

# THE CHURCH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

PHILADELPHIA, JANUARY, 1887.

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

## INTRODUCTION.

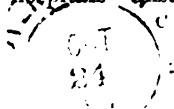
The committee appointed by the last General Assembly to arrange and issue the consolidated magazine now present the result of their work. The Assembly decided only the question of consolidation, leaving to the committee all details, including the question of editorship and the selection of an editor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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

#### EARNEST WORDS FROM A COLORED MISSIONARY.

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

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

is doing all that it can possibly do in its present condition; so that if there is any blame that more is not being done, it must rest upon the churches. More than one half of our churches give nothing to this cause. More than one half of our churches practically say they care nothing about the condition of these poor, perishing black brethren. What will these churches say when the books are opened? When the Master shall begin to say, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. . . . Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the *least* of these, ye did it not unto me." It is a fearful thing to neglect the millions in India and Africa and China; but to shut our eyes to the sore and pressing needs of the millions of our own land who are perishing for the "bread of life" is to expose ourselves to still more serious consequences. It will be well for some of these non-contributing churches to remember the solemn and impressive words of Ezekiel, "When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou gavest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but *his blood* will I *require at thine hand.*" This work among the freedmen may be neglected, these millions may be allowed to grow up in ignorance and superstition and vice for lack of schools and competent ministers to break unto them the "bread of life," but we shall answer for it at the bar of God. This letter is not written in the most cheerful tone, but it is impossible to feel cheerful when we see how little is being done in the midst of so much that ought to be done. And yet in spite of this indifference on the part of so many, I am persuaded that there is a brighter future for the Board; that the important work which has been entrusted to it will yet receive from the Church the recognition which it deserves. God hasten the time, is my earnest prayer.

The receipts of the Board of Missions for Freedmen for November were \$4789.84.

## A VOICE FROM ARKANSAS.

REV. F. C. POTTER.

It pains me to hear of the cramped condition of the Board's treasury,—not so much on account of our salaries now due and so much needed, but because the work is thereby hindered. In reading your report in last month's *Record* where so many schools, fields ready for the harvest, had to be refused or abandoned for want of funds, this question arose in my mind, Must the work cease? There are several excellent fields in this state that could be occupied, and which, through earnest work and prayer, would become strongholds of Presbyterianism and great centres of Christian work. It is said by some that Presbyterianism is not adapted to my race, that the masses do not belong or are not in sympathy with the Presbyterian Church. The negro may be Methodist by nature, but grace makes him the strongest kind of a Presbyterian. The Presbyterian Church is adapted to the negro, and the negro is in sympathy with the Presbyterian Church. The question may arise then, "If the Church is adapted to the negro and has the sympathy of the race, how is it, comparatively speaking, that so few negroes belong to the Church?" The fault lies in this one fact—our Church is too slow in entering new fields, in occupying the desolate and waste places. Lack of money compels us to refuse fields white with harvest. Places where strong Presbyterian churches could be built, and which in a few years would become self-sustaining, have to be abandoned. But while we are waiting for means to carry on the work, a sister denomination steps in, enters the work, and uses the opportunities God has given them. Then in after years we attempt to train the people in Presbyterianism when they are grounded and rooted in some other kind of *ism*. Is this state of affairs to continue? Cannot the Church be made to seize the opportunities given it? Will not the Presbyterian Church do the work the Master has assigned it? I pray that some of God's stewards, out of the abundance with which God has blessed them, may relieve the Board of its embarrassments.