

# THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

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## ARTICLE I.

### A TRUE CONSERVATISM.

In Church and State, in sect and party, the words *conservative* and *radical* have acquired a prominence and an emphasis, in the present, never accorded to them in the past. In the pulpit, the senate, and the forum, as well as in the columns of the journal and the pages of the essay or the review, these two terms are the recognised landmarks of every form of modern thought and disquisition. They are the poles of feeling, of taste, of opinion and principle. Every one who talks or writes at all, claims for himself that he belongs to one of these categories, and insists on referring an opponent to the opposite. In American politics we not only discover that the two great parties into which our population is divided are essentially different in the sense of these two criteria, but that each party is further divisible into a conservative and a radical section. There are Republicans who insist upon keeping their party rigidly in the line of its precedents, and others who maintain that its original mission has been fulfilled, and the time has come to propound new issues before the people. There are also Democrats who desire to continue the conflict on principles announced a century ago, whilst others urge the necessity of contending for the more practical interests of the present generation.

## ARTICLE VIII.

OUR CHURCH AND HER WORK AMONGST THE  
NEGROES.

Within the last year or two there has been a great deal of discussion on the negro problem, spoken of by some as the greatest social problem of modern times. It is interesting to note the field of this discussion—the pages of such representative periodicals as *The Century*, *The Popular Science Monthly*, and *The North American Review*—as well as the character of the disputants—Congressmen, statisticians, editors, authors, and bishops. While it is a discussion carried on for the most part calmly and dispassionately, there are nevertheless widely divergent views and not a little clashing of opinions. It is impossible that it should be otherwise in discussing momentous social and political issues.

Happily for the Church, her interest in this great question is widely different, the aspects in which she is to view it of a less vexing character. It may be true that the political casts its baneful shadow over the religious aspects of this problem; and it must be confessed that the social question has thus far very much beclouded our vision of the religious. But, in the good providence of God, the political shadow has well-nigh vanished, and the heavier, more confusing outlines of the social are lifting, so that as a Church we are better able to-day than we have hitherto been to take a calm, dispassionate view of the field; and just in proportion as we obtain a clearer view of it, are we prepared seriously to consider our duty and endeavor to perform it.

Remotely and incidentally the Church is an immense factor in dealing with the social and political features of this "tremendous problem," as one writer terms it; for the higher and purer a man's type of Christianity, the better fitted is he for the duties of social life and citizenship. Even indirectly, therefore, the influence of the Church of Jesus Christ in improving the temporal condition and character of this inferior race far transcends that of all legislative and educational institutions.

But the direct and distinctive work of the Church amongst this people is spiritual, having as its grand aim not improved citizenship; but the salvation of their souls. It is very true that in the execution of this work we must carefully consider methods; and in doing this, we must have due regard to all the environments of the case, social and otherwise.

But the Southern Presbyterian Church has passed safely through these perplexing, initiatory stages of the work; some years ago, after much anxious thought and discussion, she sketched the outlines of her present plan of labor. It is an outline satisfactory to both races, avoiding those questions calculated to kindle animosities or arouse such prejudices as in the providence of God only time can remove. That plan contemplates as its end *The African Presbyterian Church*, and as its intermediate steps the colored evangelistic work and the Institute at Tuscaloosa for training a colored ministry.

But what have we done in filling up that outline map? Not a great deal, it must be confessed. We have fallen much short of our duty. Our labors have been far from commensurate with our opportunities. And yet are we to take the pessimistic view presented in these pages last January?<sup>1</sup> By no means. Many of the difficulties given as reasons, in the article referred to, why our progress has been slow, and why we should henceforth abandon all direct personal effort, belong to an earlier period, in considerable measure antedating even the beginnings of our endeavor. It is very true, as has been stated, that at the close of the war, and for ten years afterwards, there was everything to discourage such effort. The great social and political changes violently introduced into our midst at the close of the war naturally unfitted us for the work of negro evangelisation then, even if we had been possessed of the means. The political party that had prosecuted the war, and whose armies had laid waste large portions of our land, thrust upon us, when we were overpowered, such State governments as never disgraced the civilised world before, arrayed the negroes against the whites, and in the minds of the masses of

<sup>1</sup>“*The Southern Presbyterian Church and the Freedmen.*”—SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, January, 1885, pp. 83-108.

