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THE

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AND

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1840.
AFRICAN COLONIZATION.

From the Springfield Republican.

AFRICAN COLONIZATION.

We afford our readers a rich treat this week in the original letters of Africanus. They were addressed to Mr. Cresson by Mr. Hanson, a native African, who is now preparing to return to Africa as a missionary. His history is interesting: his father is an English merchant at Accra, and there married a daughter of the King of Ashante. Young Hanson was educated in England, and as he also speaks five or six native dialects, (used by nearly six millions of natives,) may become the instrument of incalculable good to his native kinmen. It will be recollected that several colored missionaries were sent from Hartford to Liberia some years since. Mr. H. is now there under the charge of Bishop Brownell and Rev. Mr. Burgess. His lectures on Africa some time since afforded high gratification to the citizens of that place, and will, we hope, be repeated here.

HARTFORD, August 17, 1839.

Elliott Cresson, Esq.:

Sir: I must beg to intrude upon you again for a few moments; but I regret exceedingly that circumstances preclude the possibility of my entering at any length upon the subject, particularly as the peculiar interest it excites seems to demand something beyond cursory remarks. I, however, cannot devote much time to the consideration of it, without trespassing upon the time allotted to study; and you will therefore, if you please, Sir, excuse the very imperfect manner in which the suggestions I have to offer, are put together.

I, Sir, feel an interest in the moral regeneration and literary elevation of Africa, which some in this community do not; nay, I might say, cannot. Possibly, this very interest may have formed an unreal foundation on which I have erected our aerial palaces. I submit my suggestions, however, to your better judgment, as better able to estimate its possibility.

I have heard you allude to the formation of a settlement at Bexley, without, however, if my memory serves me, entering into detail as to the proposed character of the settlement. From the fact of this place bearing the title of an English Baronet, it is calculated for a colony under the mutual support of Britain and America; and I think it not an unfair presumption, that that circumstance would secure it the patronage of that nobleman, and interest him and his friends in its welfare. Be that however as it will, it is a well known fact, that many of the inland native tribes of Western Africa, and the Mandingois in particular, are extensively acquainted with the Arabic language: speaking, writing, and reading it fluently and with facility. Now, Sir, the thought has struck me on hearing your remarks, and I take this opportunity to enquire whether it would be practicable to found a Seminary at this place, (Bexley,) with the view of instructing missionaries in the Arabic language. To disseminate the doctrines of our Holy Religion among that long neglected people, in their native language, and thus make Arabic the standard language of the country, in my humble opinion, would have a direct tendency to bind the scattered tribes into one vast consolidated brotherhood. And I would suggest (not that it is my primary aim to accommodate the Gospel to the prejudices of men, although every judicious and prudent mind must see the expediency of such a course when circumstances demand, and it can be effected without subverting any of its institutions and doctrines,) that the proposed institution be Episcopal, believing this to be the "faith once delivered to the Saints," and further, because if I mistake not, there is in Abyssinia, as also among the Copts, the remnant of a people professing Christianity in that ancient form; and I see
not why we should not endeavor to send missions and teachers among them, as well as among the Mandingoos, the Ashanteees, and other tribes. You will, I presume, at once see the decided advantage of thus instructing your missionaries and teachers in the Arabic. While they are forming the minds of the young in their schools, they can also hold unrestrained vernacular intercourse with all ages, classes and conditions. Whereas, now, of necessity, many are deprived of the benefits of the labors and instructions of the missionary, on account of their ignorance of the English language; for at best, where you find them pretending to a knowledge of that language, it is but a very imperfect smattering which they possess, and the man of God is obliged so to mutilate his expressions as to render them incapable of so forcibly conveying the wished and intended idea—if, indeed, they do not fail altogether to do so. Nor is this evil remedied by an interpreter; and for confirmation of this assertion, (aside from my own experience,) I am bold to appeal to those missionaries who have been, and are, in Africa.

These United States and Great Britain, unitedly, for a long time, spent their energies and resources in the enslavement and degradation of the inhabitants of Africa; and I believe that this plan now affords them an opportunity to erase that, otherwise indelible blot, from their respective escutcheons, and invites them to co-operate to effect her resurrection from Paganism and ignorance. This is a debt which all Christendom, but England and America pre-eminently, owe to Africa. Will the Church of England, with her sister Church in America, turn a deaf ear to these entreaties of an African, one of their children?

