with Jessy Golfin; he lives thirty miles below me, in South Carolina, and twelve miles below Augusta; he is a negro servant to Mr. Golfin, who, to his praise be it spoken, treats him with respect. His countenance is grave, his voice charming, his delivery good, nor is he a novice in the mysteries of the kingdom.

From less than the least,

Abraham Marshall.

—*Baptist Annual Register*, 1790-1793, page 545.

A Letter from the Negro Baptist Church in Savannah, Addressed to the Reverend Doctor Rippon

Savannah-Georgia, U.S.A., Dec. 23, 1800.

My Dear and Reverend Brother,

After a long silence occasioned by various hindrances, I sit down to answer your inestimable favour by the late dear Mr. White, who I hope is rejoicing, far above the troubles and trials of this frail sinful state. All the books mentioned in your truly condescending and affectionate letter, came safe, and were distributed according to your humane directions. You can scarcely conceive, much less than I describe, the gratitude excited by so seasonably and precious a supply of the means of knowledge and grace, accompanied with benevolent proposals of further assistance. Deign, dear sir, to accept our united and sincere thanks for your great kindness to us, who have been so little accustomed to such attentions. Be assured that our prayers have ascended, and I trust will continue to ascend to God, for your health and happiness, and that you may be rendered a lasting ornament to our holy Religion, and a successful Minister of the Gospel.

With much pleasure, I inform you, dear sir, that I enjoy good health, and am strong in body, tho' sixty-three years old, and am blessed with a pious wife, whose freedom I have obtained, and an only daughter and child who is married to a free man, tho' she, and consequently, under our laws, her seven children, five sons and two daughters, are slaves. By a kind Providence I am well provided for, as to worldly comforts, (tho' I have had very little given me as a minister) having a house and lot in this city, besides the land on which several buildings stand, for which I receive a small rent, and a fifty-six acre tract of land, with all necessary buildings, four miles in the country, and eight slaves; for whose education and happiness, I am enabled thro' mercy to provide.

But what will be infinitely more interesting to my friend, and is so much more prized by myself, we enjoy the rights of conscience to a valuable extent, worshiping in our families and preaching three times every Lord's-day, baptizing frequently from ten to thirty at a time in the Savannah, and administering the sacred supper, not only without molestation, but in the presence, and with the approbation and encouragement of many of the white people. We are now about seven hundred in number, and the work of the Lord goes on prosperously.

An event which has had a happy influence on our affairs was the coming of Mr. Holcombe, late pastor of Euhaw Church, to this place at the call of the heads of the city, of all denominations, who have remained for the thirteen months he has been here among his constant hearers and his liberal supporters. His salary is 2000 a year. He has just had a baptistery, with convenient appendages, built in his place of worship, and has commenced baptizing.

Another dispensation of Providence has much strengthened our hands, and increased our means of information; Henry Francis, lately a slave to the widow of the late Colonel Leroy Hammond, of Augusta, has been purchased by a few humane gentlemen of this place, and liberated to exercise the handsome ministerial gifts he possesses amongst us, and teach our youth to read and write. He is a

strong man about forty-nine years of age, whose mother was white and whose father was an Indian. His wife and only son are slaves.

Brother Francis has been in the ministry fifteen years, and will soon receive ordination, and will probably become the pastor of a branch of my large church, which is getting too unwieldy for one body. Should this event take place, and his charge receive constitution, it will take the rank and title of the 3rd Baptist Church in Savannah.

With the most sincere and ardent prayers to God for your temporal and eternal welfare, and with the most unfeigned gratitude, I remain, reverend and dear sir, your obliged servant in the gospel.

(Signed) Andrew Bryan.

P.S. I should be glad that my African friends could hear the above account of my affairs.

—*The Baptist Annual Register*, 1798-1801, page 366.

State of the Negroes in Jamaica

Kingston, Jamaica, 1st May, 1802.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Since our blessed Lord has been pleased to permit me to have the rule of a church of believers, I have baptized one hundred and eleven: and I have a sanction from the Rev. Dr. Thomas Rees, rector of this town and parish, who is one of the ministers appointed by his Majesty to hold an ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the clergy in this island, confirmed by a law passed by the Legislative Body of this island, made and provided for that purpose.

Our church consists of people of colour and black people; some of free condition, but the greater part of them are slaves and natives from the different countries in Africa. Our number both in town and country is about five hundred brethren, and our rule is to baptize once in three months; to receive the Lord's supper the first Lord's-day in every month, after evening services is over; and we have meetings on Tuesday and Thursday evenings throughout the year. The whole body of our church is divided into several classes, which meet every Monday evening, to be examined by their Class-leaders, respecting their daily walk and conversation; and I am truly happy to acquaint you, that since the gospel has been preached in Kingston, there never was so great a prospect for the spread of the fame as there is now. Numbers and numbers of young people are flocking daily to join both our society and the Methodists, who have about four hundred. Religion so spreads in Kingston, that those who will not leave the Church of England to join the Dissenters, have formed themselves into evening societies: it is delightful to hear the people at the different places singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; and to see a great number of them who lived in the sinful state of fornication (which is the common way of living in Jamaica), now married, having put away that deadly sin.

Our place of worship is so very much crowded, that numbers are obliged to stand out of doors: we are going to build a larger chapel as soon as possible. Our people being poor, and so many of them slaves, we are not able to go on so quick as we could without we should meet with such friends as love our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, to enable us in going on with so glorious an undertaking.

I preach, baptize, marry, attend funerals, and go through every work of the ministry without fee or reward; and I can boldly say, for these sixteen years since I began to teach and instruct the poor Ethiopians in this island, the word of God (though many and many times travelling night and day over rivers and mountains to inculcate the ever-blessed gospel), that I never was complimented with so much as a pair of shoes to my feet, or a hat to my head, or money or apparel, or any thing else as a recompense for my labour and my trouble, from any of my brethren or any other person:—my intention is to follow the example set before me by the holy apostle Saint Paul, to labour with my hands for the things I stand in need of to support myself and family, and to let the church of Christ be free from incumbrances.

We have five trustees to our chapel and burrying-ground, eight deacons, and six exhorters.

I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. V. of his Majesty's ship Cumberland, in this town, who has been at my house, and at our chapel, and has seen all my church-books and the manner in which I have conducted our society. He has lately sailed for England with Admiral Montagu; and when he sees you, he will be able to tell you of our proceedings better than I can write.

All my beloved brethren beg their Christian love to you and all your dear brethren in the best bonds; and they also beg yourself and them will be pleased to remember the poor Ethiopian Baptists in their prayers, and be pleased also to accept the same from, Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your poor unworthy Brother, in the Lord Jesus Christ,

(Signed) T. N. S.

P.S. Brothers Baker, Gilbert, and others of the Africans, are going on wonderfully in the Lord's service, in the interior part of the country.

July 1, 1802.

—*Baptist Annual Register*, 1801-1802, pages 974-975.

Letter to Dr. Rippon

Kingston, Jamaica, Oct. 9, 1802.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I take the liberty to give you a further account of the spread of the Gospel among us.

On Saturday the 28th August last we laid our foundation stone for the building of the New Chapel; fifty-five feet in length, and twenty-nine and half feet in breath. The brethren assembled together at my house, and walked in procession to our place of worship, where a short discourse was delivered upon the subject, taken from Mat. XVI. 18. *Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against.* As soon as divine service was over, we laid a stone in a pillar provided for that purpose, and on the stone was laid a small marble plate, and these words engraven thereon, St. John's Chapel was founded 28th August 1802, before a large and respectable congregation. The bricklayers have just raised the foundation above the surface of the earth. And as our Church consists chiefly of Slaves, and poor free people, we are not able to go on so fast as we could wish, for which reason we beg leave to call upon our Baptist friends in England, for their help and support of the Ethiopian Baptists, setting forward the glorious cause of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, now in hand.

