

T H E

Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanters.

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THE EDUCATION OF THE FREEDMEN.

By the common consent of Christendom, the education of the millions of liberated slaves in America is esteemed one of the greatest and best works of our day. The sympathies of civilized nations of both hemispheres are awakened in behalf of the freed people. To educate the freedman—to fit him for the new sphere into which he has passed—to qualify him to take his place by the side of his more privileged brethren as a freeman and a citizen—to take his place and keep pace with his fellows in the onward march of the grand army composed of volunteers of almost every nation under heaven, is not inappropriately called "*the duty of the hour.*" Not only during the war, but after the war, may the voice of Providence be distinctly heard, warning the American nation, in tones solemn and unmistakable, that it can only prosper as it treats with justice and humanity the long-injured bondman. God has linked the destiny of the American Republic with the humble and long-despised victims of her avarice and cruelty. If there is anything peculiarly cheering to the heart of the serious and thoughtful Christian patriot, in the events of the present day, it is not the cunning schemes of reconstructionists, nor the resistless power of our arms, nor the vast resources of material wealth, but rather the indications of national repentance and national reformation; chief among which is the disposition to care for the poor and needy and to raise up the weak and lowly.

The Government, by means of the Freedmen's Bureau, endeavors to extend protection to freedmen in the full enjoyment of their civil rights in all parts of the country. It also aims to extend to the freedmen the advantages of education. In accomplishing this latter object, the Government accepts, and for the most part *relies upon* the aid of associations and churches, all acting for one end, and all considered as connected with the Freedmen's Bureau. In this way schools have been opened everywhere—a grand and most successful school-system has been speedily put into operation, enlisting the sympathies of the best people in the land, re-

LETTER FROM REV. R. J. DODDS.

LUCESCO, March 7th, 1866.

DEAR BROTHER WYLIE—I have just returned from a tour in the field of my former pastoral labors. The joy of meeting again, after an absence of more than nine years, a people to whom I had stood in so endearing a relation, was like the joy of one's espousals. Still it had one drawback, as what earthly joy has not? Some dear faces were missing; faces on which I should have liked to look once more, but never shall—in this world.

You know my congregation comprised six little groups of Covenanters, distributed over an area of about forty-five miles in length by about thirty in breadth, lying in the four counties of Armstrong, Clarion, Jefferson and Indiana. We called it Rehoboth, seeing that we had room, and trusting that the Lord would make us fruitful in the land. My pastorate, which was a very happy one, commenced in June, 1852, and lasted till September, 18th 6, when you took me away from among my own dear people to send me to the Foreign field.

I was succeeded, May 11th, 1859, by the Rev. T. M. Elder, an able minister and a faithful and affectionate pastor. In the course of a year or two, the congregation having grown, and bro. Elder's bodily strength proving inadequate to the vast amount of riding demanded by such a scattered charge, the field was wisely divided, three of the stations comprised in it being formed into a new congregation, which took the name of Salem. By the favor of the great Shepherd of the sheep, Salem congregation was settled, Feb. 5th, 1862, under the pastoral care of Rev. A. J. M'Farland, a man every way suitable for the place, the people and the work.

It was a great satisfaction to me on my return to find my children walking in the truth; and I was very glad and very thankful for all the evidence I saw of the abundant blessing of the Head of the Church on the arduous and self-denying labors of my beloved brethren Elder and M'Farland. Since the time of my departure there have been erected within their bounds five new houses of worship. Three of these are finished, and the other two are nearly so, and I believe none of them are burdened with debt. The Salem congregation, bro. M'Farland's charge, has about as numerous, I think quite as numerous a membership as my whole congregation had when I took charge of it in 1852. The other part of the field, which retained the old name of Rehoboth, and remains under the pastoral care of bro. Elder, has not nearly so fertile a missionary soil; society outside of our communion, throughout that part of its bounds in which most of our people reside, having completely crystallized, or rather petrified, more than a generation ago. It has also suffered considerably within the last nine years from deaths and removals. The consequence is, that it has not, in visible growth, yielded nearly so large a return for the labor bestowed upon it, as the Salem congregation. Bro. Elder finds, however, a considerable offset against these discouragements in the very distinct

mark which he has been enabled to make in the community around him, through the medium of an excellent academy of which he has charge, in the pleasant little village of Dayton, in the northwestern part of Indiana county, and which he conducts in a very efficient and satisfactory manner, with the help of an able corps of teachers, chosen always with equal regard to their scholarship and their religious principles.