Our people aroused prejudices that naturally rose as barriers in our pathway. With the flower of our youth in untimely graves, our hopes crushed, and fortune gone, and with corrupt adventurers ruling despotically over us by means of the negro vote, it was but natural that our people, even our *Christian* people, should feel little inclined to engage in a work such as lay at our doors. This is evidenced by the fact that beyond the adoption of the plan of an African Presbyterian Church by our Assembly in 1869, we did virtually nothing as a Church until 1876, when the Assembly established the Institute for Training Colored Ministers at Tuscaloosa. Hence no really active measures were taken by us to reach the blacks in a practical way until nine years ago. It will at once be seen, therefore, that it is wholly a mistake to speak of our Church as having been engaged in this work, in some sort of fashion, for the last twenty years.

Finding the beginnings of this work, therefore, nine, and not twenty years ago, let us see if it was properly represented in the view referred to as presented in these pages last January.

The colored evangelistic work first claims our attention, which, as had been expected, first began to assume definite shape contemporaneously with the Tuscaloosa Institute, and naturally, because it was believed that this seminary would furnish evangelists. The laboring force in this department has been chiefly our colored ministry. The Minutes of the General Assembly show that only three such ministers were laboring within our bounds in 1876, five in 1877, seven in 1879, ten in 1883. We must bear in mind the fact that these humble men, of limited mental capacity, were in a great measure untrained, some having been at Tuscaloosa only a few months and some not at all. Of the five reported in 1877, one has for several years been unable to do regular work because of age and infirmities, and another, finding his preparation for preaching entirely inadequate, has since spent two or three years at Tuscaloosa.

A little work has been done during the past nine or ten years by white ministers; but it has not been organized, systematic effort, the only kind ordinarily productive of encouraging results; and in some instances Presbyteries failed, as they often do in

white fields, to secure the proper man. One Presbytery, for instance, employed a white brother for some time; but finding him unsuited for the work, applied to Tuscaloosa for a student to take his place.

Surely, then, in a work conducted on so small a scale, with such heavy discounts, we are not warranted in looking for any decided increase in the number of churches or ingathering of members. If this little force simply held its ground amid untold difficulties and temptations to defection from our ranks, it did well. Even such a work is not to be disparaged or despised. It is matter for encouragement that this handful of humble shepherds and their flocks have been enabled to hold their own until now they see the dawning of a better day.

Let us next glance at our contributions to this cause. It is true we have had for several years a *Colored Evangelistic Fund*. It is likewise true that the contributions to it have been pitifully meagre. But are our churches wholly to blame? It must be confessed that very little prominence has been given to this fund—not enough to test the liberality of our people. No special day has been set apart for contributions to it as for other causes, no special and earnest appeals in its behalf. The gifts of the Church, therefore, cannot be correctly said to be the measure of her interest in this fund.

Meagre as these gifts have been, however, it is still more incorrect to regard the Secretary's tabular reports as indicating their total amount. In the SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW for January, 1885, p. 85, these words occur: "There is one other indication of the amount of interest felt by our Church in work for the freedmen. For years we have had, or tried to have, what is called a *Colored Evangelistic Fund*. How many churches contributed to this fund last year? Exactly *two*; and the amount contributed was exactly \$27.24." This is the sum found in the tabular report for 1884. In the same table for 1883 the amount given was \$467.24; but the Secretary stated in another portion of his report that *seven* Presbyteries, acting independently of the Central Committee in Baltimore, had contributed besides \$2,010.79, and adds: "The sum total for the Church, so far as has been ascertained, (is) \$3,458.29."

Again, in 1885, the tabular report shows only \$45.81, with three churches contributing; but the Secretary elsewhere mentions the fact that "recent reports from the Presbyteries state definitely also that \$1,837, besides the above" (the tabular amount), "were contributed by our people to aid this work in different localities. Much more than this, no doubt, was given, but was not reported."

Nothing is stated respecting these independent collections of non-coöperating Presbyteries in 1884; but as they were accustomed to contributing thus previously, and have been contributing since, the only natural inference is that there was a failure to report such collections in 1884.

Now, small as these total collections are, it is manifestly an injustice to contributing churches and Presbyteries to publish to the world simply the items from the tabular reports as the measure of our interest in this work; that our churches, for instance, gave only \$467, instead of \$3,458 (their real gift), in 1883; or \$45, instead of \$1,882 (probably over \$2,000), in 1885.

