



THOUGHTS,

ON

THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

OF

THE NEGROES OF THIS COUNTRY.

BY WM. S. PLUMER, D. D.

THOUGHTS

ON

THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

OF

THE NEGROES OF THIS COUNTRY.

BY WM. S. PLUMER, D. D.

SAVANNAH:
EDWARD J. PURSE, PRINTER,
No. 102 Bryan-Street—Up Stairs.

1848.

THOUGHTS ON THE
RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION
OF THE NEGROES IN THIS COUNTRY.

MANY centuries ago, a holy seer said, "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hand unto God." In view of the fulfilment of this prophecy, the royal bard called for a song of universal praise. The words next succeeding this prediction are, "Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth: O sing praises unto the Lord." The writings of Jeremiah inform us who the Ethiopians were, when he speaks of them as contra-distinguished from the rest of the race by their colour, as the leopard is from the rest of the feline tribe by his spots.

The first step in the providence of God towards an amelioration of the spiritual condition of the negro race was their dispersion among other races of mankind. This work, both cruel and bloody, had not been completed, when Christian philanthropy, ever vigilant, sought them out in bondage, and bore to them the cup of divine consolation, which the gospel offers to all, and especially to the sons of sorrow. As early as the year 1732, the United Brethren commenced missions to the negroes in the Danish West Indies, viz., St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. Jan. In 1754 they began their labours in Jamaica: in 1756 in Antigua: in 1765 in Barbadoes: in 1775 in St. Kitts: in 1790 in Tobago. In 1735 they began their labours among the free negroes of Surinam, and in 1736 they commenced a mission in South Africa. The same zeal led the same people to labour amongst the slaves at and near Paramaribo. One mission was at Paramaribo and one at Sommelsdyke.

The difficulty of establishing the first missions among the negroes can scarcely now be conceived. This difficulty was neither blindly contemned, nor timidly feared. With a zeal which Christ knows how to reward, "two of the Brethren at Hernhuth offered to sell themselves as slaves, should they find no other way of obtaining an opportunity of instructing the negroes." In almost every instance some ignorant or viciously disposed persons chose to misunderstand and misrepresent the object and tendency of this missionary labour; and thus at first

opposition was frequently violent. But in every case this hostility was found to be unreasonable and died away. Thus in St. Thomas through the bitterness of some, of whom better things might have been expected, the missionaries were at one time imprisoned for fifteen weeks; but soon after the governor and most of the planters on the island were convinced, by experience, that the instruction of the negroes in the principles of religion, instead of impairing, promoted the interests of their masters; and therefore they were pleased to see their slaves attend on the preaching of the gospel. Thus also in St. Croix, when a dangerous plot was discovered among the slaves, who had bound themselves to murder all the white people on the island in one night, certain malicious persons reported, that some of the negroes baptised by the missionaries were concerned in this conspiracy; but their ignorance was soon vindicated by the criminals themselves. As long as the disturbances lasted, the Brethren by the governor's advice, omitted the large meetings of the negroes; and when he authorized them to begin them again, he, and some other gentlemen were present and encouraged the negroes in their attendance. On another occasion when an order was issued that no negro should be seen on the streets or roads after seven o'clock in the evening, he made a regulation that such negroes as had attended the meetings of the Brethren, and could produce a certificate to that effect, signed by their teacher, should pass unmolested by the watch. Such was the confidence the governor placed in the missionaries, and the slaves under their care.

Indeed it has invariably occurred in the missions to these people that the planters have perceived the good effects of their labours on the slaves, and found it in every respect best to have the gospel preached upon their estates. While on this general subject, it may be proper to assert what none will or can with truth deny, viz., that no class of negroes well instructed in Christianity, and connected with churches under the care of white pastors, have ever been engaged in any insurrectionary disturbances. Thus the poor, miserable fanatic, who a few years ago headed a band of drunken murderers in one of the counties of Virginia, was not himself a member of any Christian church; nor had he any follower who had ever received sound and systematic religious instruction; or was connected with any church having a white man for a pastor or teacher. So also in reference to the plot of 1822 in Charleston, S. C., the coloured members of the Methodist Episcopal Church were by report accused of some participation. But the Hon. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Lieutenant Governor of the State, and himself not a Methodist, in his address before the Agricultural Society

of South Carolina, says; "On investigation it appeared that all concerned in that transaction, except one, had seceded from the regular Methodist Church in 1817, and formed a separate establishment, in connection with the African Methodist Society in Philadelphia; whose Bishop, a coloured man, named Allen, had assumed that office being himself a seceder from the Methodist Church of Pennsylvania. At this period, Mr. S. Bryan, the local minister of the regular Methodist Church of Charleston, was so apprehensive of sinister designs, that he addressed a letter to the City Council, on file in the Council Chamber, dated 8th November, 1817, stating at length the reasons of his suspicion."

In proof of the importance of Christianizing the negroes, even in a political point of view, it is not unworthy of notice, that soon after the commencement of the war between England and France during the last quarter of the last century, the governor of Tortola received information, that the French inhabitants of Guadaloupe meditated a descent on the island. He immediately sent for Mr. Turner, the superintendent of the Methodist Missions in Tortola and the other Virgin Islands, and having informed him of this report, added that there was no regular force in the colony to defend it against the enemy, and that they were afraid to arm the negroes unless he would put himself at the head of them. Mr. Turner was sensible that such a step was not properly within the line of the ministerial office; but considering that the Island was in imminent danger, that if it were conquered by the French, the religious privileges of the negroes would probably be lost, and that the war on their part was purely defensive, he consented to the governor's request, and was accordingly armed with the negroes. About a fortnight after, a French squadron made its appearance in the bay; but being informed, it is supposed by some emissaries, of the armed force on the Island, it abandoned its design and retired. Soon after this the Governor-general of the Leeward Islands sent an order to the Methodist Missionaries to make a return of all the negroes in their societies who were able to carry arms. The return was accordingly made; and a great part if not the whole of them were armed for the defence of the several Islands. Such was the confidence the Governor-general had in the loyalty of the missionaries and their flocks. Let these facts suffice, especially as there are none on the other side, respecting the safety of teaching the negroes to know and love God.

Another great difficulty, which the Brethren met in their missions among the negroes was the unhealthiness of the climate. Thus many of them scarcely arrived on the islands, when they

were attacked by diseases, which in a short time put a period to their labours and their lives. Thus from the commencement of the mission in the Danish Islands in 1732 to the year 1766 (or in thirty-four years) no fewer than sixty-six Brethren and Sisters died in St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. Jan. But though the mortality was so great, it is surprising with what cheerfulness others came forward to fill the ranks of those, who had so prematurely fallen. Bishop Spangenburg informs us, that on one occasion when it was made known to the congregation at Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, that five persons had died within a short time on the Island of St. Thomas, no fewer than eight Brethren voluntarily offered, that very day, to go thither and replace them. Disease and death as they did not dishearten them, so neither ought they to dishearten us in this work, even if they stared us in the face.

