

(From the Baltimore Literary and Religious Magazine.)
**The Condition of the Coloured Population
of the City of Baltimore.**

Some statistics and facts with respect to the condition of the coloured population of Baltimore, collected from observation and inquiry, may be useful and interesting as a record for future times. Their present physical, intellectual, moral, religious and social condition, and the names of their churches, Sabbath schools, and societies, will be illustrated by an article of facts and statistics, as accurately as can be ascertained from statements given, and Sabbath school reports. Some document respecting their condition, as the population is numerous, appears desirable to excite public interest and attention. In this article will be collected together some information which, perhaps, may be useful and valuable; and as there is nothing on record, in these respects published, which gives the information desired, we will speak from experience and observation, and statistical reports, which will make an interesting impression upon the minds of those who have an interest in the moral and religious welfare of society.

The number of coloured people in the city of Baltimore, is estimated at this time at about 25,000 souls, as it appears from the last census of the general population. Of this number 20,000 are free people of colour, and 5,000 are slaves. Their intellectual, moral, religious, physical and social condition will afford to the christian mind and to the patriot and philanthropist, a topic of considerable interest; and all persons who know the value of moral and christian influence, cannot look upon so vast a multitude immersed in a remarkable degree in ignorance, vice, immorality, wickedness and infidelity, without inquiring what can be done for the amelioration of their condition in society, and as members of the human family. The friends of colonization in the state of Maryland, have been zealously diligent and active to promote the welfare and prosperity of the coloured population, by opening the way for those who wish to go to Africa, to be removed there in the most convenient and comfortable manner.

The climate of the city, it is said, is unfavourable to the coloured population, as more of the coloured population die each year, in proportion, than among the white population. Intemperance may formerly have been one great cause of the death of numbers. The establishment of temperance societies has been, accordingly, an object of much interest among the Methodist societies, to ameliorate the condition of the coloured population in this respect. Places for drinking have been and are still numerous throughout some parts of the town. About 1500 persons have joined the Temperance Societies in the Sharp street, Asbury and Bethel churches.

Whatever may promote religious and moral instruction and education, and the extension of the light and knowledge of the gospel, will excite the attention, and call forth a corresponding interest among the friends of christianity, and the ministers of the gospel of different denominations. There are among the coloured population, some who attend the Methodist, others the Episcopal, and the Presbyterian, and some go to the Catholic chapels. Not more than perhaps 5,000 or 7,000, probably go to any place of public worship on the Sabbath day, leaving from 18,000 to 20,000, who do not go to places of public worship. These either go about the streets, collect in the alleys of the city, or remain at home.

Of late years Sabbath schools in respective denominations have been established and attended with much success, and great moral influence among the coloured population! Hundreds of coloured youth, and some of advanced years, have for a few years past attended on Sabbath school instructions, and a wide field of usefulness is opened in the city for doing good in this manner; and a respectable number of persons have devoted their attention on the Sabbath day, to instruct the coloured population and rising generation. The field is wide and extensive, and difficult, and much remains to be accomplished to carry forward the great objects of christian instruction among the coloured people in future years. A few years ago there were no Sabbath schools, and those people were left in ignorance of reading the Scriptures, and to habits of vice and immorality on the Sabbath day. Since the introduction of Sabbath schools, much has been done for their intellectual, moral and religious improvement; and many who have enjoyed these inestimable advantages for instruction and improvement, have improved these advantages so far as to be able to read in the sacred Scriptures.

There is a coloured Sabbath school attached to the 1st Presbyterian congregation of the city, Rev. J. C. Backus, and the number of people attending, youth and adults, is about 160. There are twenty-four white teachers in this Sabbath school, male and female, and eighteen of the teachers are ladies; and a number who read in the Scriptures among the coloured people who attend. Mr. Hyde acts at this time as superintendent of the school, formerly directed by Mr. Gill.

This school collects together on the Sabbath, not far from the City Spring, in some street back of it, in the basement story of a church.

A room for their accommodation is wanted, and would facilitate operations among the coloured population of the city; as more could and would attend on the Sabbath schools there formed and assembled on the Sabbath mornings and afternoons. Mr. James P. Walker, John Waits, and Harrison Webb, are among the coloured teachers of this Sabbath school.