My last return of the Members in our Society on the 10th August last stood thus,

		595
Expelled	2	
Dismissed	26	
Dead	19	47

Members in society 10th August 1802		548

Since which, we have had sixty-two more added to the Church, almost all young people, and natives of different countries in Africa, which make 610 in Society.

About two months ago, I paid my first visit to a part of our Church held at Clinton Mount, Coffee Plantation, in the parish of Saint Andrew, about 16 miles distance from Kingston, in the High Mountains, where we have a Chapel and 254 brethren. And when I was at breakfast with the Overseer, he said to me, I have no need of a book-keeper (meaning an assistant), I make no use of a whip, for when I am at home my work goes on regular, and when I visit the field I have no fault

to find, for every thing is conducted as it ought to be. I observed myself that the brethren were very industrious, they have a plenty of provisions in their ground, and a plenty of live stock, and they, one and all together, live in unity, brotherly love, and in the bonds of peace.

Last Lords Day, the 3rd October, was our quarterly baptism, when we walked from our place of Worship at noon, to the water, the distance of about a half mile, where I baptised eighteen professing believers, before a numerous and large congregation of spectators, which make in all 254 baptised by me since our commencement.

I am truly happy in acquainting you, that a greater spread of the gospel is taking place at the west end of the island.–A fortnight ago, the Rev. Brother Moses Baker visited me, he is a man of colour, a native of America, one of our baptist brothers and a member of our church, he is employed by a Mr. Winn, (a gentleman down in the country who possesses large and extensive properties in this island), to instruct his negroes in the principles of the Christian religion; and Mr. Vaughan has employed him for that purpose, and both these gentlemen allow him a compensation. Mr. Winn finds him in house room, lands, &c., &c., and by his instructing those slaves at Mr. Vaughan's properties, several miles from Mr. Winn's estate, a number of slaves belonging to different properties (no less than 20 sugar estates in number) are become converted souls.–Mr. Baker's errand to me was, that he wanted a person to assist him, he being sent for by a Mr. Hilton, a gentleman down in the parish of Westmoreland (50 miles distance from Mr. Baker's dwelling place), to instruct his and another gentlemen's slaves, on two large sugar estates, into the word of God, producing to me at the same time the letters and invitations he received. I gave him brother George Vineyard, one our exhorters, and old experienced professor (who has been called by grace upwards of eighteen years) to assist him; he also is a native of America, and this gentleman Mr. Hilton, has provided a House, and maintainance, a salary, and land for him to cultivate for his benefit upon his own estate, and brother Baker declared to me, that he has in the church there, fourteen hundred justified believers, and about three thousand followers, many under conviction for sin. The distance brother Baker is at from me is 136 miles, he has undergone a great deal of persecution and severe trials for the preaching of the gospel, but our Lord has delivered him safe out of all–Myself and brethren were at Mr. Liele's Chapel a few weeks ago at the funeral of one of his elders, he is well, and we were friendly together. All our brethren unite with me in giving their most Christian love to you, and all the dear beloved brethren in your church in the best bonds, and beg, both yourself and them, will be pleased to remember the Ethiopian Baptists in their prayers, and I remain dear Sir, and brother,

Your poor unworthy brother, in the Lord Jesus Christ,

(Signed) Thomas Nicholas Swigle.

P.S. These sugar estates, in the parish where Brother Baker resides, are very large and extensive; and they have three to four hundred slaves on each property.

–-*Baptist Annual Register*, 1800-1802, pages 1144-1146.

Book Reviews

The Haitian Revolution, 1791 to 1804. By T. G. Steward. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1915. 292 pages. $1.25.

In the days when the internal dissensions of Haiti are again thrusting her into the limelight such a book as this of Mr. Steward assumes a peculiar importance. It combines the unusual advantage of being both very readable and at the same time historically dependable. At the outset the author gives a brief sketch of the early settlement of Haiti, followed by a short account of her development along commercial and racial lines up to the Revolution of 1791. The story of this upheaval, of course, forms the basis of the book and is indissolubly connected with the story of Toussaint L'Overture. To most Americans this hero is known only as the subject of Wendell Phillips's stirring eulogy. As delineated by Mr. Steward, he becomes a more human creature, who performs exploits, that are nothing short of marvelous. Other men who have seemed to many of us merely names–Rigaud, Le Clerc, Desalines, and the like–are also fully discussed.

Although most of the book is naturally concerned with the revolutionary period, the author brings his account up to date by giving a very brief resumé of the history of Haiti from 1804 to the present time. This history is marked by the frequent occurrence of assassinations and revolutions, but the reader will not allow himself to be affected by disgust or prejudice at these facts particularly when he is reminded, as Mr. Steward says, "that the political history of Haiti does not differ greatly from that of the majority of South American Republics, nor does it differ widely even from that of France."

The book lacks a topical index, somewhat to its own disadvantage, but it contains a map of Haiti, a rather confusing appendix, a list of the Presidents of Haiti from 1804 to 1906 and a list of the names and works of the more noted Haitian authors. The author does not give a complete bibliography. He simply mentions in the beginning the names of a few authorities consulted.

J. R. Fauset.

The Negro in American History. By John W. Cromwell. The American Negro Academy, Washington, D.C., 1914. 284 pages. $1.25 net.

In John W. Cromwell's book, "The Negro in American History," we have what is a very important work. The book is mainly biographical and topical. Some of the topics discussed are: "The Slave Code"; "Slave Insurrections"; "The Abolition of the Slave Trade"; "The Early Convention Movement"; "The Failure of Reconstruction"; "The Negro as a Soldier"; and "The Negro Church." These topics are independent of the chapters which are more particularly chronological in treatment.

In the appendices we have several topics succinctly treated. Among these are: "The Underground Railroad," "The Freedmen's Bureau," and, most important and wholly new, a list of soldiers of color who have received Congressional Medals of Honor, and the reasons for the bestowal.

The biographical sketches cover some twenty persons. Much of the information in these sketches is not new, as would be expected regarding such well-known persons as Frederick Douglass, John M. Langston, and Paul Laurence Dunbar. On the other hand, Mr. Cromwell has given us very valuable sketches of other important persons of whom much less is generally known. Among these are Sojourner Truth, Edward Wilmot Blyden, and Henry O. Tanner.

The book does not pretend to be the last word concerning the various topics and persons discussed. Indeed, some of the topics have had fuller treatment by the author in pamphlets and lectures. It is to be regretted that the author did not feel justified in giving a more extensive treatment, as the great store of his information would easily have permitted him to do.

The book is exceptionally well illustrated, but it lacks information regarding some of the illustrations. Not only are the readers of a book entitled to know the source of the illustrations but in

the case of copies of paintings, and other works of art, the original artist is as much entitled to credit as an author whose work is quoted or appropriated to one's use.

Negro Culture In West Africa. By George W. Ellis, K.C., F.R.G.S. The Neale Publishing Co., New York, 1914. 290 pages. $2.00 net.

This study by Mr. Ellis of the culture of West Africa as represented by the Vai tribe, is valuable both as a document and as a scientific treatment of an important phase of the color problem. As a document it is an additional and a convincing piece of evidence of the ability of the Negro to treat scientifically so intricate a problem as the rise, development, and meaning of the social institutions of a people. Easy, yet forceful in style; well documented with footnotes and cross references; amply illustrated with twenty-seven real representations of tools, weapons, musical instruments and other pieces of handwork; containing, incidentally, a good bibliography of the subject; and finally, with its conclusions condensed in the last four pages, it is a book excellent in plan and in execution. The map, however, which has been selected for the book is overcrowded and, therefore, practically useless.