Turning now to the TUSKALOOSA INSTITUTE, are its history and work the disgraceful failure they are reported to be in the REVIEW article already alluded to? The language of depreciation and ridicule therein used could scarcely be stronger. If the picture of that humble school of the prophets, as drawn in these pages last January, is correct, our Institute is not only a failure, but a shameful imposition upon our Church, and the Assembly cannot too quickly blot it out of existence. But is that picture correct? Let us simply apply the scriptural test, "By their fruits ye shall know them." With one single exception all the students who have been sent forth regularly from the Institute have been *useful* men; and not only so, all of them have given their Presbyteries satisfactory evidence that they are *intelligent* men. They have acquired a fair knowledge of theology and kindred studies, have become notably ready in the Scriptures, and have invariably acquitted themselves so well in the pulpit as to awaken pleasant surprise in the minds of all white friends who have had the pleasure of hearing them. Of nearly a dozen of these students who have now been licensed, the examinations of

all before their Presbyteries have been respectable, and in some instances remarkable, reflecting a high degree of credit on the institution in which they were trained. One of these cases occurred at the recent meeting of a Presbytery in Mississippi. A colored candidate, trained solely at Tuscaloosa, came before that body, and during a careful examination, extending through the greater part of a day, the candidate evinced such a knowledge of the English branches, moral science, church history and government, and systematic theology, as was highly gratifying to the court, and at the conclusion of the examination it was remarked by the oldest member of the Presbytery that it was a better examination than a certain young white brother had passed recently, and he, by no means a man of mean parts, was a graduate of Union Seminary, Virginia. It should be remarked, furthermore, that the sermon and popular lecture, both neatly written, were of a superior order, and were heard by the congregation with pleasure and profit.

Were it needful, similar accounts of examinations of Tuscaloosa students before Presbyteries in other parts of Mississippi, Tennessee, and Alabama could be given—these students in one instance being called on to preach their trial sermons in one of our largest, most intelligent city churches, and delivering their God-given message so impressively as to awaken a deep interest in their future. The examination of one of these men on Hodge's *Outlines of Theology* was considered peculiarly gratifying by brethren who hold high position in the Church. Yet these men knew not a line of theology on repairing to Tuscaloosa some three or four years before, some of them having at that time only the rudiments of an English education.

Still another was making a similar record in one of the largest cities of Alabama, when a few months ago he was suddenly cut down by death, quickly following to his reward the noble and lamented pastor of the neighboring white church, who had been his sincere and helpful friend, and for whom the poor student's attachment possessed a singularly beautiful and pathetic interest.

The work that is now being done by these men is further evidence of the worth of their training and the sterling character

and practical value of the course of instruction at Tuscaloosa. In every instance they are reported by their white brethren as rendering effective service. Much of it is (because of their brief ministry) only preparatory, only seed-sowing; but it is promising.

Now, can an institution that trains *such* men to do *such* work be worthy of the opprobrium heaped upon it? No; far, far from it. Let us rather be thankful that God put it into the hearts of wise and thoughtful men in our Church to overture the Assembly to open this fountain of blessing to a needy and perishing race.<sup>1</sup>

But this is not the only vindication due our colored seminary. It is greatly misrepresented in the article referred to in the matter of expenses, in a comparison instituted between it and Biddle University, under the care of the Northern Church. Nothing can be more erroneous than that comparison. It is affirmed that it costs \$230 *per annum* to keep a student at Tuscaloosa, and only \$90 at Biddle. The simple fact is, that against the \$90 at Biddle, only \$72 are needful at Tuscaloosa for the same length of time. There is surely quite a difference between \$72 and \$230! The only conceivably way in which this mistake was made is that its author divided the total contributions for the Institute by the total number of students. But with these contributions grounds have been purchased, buildings erected, and professors' salaries paid. The same methods of calculation applied to Biddle would make theological education amazingly expensive there, exceeding some \$1,600 *per student*!