The Brethren had often great difficulties, with regard to the marriages of slaves, even after their baptism. When a planter in the West Indies, for instance, died in debt, his slaves and other property were sold at auction; and in these cases, part of the negroes were frequently purchased by proprietors from other islands, by which means it not only often happened that parents and children, but husbands and wives were forever parted from each other. How to act in such circumstances, the Brethren were at first quite at a loss, and they appear for some time to have prohibited the converts from contracting another marriage, apprehending this to be inconsistent with the principles of Christianity. Now, however, though they do not advise, yet neither do they hinder a regular marriage with another person, especially if a family of children, or other circumstances, seem to render a helpmate necessary.

The course of the English Baptist Missionaries in the east, on the same subject, may properly be here stated. Among the trials which their converts had to endure, their situation in respect to marriage was not the least considerable. In some cases the converts were obliged at the time of their conversion to forsake their homes, their friends, and even the wife of their bosom, nor would she afterwards have any correspondence with them, or if willing herself she was forcibly prevented by her relations. By this means they were to all intents and purposes reduced to a state of widowhood, and were in no small danger of falling into sin. It therefore became a question among the Missionaries, whether it was not lawful for a person in such circumstances to marry a second wife, while the first was still living, after he had in vain employed all possible means to induce her to return to him and not being able to recover her, had taken some public and solemn measures to acquit himself of the

blame. This question they at length resolved in the affirmative. A decision involving the same principles, as those referred to in the case of the removal or estrangement of a husband or wife was had in the Synod of North Carolina at its sessions at Salisbury in the year 1827, whereby it was declared that the wife of a member of the church being sold to the far south-west, and having herself married again, the husband was at liberty to marry again.

Notwithstanding the difficulties before stated and many similar ones, the Great Head of the Church greatly blessed the labours of the Brethren; so that in 1833 they had in the Danish Islands 7 settlements with 36 missionaries, and 9435 negroes, of whom about 4000 were communicants. In Jamaica, 7 settlements, 20 missionaries, 5146 negroes, of whom 1478 were communicants. In Antigua, 5 settlements, 23 missionaries, 14,362 converts, and 5442 communicants. In St. Kitts, 3 settlements, 10 missionaries, 5035 converts, and 1137 communicants. In Barbadoes, 2 settlements, 6 missionaries, 1374 converts and 282 communicants. In Tobago, 1 settlement, 4 missionaries and 253 in the congregation. In Surinam, after 99 years labour, they had 1 settlement, 16 missionaries, 3353 converts and 1200 communicants. In South Africa, after labouring 98 years but with a long interruption, they had 6 stations, 38 missionaries, 2963 converts and 1043 communicants. They have also one settlement in Paramaribo, and one in Sommelsdyke. The general summary view of these missions then gives us about thirty-five stations, one hundred and fifty missionaries—having in their congregations and under catechetical instruction about forty-two thousand souls, most, if all of whom profess conversion, and have been baptised—of whom about fifteen thousand are communicants. These statistics come down only to the year 1833. Since that time most of the missions have had great success, but we have not complete statistics at hand.

In the foregoing statements, one fact of great importance is brought to light, viz.: that the gospel, as dispensed by the Moravians, has, other things being equal, been more successful among slaves than among free negroes. So that the civil condition of these people cannot be pleaded against an honest discharge of our duty to them.

Though the United Brethren need the testimony of no man to the importance and utility of their labours; yet as the authority of Bryan Edwards, Esq., may have some influence with persons of a certain description, who are prejudiced against missionary exertions in general, we shall here subjoin a short extract from the work of that writer: "It is very much,"

says he, "to the honour of the legislature of Antigua that it presented to sister islands the first example of the amelioration of the criminal law respecting negro slaves, by giving the accused party the benefit of trial by jury, and allowing in case of capital conviction, four days between the time of sentence and execution. And it is still more to the honour of Antigua, that its inhabitants have encouraged in a particular manner, the laudable endeavours of certain pious men, who have undertaken, from the purest and best motives, to enlighten the minds of the negroes, and to lead them to the knowledge of religious truths. In the report of the lords of the committee of council on the slave trade, is an account of the labours of the society know by the name of the *Unitas Fratrum*, commonly called Moravians, in this truly glorious pursuit; from which it appears that their conduct in this business displays such sound judgment, breathes such a spirit of genuine Christianity, and has been attended with such eminent success, as to entitle its Brethren and missionaries to the most favorable reception from every man, whom the accidents of fortune have invested with power over the poor Africans, and who believe (as I hope every planter believes) that they are his fellow-creatures, and of equal importance with himself in the eyes of an all-seeing and impartial Governor of the Universe."—*Edward's History of the West Indies. Vol. 1, page 487. Fourth Edition.*

In the autumn of 1786 the Rev. Dr. Coke, accompanied by three other Methodist preachers, destined for Nova Scotia, sailed from England for that country, but after being ten weeks at sea, the violence of the gales, a leak in the ship, and apprehensions of the want of water, forced the captain to change his course, and bear off for the West Indies. Having landed on the island of Antigua, the Dr. and his companions resolved, that, instead of proceeding to the original place of their destination, they would attempt to begin a mission on this and some of the neighboring islands. Of these establishments we shall now give a short account.

In the course of their labours the Methodist Missionaries established missions among the slaves in Antigua—in Dominico—in St. Vincents—in St. Kitts—in St. Eustatia—in Nevis—in Tortola and the Virgin Islands—in Jamaica—in Barbadoes—in St. Bartholomews—in Grenada—in Trinidad—in St. Thomas—in New Providence—and the other Bahama Islands. In these labours the Methodists often met with little encouragement. Thus in Nevis many of the most opulent planters at first opposed the design, from an apprehension that it would introduce a spirit of insubordination among the negroes. Hence for a considerable time they would not permit

the Methodists to have access to the slaves on their estates; and when some at length ventured to invite them, they observed the utmost caution in their manner of proceeding: and in some instances, the missionaries, after having preached a few times, were discarded, without being informed of any reason for such a singular mode of treatment. They were rarely however without employment. When dismissed from one plantation they were solicited to visit others, and after a short season were treated in the same manner as they had been before.