As a scientific study, its value is suggested by the topics emphasized, viz., "Climate," "Institutions," "Foreign Influence," "Proverbs," "Folklore," and "Writing System." Referring to the climate the author says: "In West Africa the body loses its strength, the memory its retentiveness, and the will its energy. These are the effects observed upon persons remaining in West Africa only for a short time, and they form a part of the experience of almost every person who has lived on the West Coast. White persons,–with beautiful skin, clear and soft, and with rosy cheeks,–after they have been in West Africa for a while become dark and tawny like the inhabitants of Southern Spain and Italy. If we can detect these effects of the West African climate in only a short time upon persons who come to the West Coast, what must have been the effect of such a climate upon the Negroes who for centuries have been exposed to its hardships?"

The moral life of the Vais appears to be the product of their social institutions and their severe environment. These institutions grow out of the necessities of government for the tribe under circumstances which suggest and enforce their superstitions and beliefs. This is not so with respect to education. It seems that the influence of the "Greegree Bush" (a school system) is now considerably weakened by the Liberian institutions on the one hand, the Mohammedan faith and customs on the other. So that now this institution falls short of achieving its aims, and putting its principles into practice.

The study as a whole gives evidence of the author's eight years of travel and research, and can be read with profit by all friends of mankind.

Walter Dyson.

The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861. By C. G. Woodson, Ph.D. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1915. 460 pages. $2.00 net.

The very title of Dr. Woodson's book causes one who is interested in the race history to ask questions and think. There are comparatively few people who know anything about the efforts made to educate the Negro prior to 1861. Consequently, from the first page of the book to the last, the reader is continually acquiring facts concerning this most interesting and important phase of the Colored-American's history of which he has never heard before, and some of which seem too wonderful to be true. But it is not possible to doubt anything which is found in Dr. Woodson's book. One knows that every statement he reads concerning the education of the Negro prior to 1861 is true, for the author has taken pains to substantiate every fact that he presents.

It is difficult to imagine any phase of race history more fascinating and more thrilling than an account of the desperate and prolonged struggle between the forces which made for the mental and spiritual enlightenment of the slave and those which opposed these humane and Christian efforts with all the bitterness and strength at their command. The reasons assigned by those who favored the

education of the slaves and the methods suggested together with the arguments used by those who were opposed to it and the laws enacted to prevent it furnish an illuminating study in human nature.

One is surprised to find that very early in the history of the colonies there were scholars and statesmen who did not hesitate to declare their belief in the intellectual possibilities of the Negro. These men agreed with George Buchanan that the Negro had talent for the fine arts and under favorable circumstances could achieve something worth while in literature, mathematics and philosophy. The high estimate placed upon the innate ability of the Negro may be attributed to the fact that early in the history of the country there was a goodly number of slaves who had managed to attain a certain intellectual proficiency in spite of the difficulties which had to be overcome. By 1791 a colored minister had so distinguished himself that he was called to the pastorate of the First Baptist Church (white) of Portsmouth, Va. Benjamin Banneker's proficiency in mathematics enabled him to make the first clock manufactured in the United States. As the author himself says, "the instances of Negroes struggling to obtain an education read like the beautiful romances of a people in an heroic age."

Indeed the reaction which developed against allowing the slaves to pick up the few fragments of knowledge which they had been able to secure was due to some extent to the enthusiasm and eagerness with which they availed themselves of the opportunities afforded them and the salutary effect which the enlightenment had on their character. The account of the establishment of schools and churches for slaves who were transplanted to free soil is one of the most interesting chapters in the book. The struggle for the higher education shows that tremendous obstacles had been removed, before the race was allowed to secure the opportunity which it so earnestly desired. In the chapter on vocational training the effort made by colored people themselves to secure economic equality, and the determined opposition to it manifested by white mechanics are clearly and strongly set forth. In the appendix of the book one finds a number of interesting and valuable treatises, while the bibliography is of great assistance to any student of race history.

In addition to the fund of information which is secured by reading Dr. Woodson's book, a perusal of it can not help but increase one's respect for a race which under the most disheartening and discouraging circumstances strove so heroically and persistently to cultivate its mind and allowed nothing to turn it aside and conquer its will.

"The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861" is a work of profound historical research, full of interesting data on a most important phase of race life which has hitherto remained unexplored and neglected.

Mary Church Terrell.

Notes

In the death of Booker T. Washington the field of history lost one of its greatest figures. He will be remembered mainly as an educational reformer, a man of vision, who had the will power to make his dreams come true. In the field of history, however, he accomplished sufficient to make his name immortal. His "*Up from Slavery*" is a long chapter of the story of a rising race; his "*Frederick Douglass*" is the interpretation of the life of a distinguished leader by a great citizen; and his "*Story of the Negro*" is one of the first successful efforts to give the Negro a larger place in history.

Doubleday, Page and Company will in the near future publish an extensive biography of Booker T. Washington.

During the Inauguration Week of Fisk University a number of Negro scholars held a conference to consider making a systematic study of Negro life. A committee was appointed to arrange for a larger meeting.

Dr. C. G. Woodson is now writing a volume to be entitled "*The Negro in the Northwest Territory*"

The Neale Publishing Company has brought out "*The Political History of Slavery in the United States*" by J. Z. George.

"*Lincoln and Episodes of the Civil War*" by W. E. Doster, appears among the publications of the Putnams.

"*Black and White in the South*" is the title of a volume from the pen of M. S. Evans, appearing with the imprint of Longmans, Green and Company.

T. Fisher Unwin has brought out "*The Savage Man in Central Africa"* by A. L. Cureau.

"*Reconstruction in Georgia, Social, Political, 1865-1872"* by C. Mildred Thompson, appears as a comprehensive volume in the Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law.

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Edited By

Carter G. Woodson

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The Historic Background of the Negro Physician

In a homogeneous society where there is no racial cleavage, only the selected members of the most favored class occupy the professional stations. The element representing the social status of the Negro would, therefore, furnish few members of the coveted callings. The element of race, however, complicates every feature of the social equation. In India we are told that the population is divided horizontally by caste and vertically by religion; but in America the race spirit serves both as horizontal and vertical separations. The Negro is segregated and shut in to himself in all social and semi-social relations of life. This isolation necessitates separate ministrative agencies from the lowest to the highest rounds of the ladder of service. During the days of slavery the interests of the master demanded that he should direct the general social and moral life of the slave, and should provide especially for his physical well-being. The sudden severance of this tie left the Negro wholly without intimate guidance and direction. The ignorant must be enlightened, the sick must be healed, and the poor must have the gospel preached to them. The situation and circumstances under which the race found itself demanded that its professional class, for the most part, should be men of their own blood and sympathies. The needed service could not be effectively performed by those who assumed and asserted racial arrogance, and bestowed their professional service as cold crumbs that fell from the master's table. The professional class who are to uplift and direct the lowly must not say, "So far shalt thou come, but not any farther," but rather, "Where I am, there ye shall be also."

There is no more pathetic chapter in the history of human struggle than the emergence of the smothered ambition of this race to meet the social exigencies involved in the professional needs of the masses. In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, the plowhand was transformed into a priest, the barber into a bishop, the housemaid into a schoolmistress, the day-laborer into a lawyer, and the porter into a physician. These high places of intellectual and professional authority, into which they found themselves thrust by stress of social necessity, had to be operated with at least some semblance of conformity to the standards which had been established by the European through the traditions of the ages. The higher place in society occupied by the choicest members of the white race, and that too after long years of arduous preparation, had to be assumed by black men without personal or formal fitness. The stronger and more aggressive natures pushed themselves into these higher callings by sheer force of untutored energy and uncontrolled ambition.

An accurate study of the healing art as practiced by Negroes in Africa as well as its continuance after transplantation in America would form an investigation of great historical interest. This, however, is not the purpose of this paper. It is sufficient to note the fact that witchcraft and the control of disease through roots, herbs, charms and conjuration are universally practiced on the continent of Africa. Indeed, the medicine man has a standing and influence that is sometimes superior to that of kings and queens. The natives of Africa have discovered their own materia medica by actual practice and experience with the medicinal value of minerals and plants. It must be borne in mind that any pharmacopeia must rest upon the basis of practical experiment and experience. The science of medicine was developed by man in his groping to relieve pain and to curb disease, and was not handed down ready made from the skies. In this groping, the African, like the rest of the children of men, has been feeling after the right remedies, if haply he might find them.

