

these have enjoyed very fair opportunities for obtaining an elementary education, and a few have made a commendable proficiency. The standard of education, though still much lower than that of our Northern and Eastern States, is nevertheless at least hopefully elevated.

The religious aspects of the country are deeply interesting and highly encouraging. From the beginning the missionary element entered largely into the scheme of African colonization, a very large proportion of the colonists have been persons of decided and earnest religious character, led thither by their religious impulses, and actuated by the same motives since their settlement in Africa. It is therefore not at all strange, though the fact is significant and full of promise, that there is a larger proportion of members of evangelical Churches in Liberia than in any considerable portion of our own country, and that they would also compare favorably with American Christians in the consistency of their lives. The four principal denominations of this country, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians, are well established among them, ranging in relative numbers in the order here given, and all of these receive missionary aid, both men and money, from this country. Of our own mission in that country very full accounts have been laid before the Church in the Annual Missionary Reports, and through the Church papers; a pretty full review of its history and attainments was given in our columns only a few months since. The Church still has a strong and abiding interest in this its earliest foreign mission; but experience has produced the conviction that its further prosecution must devolve almost exclusively upon the colored race. All our missionaries in that field, except one female teacher, are colored persons, and the home authorities of the Church have ceased to solicit volunteers from among the whites. This is probably the best thing for Africa, as well as a matter of necessity on account of the fatality of the climate for white men; for it is evident that if Africa shall ever be redeemed and evangelized, it must be through the agency of her own sons. And for this work the most pressing want at this time is that of a sufficient number of thoroughly educated men, to carry on the work with the requisite energy and ability.

The state of things in the several denominations is comprehensively and, we presume, correctly given by our correspondent. We give his statement in his own words:

"The Baptists have as yet no educated men in their ranks, though a movement is now on foot to have them. The Presbyterians, owing to the influence of the colonization movements, and that of its agents, who are mostly members of that denomination, are, by expending the funds in their hands for educational purposes, training young men in the schools for work in their missions. Whether this educational fund is for that particular purpose I cannot say, and yet it might not be amiss to know definitely concerning it. The Episcopalians have already several talented men in their employ, and are every year increasing the number. Our own Church has not now in her employ a single educated man, though we hope to have soon. Owing to the want of educated men in that field, those of color can command higher prices for their labor as teachers than our denomination, under present circumstances, can pay; and this, I think, can be remedied only by educating in the United States young men born and raised in Africa."

The writer's views as to the necessity for educated men in that work will be conceded by all who are conversant with the circumstances of the case. That the requisite supply must be of colored men will also be granted; and there are certainly sufficient reasons why, if possible, they

should be natives of Liberia. The more perfect the identification of religious teachers with those for whose good they labor, the more efficient will they be likely to become. Besides this, there is much more liability to failure in the case of an American young man of color, educated in view of that work, than in that of a native Liberian. The free colored people of this country very generally have a prejudice against Liberia, and this, however unreasonable it may be, is a formidable obstacle in the way of making them available for that work, even after having been educated expressly for it, and should such actually proceed thither, very possibly, on account of their want of personal attachment to Liberian Methodism, they would be lured away by the tempting offers that would be made to them, "in the shape of larger salaries," by rival denominations. On the other hand, the influence of the home feeling, and the personal and family connections with our Church in that country, would tend to hold the young native Liberian to his steadfastness. We suspect too that the influences of the real freedom of the African Republic, as contrasted with the bare toleration allowed them in this country, do affect most favorably the minds and characters of those that pass their years of infancy among them.

There are now, we are informed, in Liberia several young men of good families, members of our Church, and educated as far as the schools of that country can do it. Some of these, it is believed, would gladly come to this country to prosecute their studies further, were the way opened for them, but till the way shall be prepared for them there are insuperable difficulties. Most of them would need pecuniary assistance, and all of them the co-operation of friends in this country, white men, to gain for them unprejudiced admission to the desired institutions; and all this, we fully believe, could be readily obtained for them if proper efforts should be made. If strictly satisfactory assurances could be given, that funds appropriated to that purpose would effect the proposed end, there would be but little difficulty in obtaining them, either from individuals or from associations; but there is a very general and perhaps not altogether unreasonable distrust as to matters of this kind. The chances of failure may, however, be very greatly diminished in this case. Certainly no educated Liberian would refuse to return to his fatherland. The facts that there would be his home and kindred, there his social relations, such as he could not hope to gain in this country, and that all his associations, both here and there, would be Methodistical, would all tend to secure his services in the desired work. Very possibly, too, pecuniary responsibilities for aid received could be laid upon such persons, through their friends in Liberia, which would still more effectually hold them to their obligations, or afford redress in case of failure. The outlay of a few hundreds or even thousands of dollars in securing the life-services of a competent corps of educated colored missionaries for Africa, would be but a trifle in comparison with the probable results; the only considerable difficulties in the way of the scheme are in its practical details.

We confess to a general dislike to the usual forms of charity scholarships, though within proper restrictions they may doubtless be used to the advantages of all parties. Personal independence and self-reliance are lessons that must be learned by all who are expected to effect anything considerable in the world, and to the cultivation of these the condition of a charity scholar is not usually favorable. If a young man have not the means to pay for his own education, it would be better for him to borrow of some friend than to receive it as a gratuity; and no doubt education societies could do more real good by loaning their funds than by

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XII. Newspapers

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