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Work of South Carolina Methodism
Among the Slaves.

BY REV. LEROY F. BEATY.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE
SOUTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH, SOUTH, AT COLUMBIA, S. C., NOVEMBER 26, 1901.

Work among the slaves has been pronounced the crowning
Glory of Methodism. It is the aim of this address to show what
part the Methodists of South Carolina took in this great evan-
gelistic enterprise. In doing so, we disclaim in the outset any
disposition to detract as much as an iota from what has been
done by our sister Churches or Conferences. They did their
work grandly and won many trophies for their Lord. But in
view of the magnificent history which our own Conference has
made, even comparing its work with that of others, modesty
does not forbid that we shall say in the language of King Lem-
uel's mother when praising a good wife: "Many daughters
have gotten riches, but thou excellest them all."

For convenience of treatment I have thought it best to regard
the work of slave evangelization, in so far as our Conference is
concerned, as covering two distinct periods, the first of which
began with 1785 and closed with 1828, and the second of which
began with 1829 and closed with 1864. The first period of forty-
three years embraced a work similar in most respects to that
done by all the Conferences North and South, while during the
second period of thirty-six years South Carolina had in addition
to what we may term the regular work, that which was peculiar
to herself and her sister Conferences in the South. Of these
periods I will speak tonight, briefly outlining the work of the
first, and dwelling more at length on the second.

METHODISM CARRIES THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR.

Methodism wants no higher proof of a divine legation than is
to be found in her successful preaching of Christ crucified to
the poor. That God has gone before her, a pillar of cloud by
day and a pillar of fire by night, is evidenced by the fact that at
her altars the blind have received their sight, and the lame have walked, the lepers have been cleansed, and the deaf have heard, the dead have been raised up, and the poor have had the gospel preached to them. From all the providences that have shaped her course and what she has been able to accomplish in the world thus far, it seems that God has raised her up in order to give the bread of life to multitudes of the humble of earth who, without her ministrations, could never have had it.

The founders of Methodism considered their commission to preach the gospel as not only all-embracing—including every class and condition of mankind, but as world-wide in its scope. So that while John Wesley cried with almost a divine enthusiasm, "The world is my parish," his brother Charles sang:

"The servile progeny of Ham
Seize as the purchase of thy blood;
Let all the heathen know thy name:
From idols to the living God
The wandering Indian tribes convert,
And shine in every pagan heart."

And they were faithful to the heart impulses which called forth these utterances. Whether we find them at Oxford, filling the leisure moments of student-life with visits to the prisons, and homes of the sick and poor; or in the pulpits of the established Church; or as evangelists among the colliers of Kingswood; or still later, as missionaries holding forth the word of life to the Indians of Georgia; no matter where we find them they are hastening with a divinely-inspired love for all, with every thought enlisted, and with every energy taxed, to the solemn work of helping the unfortunate and saving the lost.

It is no cause for wonder then that when the doors for preaching the gospel in the new world were opened to the Methodists, and the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us," had been raised by Embury and his colaborers, that Mr. Wesley’s preachers, constrained by the love of Christ, were found ready to respond; nor that having arrived and viewed the field, they should be ready to preach the gospel to rich and poor, bond and free alike. Their maxim was, "Go not only to them that need you, but to them that need you most." How then could they dare carry the glad news of salvation to the palace of the rich without also gladly turning aside to the homes of the poor? Thank God they not only did not dare; they did not choose so to do. They had little of silver and gold, but they had God’s best
gift to man, and this in a true apostolic spirit they were ready to share with all.

THE SPIRIT OF THE PIONEER METHODIST PREACHERS.

A glance at the fragments of history left us will give some idea of the spirit in which the early preachers met the problem of the slave's salvation and the solution which they found for it:

Richard, Boardman and Joseph Pimmoor, the first regular missionaries sent from the Wesleyan Conference, landed in Philadelphia in the autumn of 1769. Before a year had elapsed Mr. Pimmoor in a letter to Mr. Wesley says: "The number of blacks that attend the preaching affects me much." Stirred by the sight of the large number of these wandering sheep without a shepherd, they doubtless did all they could to encourage their attendance on the public worship of God in the hope that the truth might find lodgment in their hearts. Hence we are able to account for the fact that during the progress of that wonderful revival, which from 1773 to 1776 swept over Virginia and into North Carolina, one of the preachers writes: "Hundreds of negroes were seen in the congregation with tears streaming down their faces." That these men of God successfully pointed these waiting penitents to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and rejoiced to see that in their cases as well as among the whites, the gospel was the power of God unto salvation, is evidenced from a statement which Mr. Rankin makes in writing on the general state of Methodism in 1777. He says: "We had forty preachers in the different circuits, and about seven thousand members in the Society, besides many hundreds of negroes who were convinced of sin and many of them happy in the love of God." This work among the slaves was not confined to narrow limits, but was seen at all points touched by these faithful itinerants, who gave their gospel indiscriminately to white and black.