It was inevitable that the prevailing practice of conjuration in Africa should be found among Negroes after they had been transferred to the new continent. The conjure man was well known in every slave community. He generally turned his art, however, to malevolent rather than benevolent uses; but this was not always the case. Not infrequently these medicine men gained such wide celebrity among their own race as to attract the attention of the whites. As early as 1792 a Negro by the name of

Cesar[98] had gained such distinction for his curative knowledge of roots and herbs that the Assembly of South Carolina purchased his freedom and gave him an annuity of one hundred pounds.

That slaves not infrequently held high rank among their own race as professional men may be seen from the advertisements of colonial days. A runaway Negro named Simon was in 1740 advertised in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*[99] as being able to "bleed and draw teeth" and "pretending to be a great doctor among his people." Referring in 1797 to a fugitive slave of Charleston, South Carolina, *The City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*[100] said: "He passes for a Doctor among people of his color and it is supposed practices in that capacity about town." The contact of such practitioners with the white race was due to the fact that the profession of the barber was at one time united with that of the physician. The practice of phlebotomy was considered an essential part of the doctor's work. As the Negro early became a barber and the profession was united with that of the physician, it is natural to suppose that he too would assume the latter function. That phlebotomy was considered an essential part of the practice of the medicine is seen from the fact that it was practiced upon George Washington in his last illness. An instance of this sort of professional development among the Negroes appears in the case of the barber, Joseph Ferguson. Prior to 1861 he lived in Richmond, Virginia, uniting the three occupations of leecher, cupper, and barber. This led to his taking up the study of medicine in Michigan, where he graduated and practiced for many years.

The first regularly recognized Negro physician, of whom there is a complete record, was James Derham, of New Orleans. He was born in Philadelphia in 1762, where he was taught to read and write, and instructed in the principles of Christianity. When a boy he was transferred by his master to Dr. John Kearsley, Jr., who employed him occasionally to compound medicines, and to perform some of the more humble acts of attention to his patients. Upon the death of Dr. Kearsley, he became (after passing through several hands) the property of Dr. George West, surgeon to the Sixteenth British Regiment, under whom, during the Revolutionary War, he performed many of the menial duties of the medical profession. At the close of the war, he was sold by Dr. West to Dr. Robert Dove at New Orleans, who employed him as an assistant in his business, in which capacity he gained so much of his confidence and friendship, that he consented to liberate him, after two or three years, upon easy terms. From Dr. Derham's numerous opportunities of improving in medicine, he became so well

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[98] THE NEGRO CESAR'S CURE FOR POISONTake the roots of plantane and wild hoarhound, fresh or dried, three ounces, boil them together in two quarts of water to one quart, and strain it; of this decoction let the patient take one third part, three mornings fasting, successively, from which, if he finds any relief, it must be continued until he is perfectly recovered. On the contrary, if he finds no alteration after the third dose, it is a sign that the patient has not been poisoned at all, or that it has been with such poison that Cesar's antidote will not remedy, so may leave off the decoction. During the cure the patient must live on spare diet, and abstain from eating mutton, pork, butter, or any other fat or oily food. N. B. The plantane or hoarhound will either of them cure alone, but they are most efficacious together. In summer you may take one handful of the roots and of the branches of each, in place of three ounces of the roots each. For drink during the cure let them take the following: Take of the roots of goldenrod, six ounces or in summer, two large handfuls of the roots and branches together, and boil them in two quarts of water to one quart, to which also may be added, a little hoarhound and sassafras; to this decoction after it is strained, add a glass of rum or brandy, and sweeten with sugar for ordinary drink. Sometimes an inward fever attends such as are poisoned, for which he ordered the following: Take one pint of wood ashes and three pints of water, stir and mix well together, let them stand all night and strain or decant the lye off in the morning, of which ten ounces may be taken six mornings following, warmed or cold according to the weather. These medicines have no sensible operation, though sometimes they work on the bowels, and give a gentle stool. The symptoms attending such as are poisoned, are as follows: A pain of the breast, difficulty of breathing, a load at the pit of the stomach, an irregular pulse, burning and violent pains of the viscera above and below the navel, very restless at night, sometimes wandering pains over the whole body, a reaching inclination to vomit, profuse sweats (which prove always serviceable), slimy stools, both when costive and loose, the face of pale and yellow color, sometimes a pain and inflamation of the throat, the appetite is generally weak, and some cannot eat anything; those who have been long poisoned are generally very feeble and weak in their limbs, sometimes spit a great deal, the whole skin peels, and lastly the hair falls off. Cesar's cure for the bite of a rattlesnake: Take of the roots of plantane or hoarhound (in summer roots and branches together), a sufficient quantity; bruise them in a mortar, and squeeze out the juice, of which give as soon as possible, one large spoonful; this generally will cure; but if he finds no relief n an hour after you may give another spoonful which never hath failed. If the roots are dried they must be moistened with a little water. To the wound may be applied a leaf of good tobacco, moistened with rum. *The Massachusetts Magazine*, IV, 103-104 (1792).

[99] *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, Sept. 11, 1740.

[100] *The City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, June 22, 1797.

acquainted with the healing art, as to commence practicing in New Orleans, under the patronage of his last master. He once did business to the amount of three thousand dollars a year. Benjamin Rush, who had the opportunity to meet him, said: "I have conversed with him upon most of the acute and epidemic diseases of the country where he lives and was pleased to find him perfectly acquainted with the modern simple mode of practice on those diseases. I expected to have suggested some new medicines to him; but he suggested many more to me. He is very modest and engaging in his manners. He speaks French fluently and has some knowledge of the Spanish language."[101]

The most noted colored physician after the time of James Derham was Doctor James McCune Smith, a graduate of the University of Glasgow. He began the practice of medicine in New York about 1837, and soon distinguished himself as a physician and surgeon. He passed as a man of unusual merit not only among his own people but among the best elements of that metropolis. That he was appreciated by the leading white physicians of the city is evidenced by the fact that in 1852 he was nominated as one of the five men to draft a constitution for the "Statistic Institute" of which he became a leading member. For a number of years he held the position of physician to the colored orphan asylum, serving on the staff with a number of white doctors.

Living in a day when the Negro was the subject of much anthropological and physiological discussion, Doctor Smith could not resist participating in this controversy. There were at this time a number of persons who were resorting to science to prove the inferiority of the Negro. Given a hearing extending over several evenings, Doctor Smith ably discussed "The Comparative Anatomy of the Races" before an assembly of the most distinguished ladies and gentlemen of the city, triumphing over his antagonist. In 1846 he produced a valuable work entitled "The Influence of Climate on Longevity, with Special Reference to Insurance." This paper was written as a refutation of a disquisition of John C. Calhoun on the colored race. Among other things Doctor Smith said: "The reason why the proportion of mortality is not a measure of longevity, is the following: The proportion of mortality is a statement of how many persons die in a population; this, of course, does not state the age at which those persons die. If 1 in 45 die in Sweden, and 1 in 22 in Grenada, the age of the dead might be alike in both countries; here the greater mortality might actually accompany the greater longevity."[102]

The first real impetus to bring Negroes in considerable numbers into the professional world came from the American Colonization Society, which in the early years flourished in the South as well as in the North. This organization hoped to return the free Negroes to Africa and undertook to prepare professional leaders of their race for the Liberian colony. "To execute this scheme, leaders of the colonization movement endeavored to educate Negroes in mechanic arts, agriculture, science and Biblical literature. Exceptionally bright youths were to be given special training as catechists, teachers, preachers and physicians. Not much was said about what they were doing, but now and then appeared notices of Negroes who had been prepared privately in the South or publicly in the North for service in Liberia. Dr. William Taylor and Dr. Fleet were thus educated in the District of Columbia. In the same way John V. DeGrasse, of New York, and Thomas J. White, of Brooklyn, were allowed to complete the medical course at Bowdoin in 1849. In 1854 Dr. DeGrasse was admitted as a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society. In 1858 the Berkshire Medical School graduated two colored doctors who were gratuitously educated by the American Educational Society."[103] Dr. A. T. Augusta studied medicine at the University of Toronto. He qualified by competitive examination and obtained the position of surgeon in the United States Army, being the first Negro to hold such a position. After the war he became one of the leading colored physicians in the District of Columbia. Prior to 1861 Negroes had taken courses at the Medical School of the University of New York; Caselton Medical School in Vermont; Berkshire Medical School in Pittsfield, Massachusetts; the Rush Medical School

[101] *The Columbian Gazette*, II, 742-743.