There is also a Sabbath school of 100 scholars, under the superintendence of Mr. Cary, in Old Town, and connected with the 2d Presbyterian church, Rev. R. J. Breckinridge. In this school there are 10 white, 4 male and 6 female, teachers with their respective classes. About 30 of the adults and youth read in the Scriptures, and 50 say Brown's Short Catechism. The names of the Sabbath school teachers are Mr. Wm. F. Cary, Mr. James Wilkinson, Mr. Joseph A. Ramsay, Mr. James Barnes, Mrs. Sarah Cary, Mrs. Jane Barrier, Miss Elizabeth Ramsay, Miss Avis Ely, Miss Nancy McClelling. Within three years two hundred youth and adults have been instructed in the elements of knowledge, and in the principles of the christian religion. By the exertions and activity of a few friends of the cause of christian education, the Sabbath school has been collected and kept together on the Sabbath mornings and afternoons; and the congregation assembled in the room have usually heard a sermon or appropriate addresses from the Rev. Wm. McJimsey, who has preached much among the coloured population of this city. There are also schools in Sharp street church, in the Asbury church in Potter street, the Bethel on the Point, in Strawberry alley. From

reports received from Bethel church school in Saratoga near Gay street, it appears that there were some time ago about 160 scholars before the flood of last summer in June. Rev. Jacob Gruber is presiding elder of the Sharp street near Pratt, and Asbury and Old Wesley Chapel congregations of coloured people at this time. The Asbury Sabbath school has 60 scholars and a few coloured teachers; and it is the same with the Sharp street church and congregation of coloured people. There are about forty persons who constitute the official board, consisting of preachers, class leaders and exhorters, the most of whom are coloured persons.

There is much room for doing good by preaching the gospel, establishing Sabbath schools and prayer meetings and forming Bible classes for instruction in the sacred Scriptures. There is a small Presbyterian congregation, of which Mr. J. P. Walker and Mr. S. Douglass are elders.—Prayer meetings are held on Thursday evenings at Mr. Green's, in Light street, and at Mr. Walker's, not far from Rev. Mr. Breckinridge's church. Some of the friends of the cause have spoken respecting the best measures to be taken and adopted to provide rooms for Sabbath schools, and for obtaining a church in some convenient and proper location for public worship on the Sabbath and other days. Many difficulties have prevented any measures which would be effectual in accomplishing this object, from being decided on by the Presbytery or commenced by the exertions of the people themselves, who appear to be desirous for the erection of a place of worship, and the purchase of a lot for this purpose.

The St. James's Episcopal church in North street, near Saratoga, has a Sabbath school, and the number of coloured friends in attendance is about 100, with some white and a few coloured teachers. Rev. Mr. Peterkin preaches to them here for some time past, on the Sabbath day.

From a report recently obtained, it is found that the coloured Protestant Episcopal Sabbath school attached to the St. James's Episcopal church, contains about a hundred or upwards on the roll, of both sexes, adults and children, and from 75 to 80 in usual attendance. Mr. McGee, a white young man is superintendent of the school at this time; and there are also four white ladies permanent and regular teachers of the females.

The coloured male teachers are Mr. Garrison Draper and Edward Hollan, with 4 or 5 assistants; and also female coloured teachers Mrs. Draper, Miss Cook, Miss Whipper with several others. More teachers of both colours, and of both sexes are wanted in the school, as it is increasing in numbers lately, particularly some white young men. The Bethel coloured church in Saratoga, formerly called Fish street, has a Sabbath school attached to the congregation.—

From a statement and report received respecting the progress and situation of the Bethel church coloured Sabbath school from its commencement in 1836 to this time, it appears that this school was commenced and regularly organized by a few coloured young men, of good moral religious dispositions, desirous to do something with respect to Sabbath schools; and they went forward with efforts till the late flood in June last, stopped for a time their operations and labours in this cause, in which they had engaged with some zeal. It increased from the beginning, in numbers beyond expectation, till the flood came and destroyed a large library of one thousand Sabbath school books. This event for a time impeded their operations, till they could get another library by subscription and were successful in raising funds sufficient to get a small library. They have 9 teachers and 80 individuals of different ages attending the school. With respect to the occupations and employments of the coloured population some few have schools for instruction in the elementary branches of knowledge. Mr. Watkins, Mr. Fortie, and Mr. Stokes have schools during the week, in which about 200 young men and children are instructed. There are also night schools kept by them. English grammar, reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught in these schools. There are several coloured preachers of the gospel of the Methodist denomination.