Francis Asbury, the Apostle of American Methodism, betrayed the same interest in the colored people that we have seen working in the hearts of Boardman, Pimmoor, Rankin and others. From the moment of his landing on the continent his heart was filled with plans for their spiritual amelioration. Wherever he went, he manifested a lively interest in them, and did what he could to help them. His first visit to South Carolina was in 1785. He arrived in Charleston in February, in
company with Jesse Lee and Henry Willis. As history has it, they had come to set down their stakes in South Carolina and to stay for all time. This visit was not without visible fruit. A Mr. Wells was converted. Mr. Asbury left the city with a rejoicing heart, saying: "Now we know that God has brought us here, and have a hope that there will be a glorious work among the people—at least among the Africans." Knowing the spirit of the man as we do, this last clause, "at least among the Africans," is quite significant. He was not to be disappointed. The reports of this year's work show that there were brought into the church thirty-five whites and twenty-three blacks. His faithful coadjutors, constrained by the same love of Christ that characterized their leader, had faithfully preached to white and black, gathering into the fold all whom God gave them as seals to their ministry. On every subsequent visit to our State Mr. Asbury showed that his early zeal for the negroes' salvation had suffered no abatement. His was the true charity, for he did all he could to help them. It was no unusual thing for him to hold protracted sunrise prayer meetings with them during the course of his stay at a given place. He catechised them faithfully on the state of their souls, and instructed them in the principles and doctrines of our holy Christianity. It is related of him that in Charleston on one occasion while one of his preachers was holding class meeting with the whites in the parlor above stairs, that he was holding forth with the colored people in the kitchen below.

"Black Punch," a name deserving perpetual record in the history of Methodism, is peculiarly and touchingly associated with that of Bishop Asbury. We copy the record from the pen of Bishop Wightman, as showing how in working for the slave's recovery from sin, he waited not for assembled congregations, but took them singly or in groups as he found them: "On one of the Bishop's tours of visitation in 1788 on his way to Charleston, S. C., he was passing through All Saint's parish and found at a creek, on his road, a negro engaged in fishing. While his horse was drinking the Bishop entered into conversation with the fisherman.

"'What is your name, my friend?'

"'Punch, sir.'

"'Do you ever pray?'

"'No, sir,' said Punch.
"With this he alighted, fastened his horse, took his seat by the side of Punch and entered into conversation with him on the subject of religion, explaining to him in terms suited to his understanding the main peculiarities of the Christian system. Punch was sufficiently astonished at all this, but listened attentively, and as the good Bishop sang the hymn,

'Plunged in a gulf of dark despair,'

and closed it with a short but fervent prayer, the poor negro's tears came fast and free. The interview over, the Bishop bade him an affectionate farewell and resumed his journey, never expecting to see his face again. . . . He found the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins after several days of distress and earnest prayer." We shall see more of him later on.

In this work of negro evangelization Mr. Asbury received the faithful co-operation of the preachers and people of South Carolina. So that the work begun under his leadership grew after his death with the coming years.

We now submit a few statistics in order that the results of our work as a Conference in numerical gains of colored members may appear. In doing so we realize that figures are not only sometimes misleading, but are frequently dangerous matters to handle. We have heard of a brother who, when called upon at Conference for his report, arose and said: "We've had a good year, Bishop, have doubled the membership." This called forth hearty approval. But when asked how many he had to start with, he changed the strain by answering, "None, sir, none." But we have nothing of this kind to fear in the exhibit which we offer. That we had no colored members to start with is true, but we have more than doubled the membership, and the showing is creditable, whether we take our Conference as it stands alone or as its work may be compared with that of the whole Church for the same period:

In 1786 there were in South Carolina 43 colored Methodist members; in 1790, 496; in 1800, 1,535; in 1810, 9,129; in 1820, 11,748; in 1828, 18,475.

Including ours, the whole Church had in 1786, 1,890; in 1790, 11,682; in 1800, 13,452; in 1810, 34,724; in 1820, 38,755; in 1828, 55,096.

Even allowing for the large per cent. of colored people in South Carolina at the dates mentioned over and above that of
most other States, still the fact that she had within her borders in 1828, 18,475 of the 59,056 colored members in the Connection, nearly one-third, proves that the Methodists of South Carolina were neither unfaithful to duty nor behind their brethren of other States in pressing the claims of the gospel upon their "brother in black."

The Methodists of South Carolina always sought to bring the colored people to the experience of conscious acceptance with God, and to gather those converted along with others who professed a sincere desire to flee the wrath to come and to be saved from their sins, into the visible Church of Christ. But they did not stop here; they sought to furnish those means of grace which would insure the steady development, in a life of godliness, of all brought within the fold. Hence provision was made from the beginning that they might hear regularly the preaching of the pure word of God.

When in 1787 the General Conference took what has been termed "the first decisive step towards the evangelization of the slaves," by requiring the preachers "to leave nothing undone" for "their spiritual benefit and salvation," the South Carolina Conference responded by putting galleries in Cumberland Street Church, Charleston, for the accommodation of her negro members. This was the beginning of a custom throughout our State and the South wherever there was a colored congregation. Where galleries were not built other sittings were provided. At all preaching places it was considered the duty of our people to provide the necessary accommodation that none might make such a neglect a plea for absenting themselves from public worship. So that our colored members heard the message of life from the same preachers and in the same churches with their masters. Besides this, they had services of their own at which the white pastor or an approved colored brother preached. To them the sacraments were duly administered, and for them class meetings and prayer meetings were established.

Again, the colored people were not forgotten in our councils. Whether in the General Conference or doing the allotted work of the Annual Conferences, our preachers were ever mindful of the interests of their colored constituency. We do not believe a case is on record where a member of the South Carolina Conference ever failed to speak and vote for those measures which,
in the fear of God, he regarded best for the slaves, all things considered.