[102] Delany, "Condition of the Colored People," 111.

[103] C. G. Woodson, "The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861."

in Chicago; the Eclectic Medical School in Philadelphia; the Homeopathic College of Cleveland; and the Medical School of Harvard University.

The next colored physician of prominence was Martin R. Delany. Delany grew to manhood in Pittsburgh, where early in his career he began the study of medicine, but abandoned it for pursuits in other parts. In 1849 he returned to that city and resumed his studies under Doctors Joseph P. Gazzan and Francis J. Lemoyne, who secured for him admission to the medical department of Harvard College after he had been refused by the University Pennsylvania, Jefferson College, and the medical colleges of Albany and Geneva, New York. After leaving Harvard, he, like Dr. Smith, became interested in the discussion of the superiority and inferiority of races, and traveled extensively through the West, lecturing with some success on the physiological aspect of these subjects. He then returned to Pittsburgh, where he became a practitioner and distinguished himself in treating the cholera during the epidemic of 1854. About this time his worth to the community was attested by his appointment as a member of the Subcommittee of Referees who furnished the Municipal Board of Charity with medical advice as to the needs of white and colored persons desiring aid. In 1856 he removed to Chatham, Canada, where he practiced medicine a number of years. Doctor Delany thereafter like William Wells Brown, an occasional physician, devoted most of his time to the uplift of his people, traveling in America, Africa and England. He became such a worker among his people that he was known as a leader rather than a physician. He served in the Civil War as a commissioned officer of the United States Army, ranking as major.

Up to this point the colored physician had appeared as an occasional or exceptional individual, but hardly as forming a professional class. Following the wake of the Civil War colleges and universities were planted in all parts of the South for the sake of preparing leaders for the newly emancipated race. Several medical schools were established in connection with these institutions. The rise of the Negro physician as a professional class may be dated from the establishment of these institutions. The School of Medicine of Howard University, Washington, D.C., and the Meharry Medical College at Nashville, Tennessee, proved to be the strongest of these institutions and today are supplying the Negro medical profession with a large number of its annual recruits.

Dr. Charles B. Purvis, who was graduated from the Medical College of Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1865, is perhaps the oldest colored physician in the United States; and by general consent ranks as dean of the fraternity. He shared with Dr. A. T. Augusta the honor of being one of the few colored men to become surgeons in the United States Army. Shortly after graduation he was made assistant surgeon in the Freedmen's Hospital at Washington, D.C., with which institution he was connected during the entire period of his active professional life. The development and present position of the medical school at Howard University is due to Dr. Purvis more than to any other single individual. For several years he has been retired upon the Carnegie Foundation. Dr. George W. Hubbard, a distinguished white physician, dean of the Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee, has also been a great pioneer and promoter of the medical education of the Negro race.

At first, the Negro patient refused to put confidence in the physician of his own race, notwithstanding the closer intimacy of social contact. It was not until after he had demonstrated his competency to treat disease as well as his white competitor that he was able to win recognition among his own people. The colored physician is everywhere in open competition with the white practitioner, who never refuses to treat Negro patients, if allowed to assume the disdainful attitude of racial superiority. If the Negro doctor did not secure practically as good results in the treatment of disease as the white physician, he would soon find himself without patients.

According to the last census there were in the United States 3,077 Negro physicians and 478 Negro dentists. When we consider the professional needs of ten millions of Negroes, it will be seen that the quota is not over one fourth full. There is urgent need especially for an additional number of pharmacists and dentists. It must be said for the Negro physician that their membership more

fully measures up to the full status of a professional class than that of any other profession among colored men. Every member of the profession must have a stated medical education based upon considerable academic preparation, sufficient to enable them to pass the rigid tests of State Boards in various parts of the country. The best regulated medical schools are now requiring at least two years of college training as a basis for entering upon the study of medicine. Under the stimulus of these higher standards the Negro medical profession will become more thoroughly equipped and proficient in the years to come.

These physicians maintain a national medical association which meets annually in different parts of the country and prepare and discuss papers bearing upon the various phases of their profession. There are under the control of Negro physicians a number of hospitals where are performed operations verging upon the limits of surgical skill. The profession has developed not a few physicians and surgeons whose ability has won recognition throughout their profession. A number of them have performed operations which have attracted wide attention and have contributed to leading journals discussions dealing with the various forms and phases of disease, as well as their medical and surgical treatment.

By reason of the stratum which the Negro occupies, the race is an easy prey to disease that affects the health of the whole nation. The germs of disease have no race prejudice. They do not even draw the line at social equality, but gnaw with equal avidity at the vitals of white and black alike, and pass with the greatest freedom of intercourse from the one to the other. One touch of disease makes the whole world kin, and also kind. The Negro physician comes into immediate contact with the masses of his race; he is the missionary of good health. His ministration is not only to his own race, but to the community and to the nation as a whole. The white plague seems to love the black victim. This disease must be stamped out by the nation through concerted action. The Negro physician is one of the most efficient agencies to render this national service. During the entire history of the race on this continent, there has been no more striking indication of its capacity for self-reclamation and of its ability to maintain a professional class on the basis of scientific efficiency than the rise and success of the Negro physician.

Kelly Miller

The Negro Soldier in the American Revolution

The facts as to the participation of Negroes in the American Revolution have received the attention of several writers. Yet not one of them has made a scientific presentation of the facts which they have discovered. These historians have failed to consider the bearing of the status of the free Negro during the colonial period, the meaning of the Revolution to the Negro, and what the service of the Negro soldiers first enlisted effected in changing the attitude of the people toward the blacks throughout the original thirteen colonies.

To a person who has lived in the nineteenth or twentieth century it would seem incredible that Negroes, the majority of whom were then slaves, should have been allowed to fight in the Continental Army. The layman here may forget that during the eighteenth century slavery was a patriarchal institution rather than the economic plantation system as it developed after the multiplication of mechanical appliances, which brought about the world-wide industrial revolution. During the eighteenth century a number of slaves brought closely into contact with their masters were gradually enlightened and later emancipated. Such freedmen, in the absence of any laws to the contrary, exercised political rights,[104] among which was that of bearing arms. Negroes served not only in the American Revolution, but in every war of consequence during the colonial period. There were masters who sent slaves to the front to do menial labor and to fight in the places of their owners. Then there were slaves who, finding it easier to take occasional chances with bullets than to bear the lash, ran away from their masters and served as privateers or enlisted as freemen.[105] The newspapers of the colonial period often mentioned these facts in their advertisements of fugitive slaves. In 1760 a master had considerable difficulty with a slave who escaped from New England into New Jersey, where he said he would enlist in the provincial service.[106] Advertising for his mulatto servant, who was brought up in Rhode Island, James Richardson of Stonington said that the fugitive had served as a soldier the previous summer.[107] A few free Negroes found their way into the colonial militia along with white soldiers. This passed, of course, not without some opposition, as in the case of Massachusetts. In 1656 that colony excluded Negroes and Indians from the militia, and according to Governor Bradstreet's report to the Board of Trade in 1680 and subsequent action taken by that colony in 1775 and 1776, it adhered to this policy.[108]