In Jamaica, matters were still more unpleasant. A number of the white people at Kingston, soon after the opening of a chapel became so riotous that it was impossible in the evening to meet for the worship of God in peace, both the preacher and hearers being often in danger not only of mischief, but of losing their lives. Mobs and riots were raised against the missionaries. Their chapel was presented as a nuisance. The chapel was stoned—its gates were torn down. Similar outrages were committed at Morart Bay about 30 miles from Kingston. Opposition rose even higher, and the Assembly of Jamaica began the work of legislative persecution and carried it on with great zeal, but not being supported by the Crown, they were not able to accomplish all their purposes, though much inconvenience and even suffering followed. This opposition has continued, until within the last twelve or fifteen years, against the labours of these people, notwithstanding the law was fairly on their side. Yet were they not disheartened so as to abandon a field, where God had been with them from the first. And now we can all see how a gracious God has overruled all these things for good. The Anniversary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in 1834 was attended with an unusual degree of thankfulness on account of the cessation of this opposition and the readiness of the people to hear the word of God.

What has been the entire success of their labours up to this date is not known. But in 1811, twenty-five years from the commencement of the first missions in the Islands, there were 27 missionaries, and between 11,000 and 12,000 converts. That the number both of missionaries and converts has been more than doubled since that time is at least very probable.

In reference to the good effects of these missions, one, who may be regarded both as a competent and credible witness says: "Among the members of the Methodist societies in the West Indies, there are not a few, we hope, who are sincere converts to the Christian faith, though we fear there is a considerable tincture of enthusiasm among them. All of them so far as is known fulfil with propriety, the relative duties of life, even their own masters being judges, or if any occasionally

transgress the rules of morality, they are excluded from the connection, at least after neglecting due reproof. They have abandoned the practice of polygamy, the besetting sin of the negroes; and the fatal influence of Obeah or witchcraft, which is often productive of the most terrible mischief, among the slaves, is effectually destroyed wherever Christianity prevails. As a proof of the general good conduct of the converts, it is not unworthy of notice, that when an office which requires trust and confidence becomes vacant, such as that of a watchman, it is a usual practice with the planters and managers to enquire for a religious negro to fill it. Indeed in Antigua, Nevis, Tortola and St. Vincent's, the proprietors of estates, and the other inhabitants, are so fully satisfied with the conduct of the missionaries, and so sensible of the political, as well as moral and religious advantages resulting from their labours, that they entirely support the missions in the island by their voluntary contributions."

The London Missionary Society has also laboured in this field to a limited extent. In 1807 they established a mission on the river Demarara in Surinam, in South America. This mission from the first was encouraging. Many attended the preaching. Many came asking in the greatest earnestness, the way of salvation. The intemperate were reformed, and "some whom the whip could not subdue for years, the gospel subdued in a few months." Prejudice and opposition here were never violent and soon gave way. A place of worship was soon erected, at which not less than 400 generally attended. A credible witness says: "Perhaps a more attentive congregation was never seen." Ungodly men testified to the good effects of this work. They declared what every Christian would expect, viz: that the reception of the gospel made the indolent, industrious, the noisy, quiet, the rebellious, obedient, the ferocious, gentle. The great promoter of this mission was a rich planter, whose name was Post, and to whom it occurred as it often does to others, that his labours and expenditures seemed to be much more blessed to the slaves on the neighbouring plantations than to his own. The same society has established a mission at Berbice, a neighboring colony, which is highly favoured. They had 14 years ago an immense chapel at Georgetown, attended by great numbers of people of different colours, among whom were supposed to be more than a 1000 negroes. At this place the slaves esteemed it a privilege to contribute to the funds of the Missionary Society.

Did time permit, we might also give some account of the labours of the "Society for the conversion and religious instruction of the Negroes in the West India Islands." But

there is nothing very peculiar or marked in its history. We therefore pass on to notice missions among the slaves in the United States.

Of those who have laboured in this field in our own country, the earliest, that are known, were the United Brethren. The associates of Dr. Bray, a gentleman in England, who had by his last will made some provision for the conversion of the negroes in South Carolina, having solicited Count Zinzendorf to send some missionaries to that colony, the Brethren, Peter Boehler and George Schulcus, were sent thither in the year 1738. In consequence however of the sinister views of those who ought to have assisted them, they were hindered from prosecuting the great object of their mission. Both of them, indeed, soon fell sick. Schulcus died in 1739; and Boehler, who was at the same time minister of the colony of the Brethren in Georgia, retired with these to Pennsylvania, in consequence of being required to carry arms in the war that was carried on against the Spanish.

The next labourers, so far as known, in this field were Rev. Samuel Davies, afterwards President of Nassau Hall, and Rev. John Tod, of Hanover Presbytery in Va. Mr. Davies began his ministry in Hanover in 1747, and in 1755 he gives the following account in a letter to a member of "the Society in London for promoting Christian Knowledge among the poor." "The inhabitants of Virginia are computed to be about 300,000 men, the one-half of which number are supposed to be negroes. The number of those who attend my ministry at particular times is uncertain, but generally about 300, who give a stated attendance; and never have I been so struck with the appearance of an assembly, as when I have glanced my eye to that part of the meeting-house where they usually sit, adorned, for so it appeared to me, with so many black countenances eagerly attentive to every word they hear, and frequently bathed in tears. A considerable number of them (about five hundred) have been baptised, after a proper time for instruction, and having given credible evidences, not only of their acquaintance with the important doctrines of the Christian religion, but also a deep sense of them upon their minds, attested by a life of strict piety and holiness. As they are not sufficiently polished to dissemble with a good grace, they express the sentiments of their souls so much in the language of simple nature, and with such genuine indications of sincerity, that it is impossible to suspect their professions, especially when attended with a truly Christian life and exemplary conduct. My worthy friend, Mr. Tod, minister of the next congregation, has near the same number under his instructions, who, he tells me, discover the