For their sakes our Church was ostracised by many. Bishop McTyeire has said that Methodism "suffered a drain upon its resources when sending the gospel to the servile progeny of Ham; and in certain localities a certain discount was endured." True. We all remember that Methodism was once called the "nigger church." George Dougherty, writing to Bishop Asbury, said: "The epithet of Negro Schoolmaster, added to that of Methodist Preacher, makes a black compound indeed." There was a time when a Methodist church was regarded as a first rate place in which to get religion, but not so good for a permanent home.

Bishop Capers, speaking of this condition of affairs, said late in life: "Under all the obloquy cast upon them the Methodists were nevertheless much esteemed. Their preaching might be attended with great propriety, for almost everybody did so, but who might join them? No, it was vastly more respectable to join some other Church, and still attend the preaching of the Methodists, which was thought to answer all purposes. And this has been the case long since the year I am speaking of. The persons of that year whom I can call to mind have gone to their account, and yet I hesitate not to say that if all the individuals who have joined other churches in that city since 1811, professing to have been awakened under the Methodist ministry, had joined the Church where God met them, the Methodist Church in Charleston might have ranked in worldly respects with the very first before this day."

But notwithstanding all this, the Methodists went bravely on, for they held to the maxim, "The Lord will take care of the Church that takes care of His poor."

MISSIONS TO THE SLAVES.

We come now to the history of the second period, in which that wonderful work known as "Missions to the Slaves" was organized and successfully carried on.

By the law of association the great crises and great men of history are frequently so indissolubly joined together that it is impossible to separate them even in thought. The hero and his cause in a sense become one. We cannot think of Israel's deliverance from bondage without Moses appearing on the scene.
So Waterloo suggests a Wellington and the battle of Santiago Bay a Schley. But we might as well attempt to think of these heroes apart from the great historical events with which their names are associated as to try to think of "Missions to the Slaves" in Carolina without a William Capers.

We stand tonight on holy ground; ground dedicated to the worship of Almighty God and made sacred by the sleeping dust of this great man whose body rests beneath this noble sanctuary, and whose monumental shaft which stands just outside bears upon it this simple inscription:

To the Memory
of
William Capers, D. D.,
One of the Bishops of the M. E. Church, South,
The Founder of Missions to the Slaves.

Bishop Capers was the Chrysostom of Carolina and one of the most eloquent preachers of his day. He entered our Conference in 1808, when only eighteen years of age. His first appointment was Wateree Circuit. He had there a membership of 498 whites and 124 colored. It is said that from the first he took a deep interest in the latter, and as Dr. Harrison says in his "Gospel Among the Slaves," "Doubtless on this circuit were sown the seeds of a purpose that in the heart of the young preacher were to ripen into rich fruitage, and bring blessings to thousands of this race." He grew rapidly in favor with God and man. His mature manhood was marked by abilities that commanded the attention of the Church, and he was placed in many positions of trust and honor. He was at one time Professor of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy in the South Carolina College; he was the first delegate from the Methodist Episcopal Church to the British Conference; he was afterwards an able bishop of our Church, and was universally loved and respected throughout the Connection. He was largely instrumental in the establishment of our Mission to China, and as Superintendent laid the foundations of the Mission to the Creek Indians. Yet he considered the work done for negro missions as the monumental achievement of his life.

In speaking, therefore, of a cause which he was instrumental in founding, upon which he lavished the wealth of his Christian love, and to which he dedicated his personal influence, his wis-
dom in counsel, his matchless oratory, and his watchful oversight as Superintendent, it is due that we should give him the foremost place in that list of worthies who, in our mission fields, "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

As we have already seen, there was a place for the colored people in our regular churches, and they heard the same messages and united in the same devotions as were heard and enjoyed by the whites. But the regular ministry did not reach the river deltas of the low country where, on sugar, rice and cotton plantations, were segregated large numbers of these benighted sons and daughters of Ham. This was in the malarial region in which few white people were to be found. Here the slaves were shut out, or rather we should say shut in, from all gospel privileges, and not having even the advantage of the civilizing touch which contact with the whites afforded, they were in a very pitiable condition indeed. With minds and hearts darkened by sin, they were an easy prey to gross superstitions and to all the baser passions and appetites of the soul. They had little or no knowledge of God and his worship, and in this condition were doomed to a life without hope and a death of despair. But the day of deliverance was near at hand. God had heard his feeble children's cry for bread and had chosen the instruments through whom he would send it.

**Organization of Missionary Society.**

The Missionary Society of the South Carolina Conference was organized in the city of Columbia, Jan. 11, 1821, with the following officers: Lewis Myers, President; W. M. Kennedy, First Vice-President; James Norton, Second Vice-President; William Capers, Corresponding Secretary; W. C. Hill, Treasurer. Managers: Isaac Smith, James O. Andrew, Joseph Travis, Samuel K. Hodges, Henry Bass, Thomas Darley and Tilman Sneed. Mr Capers was appointed missionary in the Conference and to the Indians at this time.

With the organization of the Society began increased attention in the religious improvement of the blacks in the neglected fields of our State. Mr. Capers was profoundly interested in
them, and doubtless encouraged George W. Moore and Samuel W. Capers, then on the Orangeburg Circuit, in preaching as opportunity offered to Mr. Baring's negroes on the Combahee. This was in 1828. Mr. Baring was so well pleased with the results of this experiment that in the latter part of the year he joined with Col. Lewis Morris in the request that the Conference send regular missionaries to their plantations. But history seems to accord to Hon. Charles C. Pinckney the honor of being the first planter in the State whose interest in the work led him to make request through Dr. Capers that the Conference send missionaries to his plantations which lay along the Santee.