Favorable as this condition of Negroes during the colonial period seemed, the situation became still more desirable during the Revolution itself. This upheaval was social as well as political. Aristocracy was suddenly humiliated and the man in the common walks of life found himself in power, grappling with problems which he had long desired to solve. Sprung from the indentured servant poor white class, the new rulers had more sympathy for the man farthest down. The slaves, therefore, received more consideration. In the heat of the excitement of war the system lost almost all of its rigor, the slave codes in some cases falling into desuetude. The contest for liberty was in the mouths of some orators of the Revolution the cause of the blacks as well as that of the whites, and the natural rights of the former were openly discussed in urging the independence of the United States. When men like Laurens, Henry, Hamilton and Otis spoke for the rights of the American colonies, they were not silent on the duty of the American people toward their slaves.[109] In 1774 a patriot in the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts spoke of the "propriety, that while we are attempting to

[104] Bancroft, "History of the United States," VIII, 110; MacMaster, "History of the United States."

[105] See "Documents" in this number.

[106] *The New York Gazette*, Aug. 11, 1760.

[107] Supplement to the *Boston Evening Post*, May 23, 1763.

[108] Moore's "Slavery in Mass.," 243; Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., VII, 336.

[109] Adams, "Works of John Adams," X, 315; Moore, "Notes on Slavery in Mass.," 71. Hamilton, Letter to Jay, March 14, 1779.

free ourselves from slavery, our present embarrassments, and preserve ourselves from slavery, that we also take into consideration the state and circumstances of the Negro slaves in this province."[110]

When the Revolution came the Negro was actually in the army before the question of his enlistment could be raised by those who had not yet been won to the cause of universal freedom. Feeling the same patriotism which the white man experienced, the Negro bared his breast to the bullet and gave his life as a sacrifice for the liberty of his country. According to Bancroft, "the roll of the army of Cambridge had from its first formation borne the names of men of color." "Free Negroes," said he, "stood in the ranks by the side of white men. In the beginning of the war they had entered the provincial army; the first general order which was issued by Ward had required a return, among other things, of the complexion of the soldiers; and black men, like others, were retained in the service after the troops were adopted by the continent."[111]

Before the various officials had had time to decide whether or not the Negro should be enlisted, many had numbered themselves among the first to spill their blood in behalf of American liberty. Peter Salem had distinguished himself at Bunker Hill by killing Major Pitcairn,[112] a number of other Negroes under the command of Major Samuel Lawrence had heroically imperilled their lives and rescued him when he had advanced so far beyond his troops that he was about to be surrounded and taken prisoner,[113] and Salem Poor of Colonel Frye's regiment had acquitted himself with such honor in the battle of Charlestown that fourteen American officers commended him to the Continental Congress for his valor.[114] But great as were the services rendered by these patriots of color, the increase in the number of blacks in the Continental Army gave rise to vexatious questions. There were those who, influenced by the theories which had made the Revolution possible, hailed with joy the advent of the Negro in the role of the defender of his country, which they believed owed him freedom and opportunity. Some, having the idea that the Negro was a savage, too stupid to be employed in fighting the battles of freemen, seriously objected to his enlistment. Others were fearful of the result from setting the example of employing an uncivilized people to fight the British, who would then have an excuse not only for enlisting Negroes[115] but also the Indians. A still larger number felt that the question of arming the slaves would simply reduce itself to one of deciding whether or not the colonies should permit the British to beat them playing their own game.[116]

In the beginning, however, those who believed the Negroes should be excluded from the army triumphed. Massachusetts officially took a stand against the enlistment of slaves. The Committee of Safety, of which John Hancock and Joseph Ward were members, reported in May, 1775, to the Provincial Congress the opinion that as the contest then between Great Britain and her colonies respected the liberties and privileges of the latter, that the admission of any persons but freemen as soldiers would be inconsistent with the principles supported and would reflect dishonor on the colony.[117] They urged that no slaves be admitted into the army under any consideration whatever. No action was taken. This was not seemingly directed at the enlistment of free Negroes; but it must have had some effect, for in July of the same year, when Washington took command of the army at Cambridge, there were issued from his headquarters to recruiting officers instructions prohibiting the enlistment of any Negro, any person not native of this country, unless such person had a wife and a family and was a settled resident.[118]

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[110] Moore, "Historical Notes on the Employment of Negroes in the American Revolution," 4.

[111] Bancroft, "History of the United States," VIII, 110.

[112] Washburn, "History of Leicester," 267.

[113] Washington, "The Story of the Negro," I, 315.

[114] Manuscript, Massachusetts Archives, CLXXX, 241.

[115] Journals of the Continental Congress, 1775, pp. 221, 263; 1776, pp. 60, 874; 1779, pp. 386, 418.

[116] Ford, "Washington's Writings," VIII, 371.

[117] Journal of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, 553.

[118] Moore, "Historical Notes," 5.

This matter became one of such concern that the officials of the Continental Army had to give it more serious consideration. Communications relative thereto directed to the Continental Congress provoked a debate in that body in September, 1775. On the occasion of drafting a letter to Washington, reported by a committee consisting of Lynch, Lee and Adams, to whom several of his communications had been referred, Rutledge, of South Carolina, moved that the commander-in-chief be instructed to discharge from the army all Negroes, whether slave or free.[119] It seems that Rutledge had the support of the Southern delegates, but failed to secure a majority vote in favor of this radical proposition.

The matter was not yet settled, however. On the eighth of the following month there was held a council of war consisting of Washington, Ward, Lee, Putnam, Thomas, Spencer, Heath, Sullivan, Greene and Gates, to consider the question whether or not it would be advisable to enlist Negroes in the new army or "whether there be any distinction between such as are slaves and those who are free." It was unanimously agreed to reject all slaves and by a large majority to refuse Negroes altogether.[120] Upon considering ten days later the question of devising a method of renovating the army, however, the question of enlisting Negroes came up again before a Committee of Conference. The leaders in this council were Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Harrison, Thomas Lynch, the Deputy Governors of Connecticut and Rhode Island, and the Committee of Council of Massachusetts Bay. They were asked the question whether Negroes should be excluded from the new enlistment, especially such as were slaves. This council also agreed that Negroes should be rejected altogether.[121] Accordingly, the general orders from Washington, dated November 12, 1775, declared that neither Negroes, boys unable to bear arms, nor old men unfit to endure fatigues of the campaign should be enlisted.

The men who had taken this position had acted blindly. They had failed to consider the various complications which might arise as a result of the refusal to admit Negroes to the army. What would the Negroes think when they saw their offering thrown away from the altar of their country? Were the Revolutionary fathers so stupid as to think that the British would adopt the same policy? They could not have believed that the situation could be so easily cleared. Before the Revolution was well on its way the delegates from Georgia to the Continental Congress had already experienced certain fears as to the safety of Georgia and South Carolina. They believed that if one thousand regular troops should land in Georgia under a commander with adequate supplies and he should proclaim freedom to all loyal Negroes, twenty thousand of them would join the British in a fortnight. It was to them a matter of much concern that the Negroes of these provinces had such a wonderful art of communicating intelligence among themselves as to convey information several hundred miles in a week or in a fortnight.[122] The colonists, too, could not ignore the bold attempt of Lord Dunmore, the dethroned governor of Virginia, who issued a proclamation of freedom to all slaves who would fight for the king, endeavored to raise a black regiment among them, and actually used a number of Negroes in the battle at Kemp's Landing, where they behaved like well-seasoned soldiers, pursuing and capturing one of the attacking companies.[123] Referring thereafter to Lord Dunmore as an arch-traitor who should be instantly crushed, George Washington said: "But that which renders the measure indispensably necessary is the Negroes, if he gets formidable numbers of them, will be tempted to join" him.