The relation to us of the colored churches and ministers next

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<sup>1</sup> What has just been said respecting the character and attainments of these students applies, of course, only to those who, whether they have completed the full course or not, have gone forth with the confidence and recommendation of the faculty. Thus far they have had to dismiss only one student, a candidate under the care of Roanoke Presbytery, who was guilty of falsehood and insubordination, and perhaps worse crimes. As was to be expected, the writer heard bad accounts of him last fall from a brother in North Carolina, who had heard the expelled student's attempts at preaching. His case was much to be regretted, as he was the first student sent from Virginia.



claims notice. By these intermediate steps—the evangelistic work and the theological school—the end which the Assembly contemplates is an *African Presbyterian Church*. As soon as is possible it is intended that Presbyteries and Synods, and eventually a General Assembly, shall be formed, just as there are among the Methodists African local and general Conferences. To such a goal the negroes themselves instinctively look. They prefer to be separate ecclesiastically as well as socially.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile we enrol their churches, ministers, and candidates with our own.

There are expressions in the REVIEW article in question respecting our attitude towards these few colored brethren and their churches which it is painful to read, expressions such as these: “We are holding ourselves in readiness to shake them off just as soon as it is possible to do so without destroying their organic existence.” “We are not only careful to hold him (the negro) at arm’s length, but our attitude shows him that as soon as he gets *strong enough to stand the shock* (italics ours), we intend to push him a little further away. We have shown him that *the knife is in readiness* to sever the cord that now binds him to us just as soon as he has vitality enough *to stand the operation.*”

These expressions are harsh and painful, and there are thousands of our people and hundreds of our ministers and elders who have no sympathy with them, and would earnestly protest against their being reckoned as the voice and sentiment of our Church. It is true we do contemplate organising these separate colored Presbyteries and Synods; but only for our mutual good and for the welfare and upbuilding of Christ’s kingdom. A few in our Church may be animated by the spirit of fear that is attributed to the whole body—the fear that we shall be swallowed up by negro majorities in Church as we once were in State—

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<sup>1</sup> Whilst our progress is slow, the day is not far distant when we shall see the Assembly’s plan realised. One of these independent colored Presbyteries already exists in South Carolina. Five licensed Tuscaloosa students are now laboring in the bounds of the Synod of Memphis, and will doubtless ere long constitute a separate Presbytery. It will not be long until similar Presbyteries can be formed in Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas.

that a negro influence would soon dominate in our beloved Zion. But certainly the great majority of our people are more rational than to be frightened by such phantoms.

No, our attitude towards the negro is not one of childish, shuddering timidity, prompting us to the harsh, painful utterances quoted above. Calmly, dispassionately, and with unselfish love for and interest in our colored brethren, our Assembly has outlined the map she is attempting to fill up—slowly, it may be—by the two agencies already dwelt upon. The fact confronts us everywhere, that the negroes prefer their own organisations in all the denominations; they prefer their own houses of worship, their own preachers, their own ecclesiastical bodies. Why, then, shall we be charged with selfish, sinful timidity, if we propose, when they shall have been properly trained, to set them apart as a distinct body? Instead of our purpose being cruelly selfish (as it is intimated it is), it is Christian and benevolent. We recognise *their* race instinct as well as our own. We have carefully noted their tendency towards separate organisation. But we know they are not yet fitted for this. Hence we would keep them with us for a time for their good, have their ministers and elders attend our church courts, and, if ordained, be members thereof, and in due time, when they shall have become familiar with Presbyterian usage, and the requisite numbers are found, organise them into a separate body, *in accordance with their own preferences*. Surely this is anything but selfish, sinful timidity. And in the face of such a spirit actuating our Church, it is cruelly unjust to say she merely “*tacked on her colored members to her skirts as a fringe,*” and that we have been at “*pains to tack them on very loosely, so that we can easily rip them off.*” Such language, if it voiced the mind of our Church, would betray a timid, selfish spirit, utterly unworthy of any body professing to be a Church of Jesus Christ.

The author of “The Southern Presbyterian Church and the Freedmen,” in view of various difficulties set forth, concludes his article with a frank proposition, that we turn over the *management* of this whole work (including, of course, all personal direct effort) to the Northern Church, our own Church meanwhile abolishing the Tuscaloosa Institute, and forwarding her contributions

to the Freedmen's Board in Pittsburgh, Pa. Five reasons are assigned as recommending such a course, viz.: (1) The superiority of Northern schools; (2) Economy; (3) The violation of our Constitution in licensing Tuscaloosa men; (4) The stronger sympathy of the negro with Northern influence; (5) The better promotion of fraternal feeling.