In response to these requests the Conference of 1829 made the following appointments:

Mission to the people of color south of Ashley River, John Honour; on Santee and Pee Dee Rivers, John H. Massey; on Savannah and Broad Rivers, James Danelly. Dr. Capers was appointed Superintendent of these Missions.

Conference over, these brave missionaries, after bidding adieu to their brethren, go forth to their appointed fields. Noble men never went forth in behalf of a worthier cause. The same spirit that moved Melville B. Cox to offer himself for work in Africa, whither he went just three years from this date, was the spirit which fired the intrepid souls of Honour, Massey and Danelly. We confess a lack of sympathy for that temper of mind that gives all its thought to, and spends all its enthusiasm over, the one who is to cross the seas and has little concern for the one who, though doing the same kind of work, happens to be nearer home. Why distance merely should lend enchantment we fail to see. The immortal Melville B. Cox, after a few months' service, was stricken with African fever and died exclaiming, "Let a thousand fall before Africa be given up." Grand man! He conquered though he fell. This dying message has been the clarion note that has caused the Church to move with quickened steps to the conquest of the world for Christ. John Honour, the missionary south of Ashley River, after a few months' work, died too, a victim to the fever so prevalent in the rice field districts. Doubtless had we his last message to the Conference, it would in substance be, "Let a thousand fall before the work south of Ashley River be given up." When his name was called at Conference there was the
silence almost of death itself to hear what his last message could be. It came: "One hundred and seven African slaves have been gathered into the fold." Brother Honour was buried in the cemetery of Trinity Church, Charleston, and on the neat monument over his grave are inscribed these words:

In Memory of John Honour
Born July 22, 1770
Died Sept. 29, 1829.

FIRST FRUITS.

The following reports from these mission fields show the result of the first year’s work:

Mission to the people of color South of Ashley River, Members, 107; on Santee and Peepee Rivers, 310; on Savannah and Broad Rivers, 240. Total number of members for the year, 657.

It is worthy of mention that the Hon. Mr. Pinckney, a member of the Episcopal Church, gave all possible encouragement and help to the missionary, and during the year delivered an address before the Agricultural Society of South Carolina, ably insisting upon the religious instruction of the negroes. It was afterwards published and extensively circulated with the happiest effect.

The following were the appointments for 1830: Mission to the slaves of St. John’s, Pon Pon and Combahee, George W. Moore; on Santee River, John H. Massey; on Savannah River, James Dannelly.

The reports rendered at Conference are: Missions to slaves of St. Johns, Pon Pon and Combahee, Members, 440; on Santee River, 391; on Savannah River, 246. Total number of members, 1,077; a gain over last year of 420. There were collected for Missions during the year $261 00.

The Minutes of 1831 show no change of appointments from 1830, save that Thomas D. Turpin takes James Dannelly’s place on the Savannah River Mission.

Reports for the year show a total membership on the three charges of 1,242. Besides, there were upwards of 100 little negroes reported on the Pon Pon and Combahee Mission who received catechetical instruction according to a plan adopted by a former Conference. There were collected for the year $727 67, a gain of nearly $500 over the amount of the preceding year.

The Missionary Society closed its report to the Conference of
this year with the following words: "Guided by experience and cheered by success, we come to bind ourselves afresh to the holy work, and to renew the solemn obligation which the enterprise of negro salvation and instruction imposes on us. Into this long neglected field of danger, reproach and toil we again go forth, bearing the precious seed of salvation; and to the protection of the God of Missions our cause is confidently and devoutly commended."

In 1832 only two missions appear in the Minutes, Savannah River Mission having been put in the regular work of the circuit. The Pon Pon and Combahee Mission was enlarged by the addition of Beaufort. The appointments were:

Mission to Savannah, Pon Pon and Combahee, Wappahoolo and Beaufort, G. W. Moore, J. R. Coburn; on Santee, Christian G. Hill.

Brother Moore, during the year, wrote of Pon Pon Missions: "If we are to decide on its (the work's) advantages from the statements of those who are best acquainted with the colored people, the master and overseer, it is their decided conviction that much good has been done." Matters on Santee Mission were also in fine condition. Brother Hill received on trial during one quarter as many as 86 adults, and had nearly 200 children under catechetical instruction.

Reports from both charges at the close of the year's work give: Members, 1,395; catechumens, 492; collected for Missions, $1,519.45—a gain of nearly 400 children who received instruction, and more than double the amount collected the previous year.

This year is remarkable for two things: The appearance of Dr. Capers' Catechism for colored children and members on trial; and that memorable speech of Dr. James O. Andrew, afterwards Bishop, in favor of the scriptural instruction of the slaves. It was delivered during the Conference in Darlington at the anniversary of the Missionary Society, and gave a decided impulse to the missionary spirit of our preachers and people. Bishop Wightman said years afterward that among the speeches he had heard this effort of Dr. Andrew stood foremost.

In order that your patience may not be unduly taxed with a too detailed account, we present in decades statistics showing the gain in numbers of missions, missionaries, members and catechumens, as well as amounts collected for the work:
1838—Missions, 12; Missionaries, 13; Members in Regular Charges, 23,498; Members on Missions, 6,556; Catechumens' 25,025; Collected, $4,530.36.