same serious turn of mind. In short, sir, there are multitudes of them in different places, who are willing and eagerly desirous to be instructed, and embrace every opportunity of acquainting themselves with the doctrines of the gospel, and though they have generally very little help to learn them to read, yet to my agreeable surprise many of them, by dint of application at their leisure hours, have made such progress that they can read a plain author intelligibly, and especially their Bibles, and pity it is that any of them should be without them. Some of them have the misfortune to have irreligious masters, and hardly any of them are so happy as to be furnished with these assistances for their improvement. Before I had the pleasure of being admitted a member of your society, they were wont frequently to come to me with such moving accounts of their necessities in this respect, that I could not help supplying them with books, to the utmost of my small abilities; and when I distributed those among them which my friends, with you, sent over, I had reason to think that I never did an action in all my life that met with so much gratitude from the receivers. I have already distributed all the books that I brought over, which were proper for them. Yet still on Saturday evenings, the only time they can spare, my house is crowded with numbers of them, whose very countenances still carry the air of importunate petitioners for the same favours with those who came before them. But, alas! my stock is exhausted, and I must send them away grieved and disappointed. Permit me, sir, to be an advocate with you, and by your means, with your generous friends in their behalf. The books I principally want for them are Watts' Psalms and Hymns, and Bibles. The two first they cannot be supplied with in any other way than by a collection, as they are not among the books your society give away. I am the rather importunate for a good number of these, as I cannot but observe that the negroes above all the human species that I have ever known, have an ear for music, and a kind of ecstatic delight in psalmody; and there are no books they learn so soon, or take so much pleasure in, as those used in that heavenly part of divine worship. Some gentlemen in London were pleased to make me a private present of these books for their use; and from the reception they met with, and their eagerness for more, I can easily foresee how acceptable and useful a larger number would be among them. Indeed, nothing would be a greater inducement to their industry to learn to read, than the hope of such a present, which they would consider both as a help and a reward to their diligence." Having obtained a further supply of books from London for the negroes, Mr. Davies, in a

letter to the same gentleman, gives the following account of the manner in which they were received by them. "For some time after the books arrived, the poor slaves, whenever they could get an hour's leisure from their masters, would hurry away to my house, to receive the charity with all the genuine indications of passionate gratitude, which unpolished nature could give, and which affectation and grimace would mimic in vain. The books were all very acceptable, but none more so than the Psalms and Hymns, which enable them to gratify their peculiar taste for Psalmody. Sundry of them lodged in my kitchen all night, and sometimes when I have awaked about two or three o'clock in the morning, a torrent of sacred harmony poured into my chamber, and carried my mind away to heaven. In this seraphic exercise, some of them spend almost the whole night. I wish, sir, you and their other benefactors could hear any of these sacred concerts. I am persuaded it would surprise and please you more than an oratorio or St. Cecilia's day." Mr Davies afterwards adds, that two Sabbaths before, he had the pleasure of seeing forty of them around the table of the Lord, all of whom made a credible profession of Christianity, and several of them with unusual evidence of sincerity; and that he believed there were more than a thousand negroes who attended upon his ministry at the different places where he alternately officiated.—*Gillies' Historical Collections, Vol. I, p. 334; Appendix to the Historical Collections, p. 29, 37, 40, 42.*

The labours of the Rev. Robert Henry seem to have been blessed much to the negroes in Virginia. The centre of his operations was Cub-Creek, in Charlotte county.

Mr. Henry was succeeded by Rev. Drury Lacy of precious memory. We have seen a letter dated July 14th, 1834, which says, "During Mr. Lacy's ministrations at Cub-Creek, there were about 200 black members added, and there were 60 belonging to Mrs. Coles alone. Several black elders were appointed and set apart to superintend those black members."

Mr. Lacy was succeeded by Rev. John H. Rice, D. D. He, says the same letter, "did but little in that cause, as it began to decline as soon as Mr. Lacy ceased his labours, in Charlotte." Yet the old records of the General Assembly, and of the General Assembly's Board of Missions show that his labour was not in vain in the Lord. In 1807 Hanover Presbytery addressed a circular to the churches under their care, solemnly exhorting them not to neglect their duty to their servants.*

About the time of the labours of Mr. Henry at Cub-Creek, the Rev. Henry Patillo, pastor of Grassy Creek and Nutbush churches in Granville county, North Carolina was labouring

*Virginia Magazine, Vol. III. p. 159.

successfully among the same class of people. But we are unable to give particulars. Of one thing however we are well certified, and that is that the good effects of his labours have not ceased to be felt extensively to this day.

Dr. Semple's history of the Baptists in Virginia, contains many evidences that from the earliest beginnings of that branch of Christ's church in the South, the salvation of the negroes has not been forgotten or slighted in their ministrations. Indeed the vast numbers connected with their churches show that they have laboured much among them.

Very soon after the Methodists began to preach in the United States, the negroes claimed much of their attention. As early as the year 1804, the Methodists had in the United States 23,531 coloured members, of whom most were slaves. Since that time their numbers have been almost incredibly increased. For besides their regular system of itineracy, they have for some years had very flourishing Plantation Missions, especially in South Carolina and Georgia. The testimony in favour of their labours is not to be found merely in their own official reports, veritable as no doubt they are; but in the increasing desire of planters of all denominations and of no denomination of Christians to have their slaves instructed by them. The Hon. C. C. Pinckney in the address previously referred to, says: "On a plantation in Georgia, where in addition to superior management, the religious instruction of the blacks is systematically pursued, the crops are invariably the best in the neighborhood. The neatness and order which the whole establishment exhibits, prove that the prosperity of the master, and the best interests of the negro are not incompatible. The same state furnishes another instance of this position. The people of an absentee's plantation, were proverbially, bad from the abuse and mismanagement of an overseer, (the proprietors residing in England and the attorneys in Carolina.) The latter dismissed the overseer as soon as his misconduct was discovered, and employed another who was a pious man; he not only instructed the negroes himself to the best of his abilities, but accompanied them every Sunday to a Methodist church in the neighborhood. At the end of five years their character was entirely changed, and has so continued ever since. After nearly fifteen years more, the surviving attorney is now in treaty for the purchase of these very negroes, whom he formerly considered as a band of outlaws. Other examples in favour of this plan have occurred in Carolina. In one instance a gentleman invited a missionary to attend his plantation. After some time, two black preachers, who had previously acquired popularity fell into disrepute, and were neglected by their

former congregation. These statements are derived from unquestionable sources. The last case presents a view of the subject, which may have weight with those who think other motives insufficient."

The late Bishop Dehon of South Carolina, turned his attention somewhat to this people and not without success.

We have spoken thus far of the labours of the dead only. Did time permit, interesting details of the labours of many living men might be given. It has been clearly ascertained that in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and in all the Southern States, there are many who are fired with love to the souls of the dying negroes, and are, with various success labouring for their salvation. It will appear by statements already made, and yet to be made, that all denominations of Christians are fairly pledged to this work, so that they cannot consistently retreat from it.

In making the foregoing statements nothing more than an introduction to a great subject was intended. That great subject is our duty respecting the eternal well being of negroes. A friend once inquired respecting President Davies' practice as to the baptism of slave children. We know not what that excellent man's practice was; but we are happy in stating that the highest court in the Presbyterian church has determined in a manner, that is thought satisfactory, all questions on this point. Thus in the minutes of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia for the year 1786, p. 413, it is said: "The following case of conscience from Donnegal Presbytery was overtured, viz.: whether Christian masters or mistresses ought in duty to have such children baptized, as are under their care, though born of parents not in communion of any church? Upon this overture, the Synod are of opinion, that Christian masters and mistresses whose religious profession and conduct are such, as to give them a right to the ordinance of baptism for their own children, may, and ought to dedicate the children of their household to God, in that ordinance, when they have no scruple of conscience to the contrary."