(1) As to the first of these reasons, viz., superiority of Northern methods of education, it is doubtful, in view of the facts presented, whether, in its practical aspects, Northern training *is* better. Moreover, as will be shown hereafter, our own school at Tuscaloosa is annually raising its standard, whilst still retaining its distinctively practical features, and contemplates a regular academic department, separate from and introductory to the theological. It is also a mistake to say (as has been said) that "the superior advantages afforded by their" (the Northern) "schools, and the more sympathetic relations which they sustain to the students has reached the inmates of Tuscaloosa Institute and become a disturbing element" (SO. PRES. REVIEW, Jan., 1885, p. 105-6). To only one student at Tuscaloosa have Northern schools been a disturbing element, and his moral character was such that it became imperatively needful to dismiss him. It is not too much to say that no other school, North or South, would have borne as long and as patiently with him. Prayers, counsel, oft-repeated admonition, and long-continued forbearance proved all in vain. It is much to be feared that want of the grace of God in his heart, and not "the superior advantages" and "sympathetic relations" of Northern schools, was the disturbing element in his sad case.

(2) The reasoning from the standpoint of economy has already been shown to be wholly erroneous.

(3) The licensing of men trained at Tuscaloosa is no more unconstitutional than that of many able and useful ministers in our white fold. Both classes are licensed under that provision of our Book of Church Order which provides for extraordinary cases. If the licensing of the negro who has never studied Hebrew and Greek, is unconstitutional, so is that of the white brother. Moreover, there is a wide-spread desire throughout our Church to allow in our white seminaries just what is in use in the colored,

viz., an English theological course. Why, then, look with such distrust upon that in Tuscaloosa, which so many are trying to introduce at Union and Columbia?

(4) Doubtless hitherto the North has had a larger measure of the sympathy of this people than we have been able to claim. But this state of things is changing. As we recede from the exciting scenes of the war, the jealousies and animosities of reconstruction days, a better feeling is springing up between the two races. The change in the Federal Government has well-nigh banished the political factor as a disturbing element, and, more than all else, as with the return of more cordial relations our own people have begun to show a more active sympathy for the negro's educational and spiritual welfare, it cannot be said, as it once could, that the North has exclusive access to the sympathies of this dependent race. The old barriers are breaking down, and year by year they show a growing readiness to meet our advances, and to look to us for guidance and instruction. If we do not *now* win largely upon their sympathies, we shall surely not be blameless.

(5) It may be most seriously questioned whether transferring this work to our Northern brethren would be promotive of harmony and fraternal feeling. Even as it is, the manner in which this work is done by our Northern friends does not always meet the approbation of our people; no, not by a great deal. One of our leading church papers recently stated that since Dr. Mattoon's resignation of the presidency of Biddle University, fully developed social equality has been introduced there. Our people would not contribute of their means to an institution so conducted. Thus difficulties, rather than peace and harmony, would greet us on the very threshold of the new scheme.

We can show "a more excellent way" of promoting fraternity over our colored brother as "the bridge across the chasm." The Northern Church is far richer than ours; let them send the money to *us* to do this work. This would, indeed, draw us nearer together; it would be fraternity indeed; for when the pocket is touched it is usually likewise with the heart. We have little to give, they have much. We are on the ground, they are not.

They have the mighty West to care for, we have only our native South. Born and brought up with our colored brother, we know him thoroughly; they do not. To a candid mind, there is every reason why we are of all people in the world the best fitted for this work. Our one great need is the money to carry it on. Then, as a manifestation of fraternal feeling far more eloquent and moving than greetings of delegates, let our Northern brethren send us of their tens of thousands to equip not simply one school but many, and to employ evangelists, white and colored, laboring under the control of the Presbyteries in whose bounds their fields shall lie, and a work shall be accomplished that shall gladden all our hearts and enable us to see eye to eye. Let one illustration suffice. With the theological school inaugurated at Clarksville, we shall not now need Danville Seminary as we once did. Let the Northern Church transfer to us their moneyed interest therein, and with that we could at once purchase a property in the suburbs of Tuscaloosa—an abandoned Roman Catholic convent and school—almost equal to that of Biddle University. It has again and again been offered to us at very low rates; but we have not the funds to purchase with. It has spacious buildings, a number of acres of ground for a truck farm, orchards, out-buildings, and every convenience that we could wish. The buildings are such that we could at once open a distinct academic and normal department, and could accommodate a large number of students, while the ample grounds would furnish opportunity for self-help by means of manual labor. In this manner the expenses of the students could be made even less than they are; their health would not be jeopardised by constant study, and they would be taught habits of self-reliance. If our Northern brethren could only fraternise with us in this practical way, could only trust us to do this blessed work, and help us do it in our poverty, how soon would bitterness and recriminations be things of the past!