1848—Missions, 16; Missionaries, 23; Members in Regular Charges, 40,988; Members on Missions, 9,874; Collected, $10,184.00.

1858—Missions, 28; Missionaries, 34; Members in Regular Charges, 46,740; Members on Missions, 12,102; Collected, $18,755.34.

There are only three years left. We give the reports of the last one, 1864:

1864—Missions, 29; Missionaries, 32; Members in Regular Charges, 47,461; Members on Missions, 13,373; Collected, $42,475.80.

A SURVEY OF THE FIELD.

At the end of the first decade the ground covered by our mission fields extended from Waccamaw and Pee Dee Rivers on the east, to the Savannah River on the west. It embraced about two hundred plantations. Our missionaries were already busy men, not only preaching and administering the sacraments and discipline of the Church to 6,556 members, but catechising and otherwise instructing 25,025 negro children.

The report of 1864 shows that notwithstanding the strife between the States and the consequent hard times in the South, our missions to the slaves were held intact. Indeed the collections, in so far as we can gather from the records, reached the high water mark—the magnificent sum of $42,475.80 being raised.

During these years the Missionary Society was the great association of our Conference. Its anniversary meetings were hailed with delight, and were second in interest to none. Great throngs gathered on these occasions, and the large voluntary offerings showed the interest felt in the slaves. I mention two of these, one held in Washington Street, Columbia, in 1854, and the other held at Marion Court House, S. C., in 1855. In Columbia the collection amounted to $1,642.82, and in Marion to $1,600. We have no doubt that in many other places the collections, if not so large, were creditable to all concerned.

The planters should not be forgotten in this account. As early as 1837 they gave $2,156.16 of the amount reported, an
average of $179.68 to each missionary then in the field, and the increase of their gifts thereafter corresponded with the growth of the work, and this, too, after building churches and providing other places of worship.

**MONEY EXPENDED IN THE GOOD WORK.**

The amount expended by the South Carolina Conference during these thirty-six years for the work of slave missions alone amounted to $374,076.99—an average of $10,319.19 for each year. This work which was begun among the poorest and most abject of God's creatures, under the most trying circumstances, amid conditions that required the most delicate handling, and withal giving little promise of fruit, became one that for real blessing, first to the beneficiaries themselves and afterward to the State of South Carolina and the country at large, has scarcely had a parallel anywhere in modern times.

**OF WHOM THE WORLD WAS NOT WORTHY.**

In the time allotted it is impossible to say all that might be said of those engaged in the work. We shall have to be content with gleanings from this field. Let it be borne in mind that we did not send to these untutored slaves our weakest men. Had we no record of names, the results are sufficient to show that our very best preachers went gladly and ministered to their brethren in black. We have already named William Capers, John Honour, John H. Massey, James Dannelly, Thomas D. Turpin, Christian G. Hill and John R. Coburn; now as further evidence take the appointments to slave missions from the Columbia Conference of 1854:


The appointments for 1864 are pathetic. One record is, “Prince William, Bluffton, Beaufort, Edisto, Jehossie within the lines of the U. S. Army.” And yet there appear nearly twenty appointments, and among these last missionaries is the name of the President of the Missionary Society, Rev. Charles Betts. Truly were are fathers veritable heroes of the cross. Truly they held their way undaunted.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY SLAVE OWNERS

But any treatment of this subject would be incomplete and fail in the matter of common justice, which did not place in prominent view the worthy men and women—the owners of plantations and slaves—who opened the way for the missionaries, and, afterwards by their sympathy, personal work, and contributions of money, made possible the vast amount of good that was done. While the names of many have been preserved, some doubtless have been forgotten. But their record is with God, and when God’s children “shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of heaven”, many of the saved sons and daughters of Ham will shine in their crowns of rejoicing.

The name of Hon. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, already an historic one in the annals of South Carolina, will live as long as the story of Missions to the slaves in Carolina adorns the pages of Methodist history, as the first planter in the State to ask that a Methodist preacher be sent to minister to his slaves. And closely associated with his name will be those of Col. Lewis Morris and Mr. Charles Baring who, at the same Conference made similar requests. These gentlemen were ever afterward warm and zealous supporters of this cause, and by their strong personal influence and work contributed largely to its ultimate success.

When I mention also Hon. Robert Barnwell Rhett, Gov. Wil-
William Aiken, Wade Hampton, Capt. John Joiner Smith, Rev. James L. Belin, and Messrs. Charles Baring, Thomas Lowndes, J. J. Mikell, Thomas Cuthbert, Edward Whaley, William Seabrook and Robert Withers, I have given only a few of a large class who took a hearty interest in the missionary and his work.