On the next page (414) of the same record, it is said that "It was overtured, whether Christian slaves having children at the entire discretion of unchristian masters, and not having it in their power to instruct them in religion, are bound to have them baptised; and whether a christian minister in this predicament ought to baptize them? The Synod determined in the affirmative."

Again on the 315 page of vol. iii., containing the minutes of the General Assembly for 1816, is this entry:

"The committee to which was referred the following ques-

tion, viz : Ought baptism on the promise of the master, to be administered to the children of slaves, reported, and their report being amended was adopted, and is as follows, viz :

“1st, That it is the duty of masters who are members of the church, to present the children of parents in servitude, to the ordinance of baptism, provided they are in a situation to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, thus securing them the rich advantages which the gospel promises.

“2nd, That it is the duty of Christian ministers to inculcate this doctrine ; and to baptize all children of this description when presented to them by their masters.”

It is proper here to state that among the most serious obstacles to the spread of the gospel among this people, the use of ardent spirits has long held and does still hold a prominent place. We once heard a slave-holder say that if Abolitionists had stirred up as much rebellion and caused as much bloodshed among the negroes as the retailers of ardent spirits had done, there would long ere this have been a civil war.

Nat Turner's insurrection broke out in the region that formerly manufactured vast quantities of apple-brandy. His followers are known to have been highly stimulated with this *liquid fire*. Indeed, we know a clergyman who for many years has resided and travelled extensively in the South, and who testifies that among scores of negroes under sentence of death whom he has visited, he remembers but two, who were not led to commit the crimes that brought them to such a sentence by some sort of influence arising from strong drink ; and in most cases by drinking just before they committed the crime. It gives us pleasure to state that the sound principles of the Temperance reformation are so few, so plain, and so simple, that they are of easy application to this kind of population. Many recent experiments in the South prove the truth of this assertion, and exhibit most blessed effects arising from the introduction of this reformation among them. Let the friends of morality and religion persevere. Drunkenness is the enemy of the black and the white. It destroys both soul and body, in time and eternity.

We have in possession a number of printed documents written by good men residing in the South on the subject of the religious instruction of the negroes.

One of them is the “Rev. Dr. Richard Furman's exposition of the views of the Baptists relative to the colored population of the United States, in a communication to the Governor of South Carolina,” and published at his recommendation. In this document, it is stated that the result of his inquiry and reasoning leads among others to the following conclusions :

“That Masters having the disposal of the persons, time, and labour of their servants, and being the heads of families, are bound, on principles of moral and religious duty to give these servants religious instruction; or at least to afford them opportunities, under proper regulations, to obtain it; and to grant religious privileges to those who desire them, and furnish proper evidence of their sincerity and uprightness. Due care being taken at the same time that they receive their instructions from right sources, where they will not be in danger of having their minds corrupted by sentiments unfriendly to the domestic and civil peace of the community.” Page 15.

The second document is styled “Practical considerations founded on the Scriptures relative to the slave population of South Carolina,” respectfully dedicated to the “South Carolina Association,” by a South Carolinian, understood to be the Rev. Dr. Dalcho of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Charleston. The concluding sentence is in these words: “If we are the owners of slaves, our duty to God, to our country, and to ourselves, all urge the necessity of affording them instruction in the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the souls of men.” pp. 37, 38.

Another of these documents, whose author is the Rev. Chas. Colcock Jones, D.D., establishes these principles: That the negroes need the gospel: That God has put it in our power to give them the gospel: That we are bound by humanity, consistency, by the spirit of our religion, and by the express command of God to give them the gospel: That we cannot be excused from this work by pleading that they already and sufficiently have the light of life: Nor by pleading that they are incapable of receiving it: Nor by pleading the little success that has been had in this department: Nor by pleading the great and peculiar difficulties of the case.

The next documents are the twelve Annual Reports of the Missionary to the negroes in Liberty County, Georgia, presented to the Association from year to year, and published by order of the Association. These are the most practical and therefore to us the most useful documents in the collection. Passing by the practical matters, we present but one sentence taken from the report of 1833. “The religious instruction of servants is as much a duty as that of children. You are labouring therefore to discharge a duty; and are to account for the manner in which you discharge it at the bar of God.” p. 25.

The next document is: “Report of the committee to whom was referred the subject of the Religious instruction of the colored population, of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, at its sessions in Columbia, South Carolina, December

5th — 9th, 1833, and published by order of the Synod." This able document thus enumerates the benefits which will flow from the religious instruction of the negroes, and clearly shows that it will be to our interest. It specifies these things: "There will be a better understanding of the relation of master and servant and of their reciprocal duties: The pecuniary interests of the masters will be advanced as a necessary consequence: The religious instruction of the negroes will contribute to safety: Another benefit is, we shall thus promote our own morality and religion: Much unpleasant discipline will be saved to the churches: The last benefit mentioned is one that we thus convey to the servants instrumentally: It is the salvation of their souls."

Another document is the "Pastoral letter of the Rt. Rev. Wm. Meade, Assistant Bishop of Virginia, to the ministers, members, and friends, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in the Diocese of Virginia, on the duty of affording religious instruction to those in bondage," and published at the request of the Convention of Virginia. This manly and Christian publication shows it to be our duty to seek the salvation of these people because: "The providence of God in sending these people among us in a state of dependence points out to us this duty: The word of God is particular and emphatic on this subject: The benevolence and mercy of the gospel require this of us: Consistency requires this of us." The conclusion urges the performance of this duty from success already had in the work. In the Appendix are to be found some letters and documents of great worth on this great subject.

But Dr. Jones seems to be in this department more "abundant in labours" than any other man. We have now his excellent and practical pamphlet on the religious instruction of slaves. We are glad to see it sent forth by our Board of Publication, and in its present form too. We trust it will have an extensive circulation. No man will fail to be better informed who reads it with care. It can for a few cents be transmitted by mail to any part of the United States. Our advice concerning it is given in four words: buy, read, circulate, practice it.

The statistics of the negro race in the slave-holding States of this nation are of the most interesting kind. Their increase is prodigious. We cannot go into this matter now, further than to say that the next census will probably show that the number of negroes and mulattoes in the United States is more than four millions. What an object for Christian love and wisdom and effort! Who will not pray for the salvation of these people?