Not many are engaged as Sabbath school teachers, owing to want of attention and experience in Sabbath schools.

There is a Sabbath school at the Ebenezer church, where a number of youth attend. No reports can, with accuracy be obtained, from the coloured Sabbath schools of Strawberry alley on the Point at this time. They have it is supposed from what can be learned from them, about sixty boys and girls of colour, and a few teachers.

The coloured population have some societies for benevolent purposes and objects; and some associations and institutions for the promotion of intellectual and moral improvement. Temperance societies, three in number; female associations, a young men's society for mental and moral improvement; beneficial societies, so called, are sixteen in number, and do good among people of colour, in their circumstances of poverty and suffering, in winter and in time of sickness among the people. Some efforts are in progress to establish free schools for the common instruction and education of poor children, who are very numerous in the city. There are some of the people of colour, who are in good circumstances with respect to property, and who have acquired property by persevering industry and application to trades and callings of different kinds. The general condition of the coloured population is as good, if not better than in other cities, according to the number of population and inhabitants contained in these respective cities.

Mr. Cary visited during the last and preceding winter and summer, about 300 families, and read the Scriptures and distributed tracts on various religious subjects calculated to be useful, and was cordially received by the families among the coloured people whom he visited as a Sabbath school teacher. Many persons in these families promised to attend public worship on the Sabbath day, and also to come to the Sabbath school; but too many of them have not attended as they ought to have done, and remain very careless and indifferent and neglectful in these great and important respects, so essential for their comfort and welfare. The coloured people where Mr. Cary attended in these families, were glad to have the Scripture read to them, and they always on such occasions heard him read with pleasure and attention. Many of these people live in heathenish darkness and ignorance and insensibility with the light and knowledge of the Gospel shining around them. There appears to be a very wide field for doing good spread out here, and opened for those who in this department of christian enterprise and benevolence have a desire to do good in ameliorating the condition of these people.

Prayer meetings have been established among the coloured people; one lately commenced at Mr. Dunn's house in Short street, in Old Town, is attended by the coloured people in that neighbourhood and by some of the Sabbath school, who attend at the room, up stairs, by the fire engine house in Gay street, and is conducted by the Sabbath school teachers of the same school.

Not a few persons can give their testimony to the advantages of the Sabbath school education, Bible class instruction, and preaching of the gospel there enjoyed, and some, we trust, who have gone to glory and happiness, have left their testimony in their last words, ascribing their salvation from sin and hell, through the agency of the Holy Spirit and the power and word of God, to the benefits of religious instruction there obtained.

There is a great want of help in the Sabbath schools; it is highly desirable that the friends of the cause of Sabbath schools, would come forward and give their personal aid and assistance in this great exceedingly difficult work of keeping up and conducting Sabbath schools among the coloured population. A voice may be heard to say with respect to this vast neglected and uncultivated field, 'Come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, and in carrying forward a great and effectual warfare and controversy against sin and infidelity and ignorance and prejudice and immorality in its varied forms.'

It would require perhaps almost 500 Sabbath school teachers to carry out among the coloured population the great work and objects of Sabbath school education in the city, and perhaps almost that number in Old Town alone, not to speak of other parts of the city, where vice and misery prevail to an alarming degree; but it appears to be almost next to impossibility to get coloured adults in families to attend in Sabbath schools for their benefit and improvement. Indifference and inattention to knowledge, to virtue and to religion are too prevalent; and whatever can excite and arouse general attention and interest to knowledge, virtue and religion will advance the prosperity, welfare, and happiness of society.