Be it remembered that these planters were not the manner of men that some—Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe to instance—would have us believe. They were not cruel taskmasters, caring neither for the bodies or souls of their servants, but as a class were kind and carefully considerate of their needs. If this be not so why do we find them, at the very time "Uncle Tom’s Cabin" was written, employing missionaries, building churches, giving hundreds and thousands of dollars annually, and by every other possible token manifesting an interest in the salvation of their colored people? It is wondrous strange that inhumanity and unconcern are seen bearing such fruit! Rev. Samuel Leard was one of our most faithful and experienced missionaries. In a letter, published in "Gospel Among the Slaves," he makes this statement: "I assert, weighing my words carefully, and speaking from what I know and saw, that no class of poor people in the world were better provided for, and none had fewer cares than the slaves on the large plantations in the lower part of South Carolina, prior to and during the war." Dr. A. M. Chreitzberg tells of old Friday, a native African, 80 years old, whom he found on the Beaufort Mission. He was converted under the ministry of Rev. J. R. Coburn, a member of this Conference. Speaking of his experience, old Friday said to Dr. Chreitzberg: "Ough, mausa, buckra country too much better dan nigger country! Too much better! Too much better! Nigger country you can’t go from here to nex’ place by yerse’f; nigger meet you in de path; he got knife, he kille you. All you got do in dis country is worrack [work]. Friday got good mausa, good missus, he ole. Friday do not’ing, mausa take care o’ him; any’ting Friday want he get ’um” &c. Brother Leard’s observations tally with those of all intelligent men who have had opportunities of knowing the slave’s real condition; and old Friday’s experience was not at all exceptional. There were instances of bad treatment and even cruelty, but these were the exceptions and were always reprobated by the people generally. The Southern planters were not fools; therefore the business prudence that suggested the taking care of a horse worth
$100 certainly provided against cruelty or injury to a negro worth $1,000 or $1,500.

RIGHTEOUS DEMANDS OF SOUTHERN PEOPLE.

Not only were the planters interested in the bodies and souls of the slaves but the Southern people as a whole demanded kind treatment and religious training in their behalf. A striking proof of this we take from "Items of Slave Mission Work in Mississippi," by Bishop C. B. Galloway, whom we have the pleasure to welcome as the president and guest of this Conference: "It is a significant fact", says the Bishop, "that Mississippi retired to private life her ablest and most distinguished statesman because of his supposed opposition to the religious instruction of the negroes. The early history of the state contains no name equal in broad statesmanship and legal learning to George Poindexter. As largely the author of her first Constitution, the codifier of her laws, Governor of the State, and United States Senator, he was peerless at home and the peer of Clay, Calhoun and Webster in the upper House of Congress. But in 1822 he was defeated for Congress because of a provision he had inserted in the Code of 1820-21 supposed to be unfavorable to the religious training of slaves. I know of no more significant event in the whole history of the South which more clearly indicates the true spirit of the people toward the moral and spiritual well-being of the negro. A great statesman, almost omnipotent in political influence, was hurled from place and power because he was regarded as unsound on that great issue: plantation preaching.''

So I put these things against the misrepresentations of Mrs. Stowe and others, and will here let the matter rest.

The assistance which the planters and their families gave the missionaries was invaluable. They not only provided places of worship, but they encouraged the attendance of their negroes, old and young, upon the religious services. Instances are numerous where they assisted in teaching the little negroes the Word of God, and, in the absence of the missionary, held religious services for the older ones. They did much other religious work. Many a dying slave had the couch of death softened by the tender ministrations of these faithful Christian masters.
WORK AMONG THE NEGROES.

Let us glance at the work done for the negroes.

1. As we have already seen, places of worship were provided for them. In many instances plain but neat churches were to be found; where this was not the case, gin-houses, cooper-shops, hospitals, etc., were properly seated for the accommodation of the worshippers. This work was done by the slave-owners for the most part.

2. In these the dusky children of God assembled at the appointed times, and with them always some white person or persons, often the master himself and his family. The order of services was much the same as is common with us now, but the exercises were unique. The hearers were emotional and responsive: "Dat de trute," "Tank de Lord," "Year 'um," "Dat's so, massa," and kindred utterances punctuated the preaching. And how they sang! with rhythmic swaying of body, with shining eyes, with well-opened mouths—rendering all the parts of music and many besides—it was enough to stir a stone.

The following fine tribute to the character of these mission services is from the pen of a missionary's daughter: "I have knelt with the multitude in the grandeur of a great cathedral, where the 'dim, religious light' came softly stealing through the pictured glass and the rich-toned organ melted the heart to thoughts of prayer. I have listened to the gospel in the midst of a crowd of gray-uniformed men, whose next orders might be a summons to death. I have heard the words of truth proclaimed on the top of a lofty mountain, where we seemed 'to see God in every cloud, and hear him in the wind.' I have mingled with the throng around the holy altar in the midst of a widespread forest, where every breeze that swept by seemed to say: 'The groves were God's first temples.' I have sat in the rustic church amid the humble country worshipers, sunburned with toil and hardened with care, when I have said to myself: 'God is here worshiped in spirit and in truth.' Yet now as I look back, it seems to me I have never been in circumstances so pleasing to God and his holy angels, or seen worship so welcome to them as when I saw that man of God teaching the little negro slaves to say: 'Our Father.' " A Columbia audience need hardly be told that this paragraph was written by Miss I. D. Martin, daughter of the lamented Rev. William Martin.
3. After worship came the class-meeting—conducted by the preacher himself; although there were negro leaders to take spiritual oversight of the classes. This service gave special opportunity for those heart to heart talks which the missionary found so fruitful of good. Many an erring one was here led into right paths; many a despondent one encouraged; many a sorrowing one comforted.

4. The prayer-meeting services were oftentimes occasions of great power and blessing. Interspersed as they frequently were with experiences, they afforded opportunity for studying the marvelous effects of the gospel upon the character of these humble children of God. The moistened eye and heaving breast of the missionary often told of the joy that was in his heart as he beheld the wonderful work of God among his people. True, these experiences sometimes contained things—the like of which the world may never hear again—yet in many cases, though related in the negro's own peculiar way, they were to the point, and displayed remarkable knowledge of the deep things of God.