From what has been already said, our minds are fully satisfied of the correctness of the following positions:

I. It is the duty of Christians generally, and of Presbyterians particularly, earnestly to seek the salvation of all the destitute, and especially of the negroes of this country, by such methods as the laws of God require, and in conformity with every proper law of the land, relating to these people. A good police is nowhere adverse to the spread of the gospel.

II. On account of the incalculable benefits resulting to the teacher of the plan of salvation, and to him who is taught as well as to masters and the community generally, it is expedient to do this thing and that speedily.

III. It is entirely safe to do this. No facts can be established to the contrary, and many can be established in support of this assertion.

IV. It is very unsafe not to do it, because all men will have some notions of religion, and if they be not correct notions, they will be erroneous, wild, fanatical, superstitious, or in some way highly dangerous. On this subject we present a short extract from a discourse published by the late Dr. Rice, in the year 1825, on the subject of the injury done to religion by ignorant teachers. In that discourse the writer speaking of fanaticism says :

“ These remarks have a bearing on a particular part of our population, which I think it my duty to state in such terms that the intelligent will understand me. And that this subject may present itself with greater force it ought to be observed, that there is always a predisposition to superstition, where there are no settled religious principles. This state of the human mind, may be regarded as a predisposition to fanaticism where there is a general prevalence of ignorance and rudeness. Now it is well known that there is a large and increasing part of our population whose ignorance is almost absolute. Their spiritual interests have been very generally neglected ; and attempts to afford them religious instruction have often been frowned upon by men of power and influence. But have they thus been able to suppress the workings of the religious principle ? That is impossible. It would be as easy to exclude the light of the sun by a leaf of the statute book. What then has been the result of this very general negligence ? Why, thousands of this race have a set of religious opinions of their own in many very important respects at variance with the religion of the New Testament. They have long shown a most observable preference for those meetings, by whomsoever conducted, where there is most noise and vociferation, most to strike on the senses, and least to afford instruction. While some among them are, no doubt, true Christians, many unquestionably are rank fanatics. They are chiefly under the influence of igno-

rant spiritual guides. It is most obvious to the careful observer that they are withdrawing more and more from those ministrations, where they can learn the true character of Christianity; and insist with increasing pertinacity, on holding meetings in their own way, and having preachers of their own colour. The profession of religion among them is becoming perceptibly less beneficial: so that in some neighborhoods, this very thing generates suspicion of the professor, rather than confidence in his integrity. The preachers among them, although extremely ignorant, (often unable to read a verse in the Bible or a line in their Hymn book) are frequently shrewd, cunning men. They see what influence misdirected religious feeling gives them over their brethren and they take advantage of it. Many of them feel their importance, and assume the post of men of great consequence. This thing is growing in the Southern country. And while efforts to afford these people salutary instruction have been repressed or abandoned, a spirit of fanaticism has been spreading which threatens the most alarming consequences. Without pretending to be a prophet, I venture to predict, that if ever that horrid event should take place, which is anticipated and greatly dreaded by many among us, some crisp-haired prophet, some pretender to inspiration, will be the ringleader as well as the instigator of the plot. By feigning communications from heaven, he will rouse the fanaticism of his brethren, and they will be prepared for any work however desolating or murderous. The opinion has already been started among them, that men may make such progress in religion, that nothing they can do will be sinful, even should it be the murder of those whom they are now required to serve and obey! The present state of the country presents a prospect truly alarming; and when the rapid growth of our population both black and white is considered, it requires a man of a stout heart indeed, to view the scene without dismay. It is appalling, when such a mighty power as that afforded by the religious principle, is wielded by ignorant and fanatical men. Shall we, then, let this matter alone?"—*Evangelical and Literary Magazine*, Vol. 8, pp. 603 and 604.

How literally this "prediction" was fulfilled in the Southampton insurrection, many remember. A "crisp-haired" fanatic led it on.

V. Not only the general course of legislation, but also the general tenor of Providence unite in declaring that the great body of teachers for this people must for the present at least be white men. It is truly marvellous that although Dartmouth College was endowed chiefly as a school, in which to train up Indians for useful stations, yet did that institution never, so far

as is known, furnish more than one or two useful and successful preachers of the gospel from among that people. As early as the year 1693, the Earl of Burlington and the Bishop of London, for the time being, who had been constituted by the great Mr. Boyle trustees of the fund he left for the advancement of Christianity among infidels, directed the proceeds to be paid to the president of William and Mary College in Virginia for the education and instruction of a certain number of Indian children. This charity was continued for more than eighty years; yet did it never raise up a missionary to the Indians. In like manner efforts have been made for the last century to train up useful ministers and missionaries of the negro race for this country. As early as the year 1744 the venerable Dr. Styles and the Rev. Samuel Hopkins undertook the education of two apparently promising negroes with a view to the ministry; but it was finally a failure. Dr. John B. Smith also laboured for the same object but never really served the church in this way. Many other efforts have been made, but generally, though we are happy to say not universally, they have been unproductive of any solid or extensive good. If valuable ministers, therefore, are to be raised up from this people, in our country and in sufficient numbers, it must probably be at least for some time to come, from amongst white men.

VI. If Protestants do not attempt and execute this work, Jesuits will undertake and execute a most undesirable work among them. Not only the spirit and genius of popery, but also the developments of policy made in the Leopold Reports, put this matter beyond all doubt. The danger and annoyance of such influences may be learned not only from the doctrines of Romanism and the general history of its acts in every nation, where it has prevailed, but also in particular acts in reference to missions. Thus in St. Vincents in the West Indies the Methodist Missionaries attempted to begin a school among the native Caribs, and the legislature of the islands gave an estate for the support of the institution; but the Catholic priests of Martinico infused suspicions into the minds of the poor people, that the missionaries were employed by the King of England, and by this means raised their jealousy to such a pitch, that it was found necessary to withdraw from among them.

Among the negroes, however, the Methodists were more successful, and in a short time collected such numbers of them in their societies as amply recompensed them for the failure of their labours among the Caribs. In 1793 the Legislative Assembly of St. Vincents, which had at first patronized the

Methodist Missionaries, passed a very rigorous act against them, prohibiting them from preaching to the negroes under the severest penalties. For the first transgression, it was enacted that the offender should be punished by a fine of £10; for the second, by such corporeal punishment as the court should think proper to inflict, and likewise by banishment; and if the person should return from banishment, by death!

The emissaries of the Pope have shown their real feelings in reference to evangelical missions, in their attempts on the Sandwich Islands and in their bitterness after their failure, as also in their more recent and cruel conduct in Otaheite.

In the prosecution of the work, it must not be forgotten:

1st. That all that shall be done must be with the consent and under the sanction of proprietors of estates and of slaveholders generally, where the negroes are slaves.