The coloured children who attend the Sabbath schools often express their kindness and gratitude for the efforts and labours of those friends who have come forward to teach them in the elements of knowledge, and to impress upon their minds and hearts the great principles of morality, virtue and religion. Some few years ago, to hear of white teachers in coloured Sabbath schools was uncommon; but of late years, great attention has been given to the establishment and encouragement of coloured Sabbath schools in the city of Baltimore.

In Potter street and in other places, such as Bel-Air and Douglas streets, scenes and occurrences which ought not to be permitted if they could be prevented, are witnessed, such as intemperance, profanity and noisy and tumultuous collections of black and coloured people. These things are very unpleasant and obnoxious to the feelings and wishes of the friends of good order, of virtue and of religion. Something should be done to prevent such occurrences.

Many who are now collected together in the Sabbath schools, are drawn from such scenes of wickedness and misery and wretchedness in the remote parts of the city; and Sabbath schools for coloured youth and adults attract them from those places of temptation and crime, and have the great and happy effect in an eminent degree, by moral and religious influence, to break up these haunts of wretchedness, and to prevent such scenes, and to open doors of usefulness for the humane and philanthropic, and to give ample opportunities for the promotion of moral improvement. Grog shops and intemperance and profanity and Sabbath breaking and their concomitant evils are prevalent to a considerable and alarming extent in the community, and something should be done by moral and religious influence to stop the progress of wickedness, and to give an additional impulse to the efforts of christian activity and enterprise, and to accelerate the motion of the wheels of moral and religious influence. The field is wide, but the labourers in the field of religious and moral effort are comparatively few in number.

There are a number of coloured persons in the Penitentiary of the city, to whom with the other there, the Gospel is preached and religious instruction is given on the Sabbath.

From the statistics of destitution in the city of Baltimore by the Rev. Stephen Williams, who visited 654 coloured families last spring, we find reported 1544 coloured children in these families, 870 of whom were above 6 years of age; and 221 of them attending Sabbath school; and 72 at day schools; persons out at service 237; number of church members visited 566 and 31 persons of colour who were members of Temperance societies. These inquiries and visits were among the population in the east part of the city of Baltimore.

With respect to religion and the public worship of God while much ignorance, infidelity, neglect, carelessness and indifference prevail among a great multitude, others are less attentive to order and decorum in public worship both on the Sabbath and at weekly prayer meetings. A degree of fanaticism, and wildfire, and religious enthusiasm, perhaps, in some cases, prevail among others of the coloured people in some places in the city, when they meet together. The excitements at the meetings in Sharp street, Bethel and Asbury are sometimes considerable; and much noise prevails occasionally among the people assembled together at night meetings. Shoutings, singing, clapping of hands, and stamping with the feet, and exercises producing excitements and commotions, prevail at some of these meetings as we have heard. Curiosity, idleness and love of excitement and noise, draw crowds of people together, while they neglect instruction and will not apply with spirited activity and exertion to regular forms of worship.

The institutions of different kinds among the people of colour in the city of Baltimore, are as follows:—

- Female societies.
1. Old Union association.
 2. Benign do.
 3. McKendree do.
 4. Wesleyan do.
 5. Union Branch do.
 6. Young Women's Beneficial association.
 7. Star in the East association.
 8. Female Ebenezer do.
 9. Daughters of Jerusalem association.

The above are for mutual relief in time of sickness and for burying their own dead, and money is collected for these purposes by the members:—

Males. 1. Young Men's Beneficial association.

2. United Brethren do. do.
3. Mechanical do. do.
4. Porter's do. do.

5. Coachman's Beneficial association.
6. Caulker's do. do.

The object of both male and female in these societies are for the same purpose as stated above.

7. Young Men's Mental Improvement Society, for the discussion of moral and philosophical questions of different kinds.
8. Temperance Societies.
9. Sabbath School Associations.
10. Coloured Masonic Lodge.
11. Coloured Sabbath schools of different denominations.
12. Old Beneficial Society.
13. Young Men's United Society.
14. Columbian Beneficial do.
15. Barbers' Association.
16. Daughter's Bethel Society.
17. Olive Branch do.
18. Simeon Female Institution.
19. St. Mary's Institution.
20. Female Beneficial Society.
21. Good Samaritan Society.
22. Young Men's Beneficial United Society.
23. Beneficial Association.
24. Young Men's Branch.
25. Harmonious Friends United Society.
26. Union Volunteers do.
27. Brick Makers' do.
28. The Relief Society in cases of seizure.
29. Sharp Street Juvenile Sunday Temperance Society.