5. Great stress was put upon the work of faithful catechising both old and young. It is in this particular that the work of the missionary differed from that of his brethren on the regular charges. It was found to be the best method of fixing the truth in the minds and hearts of these untutored people, and was invariably adopted. Capers' Catechism soon came into general use, and hundreds and thousands of these colored people, and especially the children, became very proficient in their knowledge of its contents. Besides this all ages were taught the Apostles’ Creed, the ten Commandments and the Lord’s prayer. The little negroes were formed into classes and were instructed for the most part on week days. One of the most interesting sights in plantation life is said to have been the missionary's arrival at a place, his hearty greeting from scores and sometimes hundreds of these ebony-faced little creatures. “Preacher’s come!” “Preacher’s come!” and then a run to open gates through which he might enter, was followed by a general preparation for the catechising service. All ready, they stood in line. After thorough drilling in the catechism, etc., came the singing of such hymns as the missionary had taught them. This over, they knelt in prayer, all repeating at the conclusion, “Our Father, which art in heaven,” &c.
6. I have yet to notice a work which, though mentioned last, was by no means least, namely, visits to the aged, the sick and the dying. To these the missionary was no infrequent visitor, and oftentimes the cabin home became the very ante-chamber of heaven, while the man of God and his humble member held converse with their Lord.

TRANFORMED BY THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

The question arises, "What manner of Christians were the converted Slaves?" Answer can be made in one sentence: What was it that in the days of battle, when only women and children were on many plantations, there was no hurt or harm done or attempted? It was because the Holy Ghost had changed the savage heart, and Christ dwelt in his humble followers and they in him.

But to put the transformation into plainest view, I ask you to look at some characters made notable under the power of the gospel as dispensed by our own and other Southern preachers:

Castile Selby,—the old class-leader, clad in a clean, unpatched, linsey-woolsey coat, a blue striped handkerchief tied about his head, was a familiar figure in the congregations of the Methodists of Charleston in the early days. His remarkable industry as he plied his business of "carter" through heat and cold, wet and dry, as well as other fine traits impressed itself upon Dr. Capers, who says of him: "The weight and force of his character was made up of humility, sincerity, simplicity, integrity, and consistency; for all which he was remarkable, not only among his fellows of the colored society in Charleston, but, I might say, among all whom I have ever known. He was one of those honest men who need no proof of it. No one who ever saw him would suspect him. Disguise or equivocation lurked nowhere about him. Just what he seemed to be, that he invariably was—neither less nor more. Add to this a thorough piety—which indeed was the root and stock of all his virtues—and you will find elements enough for the character of no common man; and such was Castile Selby!" Dr. F. A. Mood, in his work on Charleston Methodism, says: "As early as 1801 he is on record as a leader, and he held the office untarnished for over half a century." He died in 1849 in his 88th year. A funeral sermon was preached over his remains by the Presiding Elder of the Charleston District.
Rachel Wells,—familiarly known as "Maum Rachel," was the first colored person who joined the society in 1785. She died in 1849, having lived a consistent member of the church sixty-four years. Dr. Capers, who knew her well, speaks in highest terms of her fidelity to God and her unusual intelligence as a Christian. When he had on one occasion expressed sorrow at an accident which she had received and which had kept her from enjoying the meetings held in Trinity every night, she replied, "I hear of de meetin', Sir, and tank God for 'em for your sake; but as for me I hab no need o' dem . . . . Tank God, my blessed Jesus hab shorter way to me now dan by Trinity church. All he do to me wid de meetin' befo' time, he do for me now widout de meetin'; and more too, bless de Lord."

. . . . Dr. Capers speaks also of a pretty thought she gave him of the perpetuity of Christian zeal beyond the present state, while speaking of the death of William M. Kennedy. "Well, Mr. Kennedy he keep go and neber stop till he drop down in de Master work. So you must do too. All de dear ministers what used to work wid him must do so too. Mr. Kennedy gone, but dat spirit Mr. Kennedy had he carry wid him. And you tink Mr. Kennedy do notin' in heaven? He no stan' still for God here. He no stan' still dere. He ministerin' spirit. He fly like de angel to help de work on." On another occasion while speaking to Dr. Capers of the loss of her children she said: "Time was when I had some 'bout me, but God please to tek dem from me. But I quite resign. When de las' one gone, I feel my heart begin to sick and fret. But I tink, what dis? If I fret, who I fret against? My chillen gone, but my frien' take em. I can't fret 'gainst my frien'. Den I lif' up my heart and say, 'Well, Lord, you got 'em all now; you aint left me one. Now den you come stay wid me, and I no care. I tek you now in place o' all dem you tek from me.' So he come to me closer dan eber, an' I neber want for anybody else."

If Christian philosophy furnishes any better method of dealing with providential afflictions than the one here adopted by "Maum Rachel," we have failed to find it.