Subsequent developments showed that these misgivings were justified. In July, 1776, General Greene learned on Long Island that the British were about to organize in that vicinity a regiment of Negroes aggregating 200.[124] Taking as a pretext the enrollment of Negroes in the Continental Army,

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[119] *Ibid.*, 6.

[120] *Ibid.*, 6.

[121] *Ibid.*, 7.

[122] Adam's Works, II, 428.

[123] Life and Correspondence of Joseph Reed, I, 135.

[124] Force, American Archives, I, 486. Fifth Series.

Sir Henry Clinton proclaimed from Philipsburgh in 1779 that all Negroes taken in arms or upon any military duty should be purchased from the captors for the public service, and that every Negro who would desert the "Rebel Standard" should have full security to follow within the British lines any occupation which he might think proper.[125] In 1781 General Greene reported to Washington from North Carolina that the British there had undertaken to embody immediately two regiments of Negroes.[126] They were operating just as aggressively farther South. "It has been computed by good judges," says Ramsey, "that between the years 1775 and 1783 the State of South Carolina lost 25,000 Negroes,[127] that is, one fifth of all the slaves, and a little more than half as many as its entire white population. At the evacuation of Charleston 241 Negroes and their families were taken off to St. Lucia in one transport, the Scimitar."[128] Yet in Georgia it is believed that the loss of Negroes was much greater, probably three fourths or seven eighths of all in the State. There the British were more successful in organizing and making use of Negroes. One third of the 600 men by whom Fort Cornwallis was garrisoned at the siege of Augusta were Negroes. So effective were some of these Negroes trained by the British in Georgia that a corps of fugitive slaves calling themselves the "King of England's Soldiers," so harassed the people on both sides of the Savannah River, even after the Revolution, that it was feared that a general insurrection of the slaves there would follow as a result of this most dangerous and best disciplined band of marauders that ever infested its borders.[129]

The leaders of the Revolution, therefore, quickly receded from their radical position of excluding Negroes from the army. Informed that the free Negroes who had served in the ranks in New England were sorely displeased at their exclusion from the service, and fearing that they might join the enemy, Washington departed, late in 1775, from the established policy of the staff and gave the recruiting officers leave to accept such Negroes, promising to lay the matter before the Continental Congress, which he did not doubt would approve it.[130] Upon the receipt of this communication the matter was referred to a committee composed of Wythe, Adams and Wilson, who recommended that free Negroes who had served faithfully in the army at Cambridge might be reenlisted but no others.[131] In taking action on such communications thereafter the Continental Congress followed the policy of leaving the matter to the various States, which were then jealously mindful of their rights.

Sane leaders generally approved the enlistment of black troops. General Thomas thought so well of the proposition that he wrote John Adams in 1775, expressing his surprise that any prejudice against it should exist.[132] Samuel Hopkins said in 1776 that something should be speedily done with respect to the slaves to prevent their turning against the Americans. He was of the opinion that the way to counteract the tendency of the Negroes to join the British was not to restrain them by force and severity but by public acts to set the slaves free and encourage them to labor and take arms in defense of the American cause.[133] Interested in favor of the Negroes both by "the dictates of humanity

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[125] "By his Excellency, Sir HENRY CLINTON, K.B., General and Commander-in-Chief of all His Majesty's Forces within the Colonies lying on the Atlantic Ocean, from Nova Scotia to West Florida, inclusive, etc."PROCLAMATION "Whereas, The Enemy have adopted a practice of enrolling NEGROES among their troops: I do hereby give Notice, that all NEGROES taken in Arms, or upon any military Duty shall be purchased for the public service at a stated price; the Money to be paid to the Captors. "But I do most strictly forbid any Person to sell or claim Right over any Negroe, the Property of a Rebel, who may take refuge with any part of this Army: And I do promise to every Negroe who shall desert the Rebel Standard full Security to follow within these Lines any occupation which he may think proper." "Given under my Hand at Head-Quarters, Philipsburgh, the 30th day of June 1779. H. CLINTON. By his Excellency's Command, JOHN SMITH, Secretary."

[126] The Journal of the Continental Congress, II, 26.

[127] Ramsay, "The History of South Carolina" [Edition, 1809], I, 474-475.

[128] *The Gazette of the State of South Carolina*, Nov. 22, 1784.

[129] Moore, "Historical Notes," 14.

[130] Sparks, "Washington's Works," III, 218.

[131] *Ibid.*

[132] Letter of General Thomas to John Adams, Oct. 24, 1775.

[133] Moore, "Historical Notes," 4.

and true policy," Hamilton urged that slaves be given their freedom with the swords to secure their fidelity, animate their courage, and influence those remaining in bondage by opening a door to their emancipation.[134] General Greene emphatically urged that blacks be armed, believing that they would make good soldiers.[135] Thinking that the slaves might be put to a much better use than being given as a bounty to induce white men to enlist, James Madison suggested that the slaves be liberated and armed.[136] "It would certainly be consonant to the principles of liberty," said he, "which ought never to be lost sight of in a contest for liberty." John Laurens, of South Carolina, was among the first to see the wisdom of this plan, directed the attention of his coworkers to it, and when authorized by the Continental Congress, proceeded to his native State, wishing that he had the persuasive power of a Demosthenes to make his fellow citizens accept this proposition.[137] In 1779 Laurens said: "I would advance those who are unjustly deprived of the rights of mankind to a state which would be a proper gradation between abject slavery and perfect liberty, and besides I am persuaded that if I could obtain authority for the purpose, I would have a corps of such men trained, uniformly clad, equipped and ready in every respect to act at the opening of the next campaign."

All of the colonies thereafter tended to look more favorably upon the enlistment of colored troops. Free Negroes enlisted in Virginia and so many slaves deserted their masters for the army that the State enacted in 1777 a law providing that no Negro should be enlisted unless he had a certificate of freedom.[138] That commonwealth, however, soon took another step toward greater recognition of the rights of the Negroes who desired to be free to help maintain the honor of the State. With the promise of freedom for military service many slaves were sent to the army as substitutes for freemen. The effort of inhuman masters to force such Negroes back into slavery at the close of their service at the front actuated the liberal legislators of that commonwealth to pass the Act of Emancipation, proclaiming freedom to all Negroes who had thus enlisted and served their term faithfully, and empowered them to sue *in forma pauperis*, should they thereafter be unlawfully held in bondage.[139]

In the course of time there arose an urgent need for the Negro in the army. The army reached the point when almost all sorts of soldiers were acceptable. In 1778 General Varnum induced General Washington to send certain officers from Valley Forge to Rhode Island to enlist a battalion of Negroes to fill the depleted ranks of that State.[140] Setting forth in the preamble that "history affords us frequent precedents of the wisest, freest and bravest nations having liberated their slaves and enlisted them as soldiers to fight in defense of their country," the Rhode Island Assembly resolved to raise a regiment of slaves, who were to be freed upon their enlistment, their owners to be paid by the State according to the valuation of a committee. Further light was thrown upon this action in the statement of Governor Cooke, who in reporting the action of the Assembly to Washington boasted that liberty was given to every effective slave to don the uniform and that upon his passing muster he became absolutely free and entitled to all the wages, bounties and encouragements given to any other soldier.[141]

The State of New Hampshire enlisted Negroes and gave to those who served three years the same bounty offered others. This bounty was turned over to their masters as the price of the slaves in return for which their owners issued bills of sale and certificates of freedom.[142] In this way slavery practically passed out in New Hampshire. This affair did not proceed so smoothly as this in Massachusetts. In 1778 that legislature had a committee report in favor of raising a regiment

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[134] Hamilton's "Works," I, 76-78.