30. The coloured people's Bible Society auxiliary to the Young Men's Bible society of the state of Maryland.

Some of these societies above named, are for mental relief and improvement, and there are a few more smaller societies whose names cannot be ascertained here.

Mr. Thomas Green, has a well known barber shop in Light street. He came here upwards of twenty-five years ago, from the Barbadoes Island, West Indies, and has since that time, been established here in business, and by industry and attention has acquired considerable property in houses and real estate.

Mr. J. Watts, in Light street, has a store and boarding house. He can accommodate from 30 to 40 coloured persons in the house at once.

Some of the coloured people are tobacconists, some brick-makers, some shoe-makers, some merchant tailors, and some few have small stores, where they sell various articles for common use in society among people of colour. Some of the more usual employments are day-labourers, draymen, porters, sawyers, and servants in families, male and female. There are several places where they take their position on the wharves, or in the public streets, where they can be found by their employers, as porters, or draymen, or workmen in labour of different kinds.

It appears from statistics, that there are about 700 youth and adults among the coloured population, who attend on Sabbath school instruction. There are hundreds and thousands of families among the coloured population living in neglect of the great salvation, and what can be done for them in this respect—as difficulties are great and numerous, in accomplishing the great object of preaching the gospel in the best possible manner.

To accomplish these objects, white Sabbath school teachers and ministers of the gospel could employ their talent and influence with great and powerful effect in exciting attention to the observance of the Sabbath, the importance of religion, and the great value of Sabbath school education among the coloured population, &c. Much has been done by different denominations of christians with respect to these objects, and much remains to be done for the good of the community, in this neglected, difficult and uncultivated field of moral and christian exertions.

Irreligion, and vice, and Sabbath breaking, prevail to a great degree and considerable extent; and many difficulties and obstacles are in the way of the amelioration of the coloured population in these respects. Much is to be done in removing irreligion and wickedness; and much can be done, if persons means to help us with the work of moral reformation, could be obtained adequate to the work to be accomplished. The circulation of tracts, and the distribution of bibles, have been attended to, in families among the people of colour; and more remains to be done for their good, and the general interests of the community with respect to them. Whatever can be done to promote moral and religious influence, is worthy of attention, as interests of vast amount are at stake for eternity. The influence of the christian religion, and the promotion of christian knowledge, are objects of inestimable interest, and deserve our highest respect and estimation.

The Rev. William McJimsey, by an appointment from the Board of Missions of the general assembly of the Presbyterian church, on recommendation of the Committee on Missions, has laboured for a year and six months, within the last three years, among the coloured population of the city generally. It has been the great object of Mr. McJimsey, to preach the gospel, to establish bible classes and Sabbath schools, and to promote the amelioration of the condition and prospects of the coloured population, by extending christian knowledge and education, and by endeavouring as far as possible, to excite attention to the worth and value of intellectual, moral and religious influence in society at large. Ignorance and poverty, and other causes, such as long established habits in vice and neglect of the Sabbath day and Sabbath schools, have produced in thousands of coloured families in the city, an indifference to the observance of the Sabbath, and to the great importance of religious and moral instruction. These general facts will illustrate in a more particular manner than can be found in any other article, the condition of the coloured population of the city of Baltimore.

Emancipation and Colonization.

The New Orleans Picayune of the 13th Feb. says—'We understand that six hundred negroes, belonging to a gentleman of this city, lately deceased, are to be liberated according to his will, provided they are willing to go to Africa, in which case ample provision is to be made for their transportation.'

The Rev. G. W. McElroy, of Kentucky, writes to the Rev. Dr. Proudfit, of New York, that at least seventy-five, or perhaps a hundred emigrants might be found ready to embark for Africa, from that State, by the last of April.—Christian States.

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