2nd. That the friends of religion should labour to obtain unity of views, sentiments, and purposes amongst all the ministers and churches in our bounds; especially where this population is large.

3d. There must be exercised in the whole matter a sound discretion, and a careful examination of every step.

4th. Also unbleaching intrepidity, and Christian firmness.

5th. Untiring perseverance and unceasing effort.

6th. That long patience, which the husbandman hath when he waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth.

7th. Undoubted love to God and to all men.

8th. Correct statistical information of the number of black members in our churches, and hearers in our congregations, should be obtained and published.

9th. A hearty and steady engagedness of private members in all our churches in continual and becoming labours for the salvation of those immediately dependant upon them, should be urged.

10th. Some years ago (in 1833) there was a proposal to organize a general Board or Missionary Society in the South, for the special purpose of conducting this work. At the time we were in favour of such an organization. But it failed from some cause. In the present state of our church, the Board of Missions, (Domestic,) acting as it does through the Presbyteries, and by their advice, is perhaps fully adequate to the work. We see not why they may not do it all, if the churches will but furnish the means, and if proper men can be found. We have spoken of a general Board. Local Associations are and will continue to be in many respects useful and important. Let such be formed, on correct principles wherever it may be useful. **A form of a constitution for such an association "auxili-**

ary to the Board of Domestic Missions" constitutes a valuable part of the Appendix to the pamphlet under review.

A friend of ours, who has long felt an interest, and who has through a course of years conducted an extensive correspondence on this subject, has shown us a large number of letters obtained by him for public use from clergymen of high standing in several different denominations, from lawyers, physicians, judges, members of Congress, intelligent planters, officers of public institutions, and others residing in Virginia and Texas, and States lying between them. We find in these letters from men residing far apart a remarkable agreement both in feeling and in judgment.

We propose to conclude this article by quoting a few sentences on topics, which we deem of great importance.

One says, "From my own experience I should say there is but one obstacle to success, and that is a belief among the slaves, that all scriptural passages which bear upon their peculiar situation, have been interpolated by white men. How far this notion prevails I cannot say, but I am sure it does to a great extent."

Another says, "I cannot conceive how any one, who acknowledges the obligations of Christian duty can decline affording Christian instruction to his slaves. That this duty of instruction may be safely performed, seems to me manifest from the very precepts of Christianity. The whole tenor of the Bible inculcates nothing but what, if practised, must contribute to the common advantage of the parties [master and servant.] The chief source of danger from the negro race consists in keeping them ignorant of the principles of Christianity. My experience in this matter has been sufficient to satisfy me that there is no yeomanry in the world, who would make a better return for the labour of moral instruction, so far as the great leading principles of Christianity are concerned."

Another says, "Sermons to coloured people ought to be studied and well prepared. The preacher must by all prudent means enlist public favour. The negroes must be treated with kindness and respect. In giving catechetical instruction, their ignorance and blunders must not be allowed to expose them before their fellows, but must be covered. Their feelings must not be wounded."

Another says, "We must guard against the danger of so presenting the subject of religion to the minds of the negroes as to make the operation of their senses and imagination a substitute for the exercise of the right affections of the heart. Such a method of instruction should be adopted as would make a lawful and judicious use of the senses and imagina-

tion; and therefore sermons addressed to them should abound with illustrations taken from common life; a course justified by the parables of our Saviour."

Another says, "Undoubtedly Christians ought to engage in this great work without delay. Nothing can be gained by postponement. The moral wretchedness of our coloured neighbours demands immediate relief; and every principle of humanity and religion urges us to afford it. Preaching intended for this class of persons should be on important subjects, as simple as possible, familiar, attractive and solemn."

Another says, "I think that our white population is prepared for this work; and I know that many of the negroes are perishing for lack of knowledge. All our churches are doing a little for these too long neglected immortals; but the efforts used bear no just proportion to their numbers and necessities."

Another says, "Our Convention appointed a committee to prepare, or collect and publish a series of tracts for the benefit of the slaves, which may be read to them, or by such of them as can read. I trust the scenes, which are enacting in some parts of the north, will convince all our citizens that our first duty is to instruct them in the principles of religion, and not seek to inspire them with lofty notions, which will only rouse up against them the worst feelings of the whites."

Two others relate at length how they overcame reluctance in their negroes to attend upon religious instruction. They gave them a part of Saturday for doing those things, which they had formerly done on the Lord's day, as going to a market, &c. They also gave them two or three hours, when preaching could be had during the week. They thus showed that they were willing to lose, (if loss it was) a portion of their time for their spiritual good. "This course soon removed all outward opposition."

Another says, "Ministers ought not only to preach a great deal more than formerly to servants, but also preach a great deal to white people about the instruction of servants, so as to convince the whole church and the servants that we are in earnest in this business and intend to persevere."

Another says, "May I entreat you to be zealous, as you value the welfare of your country, the prosperity of our church, your own reputation as a minister of the gospel, and the approbation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I am assured that nothing under God, will ever give motion to our Southern Zion in this most momentous of all causes of Christian benevolence before us, but the united, determined and protracted effort of God's ministers."

Another says, "Under present circumstances it is evident

that they who engage in the delicate business of instructing our slaves, must confine themselves to the method of oral communication. But this limitation should not produce the slightest discouragement. Written documents bore but a small part in the early propagation of Christianity. Until the present age, indeed the mass of the people have received by far the greater part of their religious knowledge and impressions from the mouth of the living teacher. Even now perhaps the majority in our own country have their religious principles and character formed mainly by oral instruction.

“Respecting the method best adapted to the negroes, experience must decide. A few remarks will develop the general principles on which I would act if called to this high and holy duty.

“1st. To study to make the instructions given both pleasant and profitable to the instructed. The whole carcass of modern technical theology—its metaphysics—its subtle distinctions—its mystical dogmas—its sectarian polemics—its technical phrases, &c. &c.—should be cast away by him who goes to this simple and ignorant people as a Christian teacher. He should know nothing among them but the plain facts, and practical precepts, and the devotional sentiments of the Bible; and these he should set forth in the most simple, intelligible, and animated language, abounding in illustrations drawn from objects familiar to his auditors. But let him avoid negroism and vulgarity of all sorts—they would detract from his respectability, and be offensive to the understanding, and native taste of the negroes themselves, who are ignorant indeed, and to a degree stupid—but they are not fools.