[135] Moore, "Historical Notes," 13.

[136] Madison's Papers, 68.

[137] Letter of Hamilton to Jay, March 14, 1779; and Journals of the Continental Congress.

[138] Hening, Statutes at Large, IX, 280.

[139] *Ibid.*, XI, 308, 309.

[140] Rhode Island Colonial Records, VIII, 640, 641.

[141] *Ibid.*, 358-360.

[142] Moore, "Historical Notes," 19.

of mulattoes and Negroes. This action was taken as a result upon receiving an urgent letter from Thomas Kench, a member of an artillery regiment serving on Castle Island. Kench referred to the fact that there were divers of Negroes in the battalions mixed with white men, but he thought that the blacks would have a better esprit de corps should they be organized in companies by themselves. But the feeling that slaves should not fight the battles of freemen and a confusion of the question of enlistment with that of emancipation for which Massachusetts was not then prepared,[143] led to a heated debate in the Massachusetts Council and finally to blows in the coffee houses in lower Boston. In such an excited state of affairs no further action was taken. Finding recruiting difficult it is said that Connecticut undertook to raise a colored regiment[144] and in 1781 New York, offering the usual land bounty which would go to the masters to purchase the slaves, promised freedom to all slaves who would enlist for the time of three years.[145] Maryland provided in 1780 that each unit of £16,000 of property should furnish one recruit who might be either a freeman or a slave, and in 1781 resolved to raise 750 Negroes to be incorporated with the other troops.[146]

Farther South the enlistment of Negroes had met with obstacles. The best provision the Southern legislatures had been able to make was to provide in addition to the allotment of money and land that a person offering to fight for the country should have "one sound Negro"[147] or a "healthy sound Negro"[148] as the laws provided in Virginia and South Carolina respectively. Threatened with invasion in 1779, however, the Southern States were finally compelled to consider this matter more seriously.[149] The Continental Army had been called upon to cope with the situation but had no force

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[143] Manuscripts in the Archives of Massachusetts, CXCIX, 80.

[144] Moore, "Historical Notes," 20.

[145] Laws of the State of New York, Chapter XXXII, Fourth Session.

[146] Sparks, "Correspondence of the American Revolution," III, 331.

[147] Moore, "Historical Notes," 20.

[148] *Ibid.*, 21.

[149] Taking up the Southern situation, Hamilton in 1779 wrote Jay as follows:"*Dear Sir*: Colonel Laurens, who will have the honor of delivering you this letter, is on his way to South Carolina, on a project which I think, in the present situation of affairs there, is a very good one, and deserves every kind of support and encouragement. This is, to raise two, three, or four battalions of negroes, with the assistance of the government of that State, by contributions from the owners, in proportion to the number they possess. If you should think proper to enter upon the subject with him, he will give you a detail of his plan. He wishes to have it recommended by Congress to the State; and, as an inducement, that they would engage to take their battalions into Continental pay. "It appears to me, that an expedient of this kind, in the present state of Southern affairs, is the most rational that can be adopted, and promises very important advantages. Indeed, I hardly see how a sufficient force can be collected in that quarter without it: and the enemy's operations there are growing infinitely serious and formidable. I have not the least doubt, that the negroes will make very excellent soldiers with proper management: and I will venture to pronounce, that they cannot be put in better hands than those of Mr. Laurens. He has all the zeal, intelligence, enterprise, and every other qualification, requisite to succeed in such an undertaking. It is a maxim with some great military judges, that, with sensible officers, soldiers can hardly be too stupid; and, on this principle, it is thought that the Russians would make the best soldiers in the world, if they were under other officers than their own. The King of Prussia is among the number who maintain this doctrine, and has a very emphatic saying on the occasion, which I do not exactly recollect. I mention this because I have frequently heard it objected to the scheme of embodying negroes, that they are too stupid to make soldiers. This is so far from appearing to me a valid objection, that I think their want of cultivation (for their natural faculties are as good as ours), joined to that habit of subordination which they acquire from a life of servitude will enable them sooner to become soldiers than our white inhabitants. Let officers be men of sense and sentiment, and the nearer the soldiers approach to machines, perhaps the better. "I foresee that this project will have to combat much opposition from prejudice and self-interest. The contempt we have been taught to entertain for the blacks, makes us fancy many things that are founded neither in reason nor experience; and an unwillingness to part with property of so valuable a kind, will furnish a thousand arguments to show the impracticability, or pernicious tendency, of a scheme which requires such sacrifices. But it should be considered, that if we do not make use of them in this way, the enemy probably will; and that the best way to counteract the temptations they will hold out, will be to offer them ourselves. An essential part of the plan is, to give them their freedom with their swords. This will secure their fidelity, animate their courage, and, I believe, will have a good influence upon those who remain, by opening a door to their emancipation. "This circumstance, I confess, has no small weight in inducing me to wish the success of the project; for the dictates of humanity and true policy equally interest me in favor of this unfortunate class of men. "While I am on the subject of Southern affairs, you will excuse the liberty I take in saying, that I do not think measures sufficiently vigorous are pursuing for our defence in that quarter. Except the few regular troops of South Carolina, we seem to be relying wholly on the militia of that and two neighboring States. These will soon grow impatient of service and leave our affairs in a miserable situation. No considerable force can be uniformly kept up by militia, to say nothing of the many obvious and well-known inconveniences that attend this kind of troops. I would beg leave to suggest, sir, that no time ought to be lost in making a draught of

available for service in those parts. The three battalions of North Carolina troops, then on duty in the South, consisted of drafts from the militia for nine months, which would expire before the end of the campaign. What were they to do then when this militia, which could not be uniformly kept up, should grow impatient with the service? Writing from the headquarters of the army at this time, Alexander Hamilton in discussing the advisability of this plan doubtless voiced the sentiment of the staff. He thought that Colonel Laurens's plan for raising three or four battalions of emancipated Negroes was the most rational one that could be adopted in that state of Southern affairs. Hamilton foresaw the opposition from prejudice and self-interest, but insisted that if the Americans did not make such a use of the Negroes, the British would.

The movement received further impetus when special envoys from South Carolina headed by Huger appeared before the Continental Congress on March 29, 1779, to impress upon that body the necessity of doing something to relieve the Southern colonies. South Carolina, they reported, was suffering from an exposed condition in that the number of slaves being larger than that of the whites, she was unable to effect anything for its defense with the natives, because of the large number necessary to remain at home to prevent insurrections among the Negroes and their desertion to the enemy. These representatives, therefore, suggested that there might be raised among the Negroes in that State a force "which would not only be formidable to the enemy from their numbers and the discipline of which they would readily admit but would also lessen the danger from revolts and desertions by detaching the most vigorous and enterprising from among the Negroes." At the same time the Committee expressed the opinion that a matter of such vital interest to the two States concerned should be referred to their legislative bodies to judge as to the expediency of taking this step, and that if these commonwealths found it satisfactory that the United States should defray the expenses.

militia to serve a twelve-month, from the States of North and South Carolina and Virginia. But South Carolina, being very weak in her population of whites, may be excused from the draught, on condition of furnishing the black battalions. The two others may furnish about three thousand five hundred men, and be exempted, on that account, from sending any succor to this army. The States to the northward of Virginia, will be fully able to give competent supplies to the army here; and it will require all the force and exertions of the three States I have mentioned, to withstand the storm which has arisen, and is increasing in the South. "The troops draughted, must be thrown into battalions, and officered in the best possible manner. The best supernumerary officers may be made use of as far as they will go. If arms are wanted for their troops, and no better way of supplying them is to be found, we should endeavor to levy a contribution of arms upon the militia at large. Extraordinary exigencies demand extraordinary means. I fear this Southern business will become a very *grave* one. "With the truest respect and esteem, I am, sir, your most obedient servant, Alexander Hamilton."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.