In the REVIEW article already frequently alluded to, several reasons are presented why it seems useless for us longer to attempt anything directly in behalf of the negro—viz., because social, political, ecclesiastical, and Northern influences are all insuperable obstacles in the way. But, taking these objections up in

order, that urged from the social standpoint loses all its force when carefully examined, because it is based on a false assumption. It is assumed that active effort on our behalf for the negro necessarily involves social equality. Such expressions as these occur in the argument: "Social equality we cannot, will not, consent to. But we see at a glance how this must interfere with our work among the negroes. We have one hand on their heads, holding them down socially; how much can we lift them up religiously with the other? . . . If to lift them up religiously it should be necessary to remove the social pressure, will we do it? If to hold them under socially it should be necessary to withdraw the religious uplifting, will we do it? . . . The white people of the South deem it a matter of *first* importance to maintain their present social ascendancy, and they cannot take an active interest even in religious work, if that work threatens to disturb this ascendancy" (SO. PRES. REVIEW, January, 1885, p. 93).

This is bringing in an entirely needless question—one with which the matter of our duty should never be burdened. It is wholly irrelevant, needlessly appealing to passions and prejudices that, when once called up, inevitably obscure the truth we ought to endeavor to see clearly.

Experience has shown that we *can* labor successfully among the negroes, while moving in a separate social sphere. *Our* best people do not think of social equality; neither do *theirs*. The race instinct is God-given and strong, and is a natural barrier keeping us apart; and if on the one side there were not imprudent attempts to force social equality and on the other equally imprudent and needless utterances about our determination "to keep the negro down," and to keep him "in the barnyard and kitchen," we would see and hear very little to disturb us on this question from the negroes themselves. Social equality is certainly not taught or practised at Tuscaloosa, and yet it would be hard to find in any institution or community more cordial and sympathetic relations than exist between the two races there—not simply between students and teachers, but also between the white and colored Presbyterian churches.

From the tone and spirit of Col. J. T. L. Preston's article in

the April number of this REVIEW, it is to be inferred that like pleasant relations exist at Lexington. And it will be thus wherever our white people, in the spirit of their Lord and Master, enter upon this work earnestly. Every year the demonstration from experience grows stronger that the social alarm is a needless one, and that it is time for us to awake from its delusion.

The second objection, that urged on political grounds, is practically out of date. The change in the Federal administration has brought about a marked change amongst the negroes. The recent independent political convention of negroes in Virginia is very significant. In all the current discussions on the negro question, it is admitted on all sides that throughout the South as a whole the negro has ceased to consider the realm of politics a terrestrial paradise, and in many States he now takes little or no interest in political questions. But granting that he is arrayed against us politically from January to January (which is now far from being wholly true), is that a just reason for withholding our Christian efforts from him? Did the Apostles reason thus? They were Jews, and many of the Gentiles, notably the Romans, were their oppressors and political enemies. It doubtless required much grace to toil for the spiritual good of oppressive Roman tax-gatherers and soldiers, but they did it gladly. For several years there have been many pastors in Virginia who have had "Readjusters" in their congregations, and the feeling between "Readjusters" and "Funders" has been strong, even bitter. But has any pastor felt that differences in politics absolved him from faithful pastoral duty to all alike? By no means.

The objections from an ecclesiastical standpoint have already been sufficiently considered. It need only be added, the tone and spirit in which these objections are urged do great injustice to our Church.

With reference to the last objection, Northern influence, it is hard to see the consistency of presenting this as an evil in one place, marring our relations with the negro, and in another place deliberately proposing that our Church introduce this evil throughout all our bounds, giving it her official sanction, and asking our people to give it annually their moneyed endorsement!