Black Punch.—We have already seen the remarkable story of his conviction and conversion as the result of an accidental meeting with good Bishop Asbury. Having obtained a knowledge of sins forgiven he began to tell his fellow-servants what a dear Saviour he had found. Many of them were brought to
the knowledge of God through his influence; among others an irreligious overseer who had charge of the plantation. Theophilus Huggins who in 1836 was sent as the first missionary to Waccamaw Neck refers to Punch, who at this time had grown to be an old man, yet who had under his spiritual supervision between two and three hundred blacks. I copy from "Gospel Among the Slaves:" "I was much interested," said he, "on my first visit to the old veteran. Just before I reached his house I met a herdsman, and asked him if there were any preacher on the plantation. 'O, yes, massa; de ole bishop lib here.' Said I, 'Is he a good preacher?' 'O, yes,' was the reply. 'He word burn me heart.' He showed me the house. I knocked at the door, and heard approaching footsteps and the sound of a cane upon the floor. The door opened, and I saw before me, leaning upon a staff, a hoary-headed black man, with palsied limbs but a smiling face. He looked at me a moment in silence, then raising his eyes to heaven, said: 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' He asked me to take a seat, and I found, in the following remarks, the reason of his exclamation. Said he: 'I have many children in this place. I have felt for some time past that my end was nigh. I have looked around to see who might take my place when I am gone. I could find none. I felt unwilling to die and leave them so, and have been praying to God to send some one to take care of them. The Lord has sent you, my child. I am ready to go.' Tears coursed freely down his time-shriveled but smiling face." Not long after the arrival of the missionary, Black Punch was taken ill and lingered only a few days. After addressing affectionate words to the people who crowded at his bedside, he died, while attempting to repeat what seemed to be his favorite text: "'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.'

Henry Evans,—one of the most notable men of his time, was the founder of Methodism in Fayetteville, North Carolina. He had so lived and worked among his own people as to win the perfect confidence of the white people who heard the gospel according to Methodism first from his lips. It is said that his popularity as a preacher was so great that distinguished visitors to the town rarely failed to hear him. Bishop Capers related that on the Sunday before he died, he delivered his last farewell to his people: 'I have come to say my last to you. It
is this: None but Christ. Three times have I had my life in jeopardy for preaching the gospel to you. Three times I have broken the ice on the edge of the water and swam across the Cape Fear to preach the gospel to you. And now, if in my last hour I could trust to that or anything else but Christ crucified, for my salvation, all should be lost, and my soul perish forever." "He was buried," says the Bishop, "under the chancel of the Church of which he had been in so remarkable a manner the founder."

Sancho Cooper—was for a long number of years known among the people of this city, (Columbia, S. C.,) as one of the most exemplary Christians to be found anywhere. He was the trusted servant of Dr. Thomas Cooper, President of the S. C. College. He was class-leader among the colored members of the church for many years, and the fine work that he did in impressing religious truth upon the minds and hearts of those of his own race, is simply incalculable. Politeness, humility, faith in God and unswerving fidelity, were his prominent characteristics.

It is said that the master to whom Sancho belonged in early life, bitterly opposed his holding meetings and praying with the negroes on the plantation, and that having failed to make him stop it, finally sold him to Dr. Cooper, who said that he had no objection to his praying so long as he faithfully discharged his duty to him. Sancho related to Dr. Whitefoord Smith, his pastor at the time, that during Dr. Cooper's last illness he called him (Sancho) into his room and directed him to shut and lock the door. Pointing to a large Bible upon the shelf, he bade him take it down, and gave it to Sancho to keep for his sake. He then referred to the religion his faithful old servant had so long professed—told him it was right and to hold on to it—that in young life he had known what it was himself, but had been led away from it. He then asked Sancho to kneel down and pray for him. Sancho at first objected, saying: "I am not fit, master, to pray for so great a man as you," but being assured by the Doctor that he was good enough, and that it was his wish that he should pray for him, he complied to the best of his ability. Sancho kept his Bible as among his most treasured possessions, and determined that at his death it should be given to the library of Wofford College, but in some mysterious way it disappeared, and is supposed to have been consumed when Columbia was destroyed by fire during the Civil War. When
we remember that it is said that this Bible was the property at one time of Dr. Cooper's father, who was a minister of the gospel and a great friend of Mr. Wesley, we see what a valuable relic Wofford College lost by Sherman's fire. Sancho lived to be ninety-five years old. He was well provided for by his master, who had left him an annuity in his will. He had been a member of the church seventy years and a class-leader more than sixty years. Such was his love for Rev. Wm. Martin that he had a standing engagement for more than twenty-five years that his funeral sermon should be preached by that honored minister.

But time fails to tell the shining story. I have sought to lift a little the curtain that has fallen on our splendid mission to those who were our bondmen in the past. A glimpse of this past and an outlook upon the lawlessness of today teaches somewhat the value of Methodist preachers and their worthy collaborators to South Carolina and the South. San Domingo was impossible here because our fathers led the negro to Christ and God gave him a heart tender and true.

We did not cross the line of separation which God has fixed between the races, but we taught the black man that Jesus Christ tasted death for all men, and we made possible all that he has achieved. The 60,834 colored converts on the rolls of the South Carolina Conference in 1864; the 207,000 reported at the same time by our entire Church—a number greater than all the heathen brought to Christ at that date by all the Protestant Missionary Societies of the world combined—the more than 500,000 gathered into the fold of all the denominations of the South, prove our statement to be correct!

Time will come when earth will turn to us a thankful face and say, "Well done, good and faithful servants." Time also will come when heaven will say unto us, "Enter thou into the joy of your Lord"—and bond and free, Jew and Greek, white and black, Carolinian and African, "will enter in through the gates into the city!"

We have not ceased our interest in the negro. Our last but not our least gift is George Williams Walker—my Conference class-mate—than whom a braver and better spirit never lived.