I must confess frankly, that in revisiting the scene of my early labors, my main object was to see and salute as many as possible of my dear brethren there and the friends of the olden time; while I made the special work with which I am charged by your Board, that is, the raising of funds for the Foreign Mission, quite a secondary consideration. The circumstances too were unpropitious. Being unable to fix the time of my tour long enough beforehand, to plan its details in advance, I came down on them in most places like Elijah the Tishbite, without any sufficient forewarning or announcement. The weather was very disagreeable, the roads very bad, and the evenings (part of the time) very dark; which, you know, makes a great difference in an enterprise, the success of which depends on meetings held at many and widely distant points in the backwoods, among a scattered people. Still, I succeeded far beyond what anybody but one who knew the people would have expected; and if the rest of the church does half as well, the Foreign Mission treasury will overflow before October. One thing in relation to the contributions of the people there deserves commendatory notice, viz. that what they gave, they gave without asking; except in some cases such asking as was implied in announcement on short notice, of a collection to be taken up at the close of some lecture or sermon.

Before entering upon the statement of the receipts for the Foreign Mission Fund from those bounds, I must mention a previous one, viz.:

Jan. 23.	From Brookland,*.....	\$27 00
<i>Received within the bounds of Rehoboth congregation:</i>		
Feb. 12.	From Christian friends at Dayton.....	14 53
“ “	Rev. T. M. Elder and family,.....	10 00
13.	“ Piney,†.....	20 00
14.	“ Wm. Thomas, at Mahoning,‡.....	1 00
15.	“ Robert Pollock, “.....	5 00
16.	“ Robert M’ Isaac, “.....	10 00
19.	“ Christian friends at “.....	9 56
<i>Received within the bounds of Salem congregation.</i>		
Feb. 19.	From Bear’s Run,.....	21 00
25.	“ Belleview,.....	20 75
28.	“ Wm. P. Jenks, Esq., Brookville,.....	5 00

* I have not yet given the other branches of bro. Reed’s congregation an opportunity to make special contributions.

† Piney had very recently made its regular contribution on a liberal scale.

‡ Some of the brethren at Mahoning who desired to contribute liberally were not prepared; but they know how to forward through their pastor.

Feb. 28.	From other Christian friends in Brookville,.....	\$43 60
March 2.	“ Mrs. E. Minor, at Warsaw,.....	1 00
“	“ John Bell, at “	1 00
“	“ a collection at “	3 33
3.	“ Mrs. Sarah Conn, “	5 00
4.	“ another collection at “	22 10
“	“ Christian friends at Beechwoods,.....	8 68
5.	“ Isaac Temple, “	2 00
“	“ Miss Jane Hanna, “	1 00
“	“ Joseph M’Giffin, at Jefferson,.....	5 00

\$236 55

Expenses, charged to Foreign Mission Fund.

Feb. 8.	Fare on R. R. from Kiskiminetas to Kittanning,.....	\$ 55
March 6.	Fare by stage from Jefferson to Kittanning,.....	4 50
“	Other expenses <i>en route</i> ,.....	1 00
“	Fare from Kittanning to Kiskiminetas, by R. R.....	60
7	Uncurrent money thrown inadvertently in collections,.....	4 30

\$10 95

Having now fairly set out, I expect to continue my travels with little interruption till fall, and in the course of time to visit as many as possible of our congregations. My intention is to take up a special collection for the Foreign Mission Fund wherever I preach or lecture, unless where by a special dispensation I shall see best to omit it. I hope to have good reports to send in to you from time to time.

Yours, truly,

R. J. DODDS.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT—AN OBJECTION ANSWERED.

THE following paragraph, contained in a letter from an esteemed friend, presents in a plausible light a popular objection to the religious amendment of the Constitution :

“ You contend that there should be embodied in the Constitution : a recognition of God as the source of all authority, an acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule, and a declaration of subjection to Christ as King. Now I think you should wait until men believe these things, before you require them to make a profession of believing them. Unbelief is a sin, but professing belief when it does not exist, is adding sin to sin. Surely you would not wish the people to be worse than they are. I think that such a confession honestly made would entitle a man to church privileges, and consequently the people of the United States would be turned into a great national church. It is undeniable that the majority of the people are unbelievers in the above named truths, and it would be hypocrisy in them to make such a profession. So long as sinful obligations are implied in citizenship, you may justify yourselves in keeping apart, but it will be difficult to do so on the ground that the people are unbelievers. There is to be no fellowship with unbelievers in the church, but it will be hard to prove that this rule is to be applied in civil matters.”

To this we reply :