We all frankly admit that there are difficulties, many and serious, in the way of our working successfully amongst the negroes. But a solemn sense of duty, rising above all obstacles, presses upon the heart and conscience of our Church. Delegating this work to others will never satisfy this sense of duty or admonition of conscience. The North might do it ever so well in our stead; but this would not remove the burden from our own hearts. There is an instinctive feeling—and it is a Christian birthright—that we have a *personal* duty to our neighbor, the black as well as the white. The sending away of our funds to others (even if that could be reckoned on, *as it certainly could not*), and inviting them to come to our very doors and with our gifts do this work for us, will not banish this instinctive feeling. It is a conviction planted of God, and in his providence he has intended that we should give it sacred regard. Alas! may the day never come when we shall deliberately stifle it! If we listen to those whose counsel is virtually to abandon religious effort for this needy race (such would surely be the outcome of the new measure proposed), we may well expect the chastening hand of Providence and the withholding of his favor. In vain shall we look for his blessing on our white work at home or our mission work abroad, if we deliberately turn as a Church from these perishing millions in our midst, who prepare our food, build our homes, plough our fields, and nurse our children, and whose fathers served ours long and faithfully, in prosperity and adversity, and were bound to them by the strongest yet tenderest ties. If we turn from them, the blood of souls shall be to no small extent upon our skirts.

Instead of turning over this work to others, let us address ourselves to it with new vigor. Let us follow up the more vigorous steps taken by the Secretary of Home Missions in his September circular in behalf of the *Colored Evangelistic Work*. The action of the last Assembly touching this matter, which was itself an index of awakened interest, should be carefully noted. Many of our people *wish* to give to this effort, and only wait for the opportunity to be offered. Let not our pastors be afraid to present this cause, so warmly advocated by the Secretary, and urge



it upon the attention of their people. But beyond and in addition to this, why should not a larger *per cent.* of the Sustentation fund be devoted to this work? At present five *per cent.* is the limit fixed; let it be increased to ten, thus doubling the amount.

Moreover, let Presbyteries and Synods take a more active interest in this field of labor. The Synod of Virginia acted wisely last fall in employing a colored evangelist at her own expense. Let others do likewise. Many of our Presbyteries now have safe, intelligent colored ministers laboring under their care. They are men they have licensed; they can trust them. Let these men be sent forth with their presbyterial and synodical credentials to do evangelistic work, and let our white pastors cooperate with them cordially, endeavoring to awaken interest in them and in their mission, helping them in the opening up of fields, and assisting them in securing temporary or permanent places in which to conduct divine service.

A preparation for this work in many many of our communities can be made in Sabbath-schools for colored youth—a work in which more of our consecrated laymen might well imitate the example that has so long been as a shining light in Tuscaloosa and Lexington.

Let our Church likewise take a more wide-spread interest in the *Tuscaloosa Institute*. Year by year it has grown upon the confidence of our people. They now no longer look upon it as an experiment. Its students favorably impress all with whom they come in contact. In view of these facts no pastor need hesitate to present its claims cordially, and appeal earnestly for a larger measure of support in its behalf. Many of our churches fail to take up collections for it through neglect. To obviate this, let the claims of the Institute be fully set forth at the meetings of all our Synods, either by the Secretary in person, or some one commissioned to represent him, and let the Assembly's Executive Committee in Tuscaloosa annually address all our churches, both vacant and supplied, previous to the first Sabbath in December, such a circular letter as our other committees do relative to the other causes and collections, thus directly impressing upon them the importance of this work.

For several years the need of a distinct academic department has been felt; but the Executive Committee lacked the means with which to equip it. Their last annual report indicates that this long cherished plan is beginning to attract attention, and it may reasonably be hoped that at an early day such a department will be established, thus furnishing an academic course preparatory to and separate from the theological. In an humble way its plan will be somewhat analogous to that of the Southwestern Presbyterian University at Clarksville. With a cordial, full presentation of our Institute and its claims from all our pulpits, there is little reason to doubt that our people would give such a response as would enable our Committee in Tuscaloosa to take steps at once in developing these plans.

In conclusion, instead of abandoning this work, or, what amounts to the same, delegating it to others, let us take it nearer our hearts, let it oftener find a place in our prayers, let us increase our gifts to it, and, above all, let us devote consecrated, personal endeavor to this work, which has for earnest, consecrated laborers its joys as well as its trials.

D. C. RANKIN.

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ADDITION TO NOTE P. 749.—Since the above was written the writer has received a letter from an esteemed brother in Texas, in which this statement occurs: "Our work (amongst the colored people) in this Presbytery has grown . . . from nothing to this: we have now three ordained colored ministers and one licentiate and six organised churches with five comfortable church buildings. Our colored ministers maintain a good character, and I think are slowly gaining in influence among their people. We could have two more intelligent men—educated men of the Island of Jamaica—put into the work of preaching at once if we had the means to support them."