“2d. To study maturely, and to digest in a lucid order, a systematic course of instruction—not the technical system of the schools—but a system of plain, practical truth, adapted to the peculiar state of the people to be instructed—illustrating, inculcating, repeating fundamental truths, and scriptural maxims, till they are well understood: aiming first to lay the foundation of a rational faith and an intelligent conviction—before the feelings and fancies of a blind enthusiasm are stirred up. It is peculiarly dangerous, to set fire to the combustible heap of crude and fanatical fancies that occupy the brain of an ignorant person, such as are most of the uninstructed negroes. It is no hard thing to guide a well instructed mind, in which reason and conscience have their due influence—but what can be done with a full blown enthusiast, or a furious fanatic, who is maddened by the chimeras of a diseased fancy? They will disdain sober instruction and set up for themselves. They will be your rivals, and have the advantage of you too, when once

the flame of blind enthusiasm is kindled in the congregation.

“3d. To avoid cramming an unprepared mind with too much at once. A few ideas at one time should be clearly expressed and deeply impressed. Do not hurry matters; but let the weak stomach digest one bit, before another is administered; relieve the wearied attention, and quicken pure devotional feeling, by sweet hymns and simple fervent prayers, and short affectionate exhortations.

“4th. To combine various modes of instruction; now a short sermon, methodically exhibiting a single point of truth or duty; now a suitable passage of scripture with a pithy commentary; now a catechetical exercise, either on the last sermon or by lecturing at the time, propounding a point clearly, and then examining the auditor to see if he remember and understand. This will quicken attention, fix what is understood, and detect what is wanting.

To carry on this course, meet them twice on Sabbath and once in the week if possible. But do not claim too much of their Sunday leisure, or they will shun you.

“5th. To gain their confidence and love, sympathize with their innocent feelings. talk to them privately, preserve a mild dignity without contemning their ignorance and degradation. Have all patience with them.

“6th. Do nothing without the master’s consent. Teach them what Paul directed slaves to do and be; but beware of pressing these duties too strongly and frequently, lest you beget the fatal suspicion that you are but executing a selfish scheme of the white man to make them better slaves, rather than to make them Christ’s freemen. If they suspect this, you labour in vain.”

Another says, “On the modes of communicating a saving knowledge of Divine Truth to the coloured population, best suited to their genius, habits, and condition, we must remember that oral instruction is the kind of instruction alone that is universally allowed in slaveholding States. Hence the question with us will be, in what mode can oral instruction be best communicated?”

“I answer, 1st. Nothing can take the place of competent, qualified ministers or missionaries; men exclusively devoted to the work, who shall make it their lifetime labour and study, to whom adequate support must be given. The church is as much bound to furnish and support such missionaries, as missionaries to any other heathen people in the world.

“2d. Their labours must be at churches or convenient stations on the Sabbath; and from plantation to plantation during the week. Plantation meetings are scarcely exceeded in utility

by Sabbath or any other kind of meetings, and therefore should be vigorously prosecuted. As a general rule none should attend but residents on the estates where they are held.

“3d. In addition to the preaching of the gospel, classes of instruction should be formed, embracing in the first division, adults; and in the second, children and youth. Special instruction should also be given to those who are members of the church, and those who are applying for admission. Let hasty admissions be avoided.

“4th. The manner of communicating instruction should be plain and familiar; fully within their comprehension; without coarseness or levity; and with fervour. In the earlier stages of instruction, the catechetical method may be resorted to with success, your subjects being of the simplest kind; as you advance and your people acquire habits of attention and reflection and improve in knowledge, your subjects may be more elevated.

“5th. The matter of preaching, at least for no very inconsiderable a time, may be chiefly, narratives, biographies, striking works of God, miracles, parables. Didactic discourses, at least at first, are far from being interesting to them. Vary the exercises of worship by singing, and sing standing. Let portions of scripture be committed to memory, as well as psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, to take the place of the foolish and irreverent ones that are often in use among them. The besetting sins of this people ought to be exposed continually. Here give line upon line, and precept upon precept, until conscience is enlightened, Give encouragement in preaching, address them as men, men whom you love, men whom you believe to be capable of improvement, and who, you make no doubt, will improve.

“6th. Of the classes of instruction, I would say that they are of incalculable benefit. All that can be said in favour of Sabbath schools, and Bible classes, can be said in favour of these classes: properly conducted, they are nothing less or more, than Sabbath schools, and Bible classes for coloured persons. Our main hope of permanently improving this people lies just where it does with every other people: in the instruction of children and youth. Be beforehand with their parents, who can only, in the vast majority of cases, inculcate evil both by word and deed; and if it were practicable, an entire separation of children and adults (as is attempted by our missionaries at some of the stations by boarding schools and the like,) would be the best thing that could be done. Every effort therefore should be made to draw out and attach children and youth to the schools opened on the Sabbath, at stations, and to schools opened in plantations. Wherever these schools

are opened, if the missionary cannot be supported by good teachers, let him instruct the whole school, on the infant school plan himself. His instructions too should not be short, and imperfect, but embrace some regular system of Christian doctrine and practice; so that after a reasonable time, when the course is completed, a connected and intelligent view of Christianity will have been communicated. Connected with such a regular course of instruction, may be the use of scripture cards, and the like; teaching them to sing hymns, &c. Every thing I may say depends upon the teacher. If he is an interesting man, he will behold increased interest and rapid improvement in his classes.

“With adult classes the improvement will generally be slower and the interest perhaps less and not so easily kept up. Let the same general course of instruction be pursued with them, for literally they are but grown up children.

“7th. I must not omit to mention, that these efforts of regularly appointed missionaries, must be seconded by pastors of churches, and when they can, let them have in their own churches, coloured schools, under the superintendance of elders and laymen. Is it not wonderful that our churches have so long remained indifferent to this most interesting field of labour? One-half or two-thirds of our members have nothing to do. And why is it so? Because they will not labour for the coloured population. Let pastors awake and bring the subject strongly and repeatedly before their people.

“8th. The Missionary must be supported by Christian owners; they must labour to improve the servants at home; having regular schools for the children and meetings for the instruction of adults. They should encourage their people to attend public worship, especially should they send the children to Sabbath school; otherwise such schools, let the missionary or teacher do what he may, will decline in all ordinary case.

“9th. Let owners also pay special attention to their plantation regulations; all these should be founded on Christian principles. Discipline, labour, houses, food, clothing, should all be attended to; lest in works we deny our profession. This is fundamental.

“10th. While strict subordination is maintained on plantations, the general police of counties should be rigidly adhered to, and if possible the coloured population protected from ardent spirits. The plan now hinted at, or one very similar, will perhaps be found best suited to their genius, habits, and condition.”

But we must close. If our readers feel half the interest in this subject, which its importance demands, they will thank us for these views, even if they should not concur in every suggestion made. Let every man stand in his lot, and put on the whole armour of God.