Far from presuming to dictate in this matter, it did occur to me, that Great Britain should provide a professor of Arabic, together with the literature; and I trust that the sacred fire is not so extinct in the breast of their transatlantic brethren that men for future missionaries cannot be procured here. As an individual, I could wish that these might be colored men. It pains me, Sir, that there should be among the descendants of the African in this country, so few, who, burning with zeal for the cause of Christianity, offer themselves as instruments in the hand of the All Wise, to effect the much to be desired elevation of Africa. While we proudly look back upon the bygone days of Afric’s glory, and call to remembrance the burning eloquence, the cogent arguments, and the devoted piety of a Cyprian, a Cyril, or an Origen, how few of us are there who feel a desire to emulate the example of these illustrious countrymen of our progenitors? More intent upon following the fleeting vanities of this world, which “passeth away and the lust thereof,” we cleave to more highly favored America. Can the colored population bear so small a share of interest in the well being of Africa, as to be unwilling to spend and be spent in her service? Allow me,—Sir, in conclusion, to express my firm conviction, that the Lord in his Providence, will overrule the bondage of the Africans in this land, so as to make that people the instruments in his hand of causing “Ethiopia to stretch forth her hands unto God;” and under this conviction, I have penned the above, which I respectfully submit to your consideration; it may be somewhat chimerical—but as we are placed in this world for the good of our whole race, and not merely for our individual gratification, you will, I trust, Sir, readily appreciate my motives.

I would, Sir, ask my colored brethren, whether their consciences acquit them while thus neglecting Africa? I would ask whether this is doing as they would be done by? I would enquire whence arises this apathy with which they treat every appeal for Africa? Who so likely to be faithful laborers for her spiritual welfare as they who would naturally feel a two-fold interest in her elevation? Are they indeed willing to endorse the vile aspersions that they are not fit materials with which to evangelize Africa?
Claims of Africa.

They may perhaps feel to console themselves that their consciences acquit them of malignity for any design that will benefit her. I ask them what are they doing for her? Saying unto her ‘be fed, and be clothed,’ is too unreal an assistance to avail much. She wants substantial friends, such as will give their time, their talents, and their lives, if need be, for her sake. The Lord Jesus Christ has assured us, that ‘whosoever will lose his life for his sake shall gain it.’ Unto his name be praise that there are yet some hearts warm with love to Africa—and while the multitude are intent upon reviling any missionary enterprise for her benefit, let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, ‘bearing his reproach.’

Permit me to subscribe myself, Sir,
Respectfully, your
Obedient and humble servant,
Africanus.

From the Philadelphia Episcopal Recorder.

Claims of Africa.

More than one heart has been gladdened by the plea put forth in last week’s Recorder under the above caption; but while the obligation of the American people to poor Africa, is there enforced on more general grounds, we may emphatically ask whether there is not a special duty incumbent upon the Episcopal Church. The land of Cyprian, and Tertullian, and Augustin, received the glad tidings in early days so effectually, that we read of a concave of 370 African Bishops in those times—and though a long night of many centuries has since brooded over her uncounted millions, and the lamp of truth has well nigh been extinguished,—yet when we witness the blessing which has rested upon the pious labors of other denominations, we have reason to ask whether the promised day is not nigh when “Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.” Ps. lxviii.

It may be well to remember that by a remarkable concurrence of events, the heralds of light and knowledge have been planted almost simultaneously by different Christian powers at the four cardinal points of that great continent. And although her barbarous people, guaded to violence and crime by the cruelty and cruelty of professed Christians, present scenes over which humanity weeps, yet there are many cheering indications that the labors of the missionary have been richly blessed, even there, while many portions of the heathen world, far more promising to all human appearance, are entirely closed against us.

But the great work is yet scarcely begun. A few scattered rays only have shed their effulgence over the borders of that mighty continent, and for every missionary hitherto sent, ten are demanded by the perishing natives. The call has been extended to us: at one time we were solicited to send a clergyman to the Church of St. James, organized at Monrovia, and at another to supply the loss of the Rev. Mr. Cesar, who had formed an interesting congregation at Caldwell; but both have been permitted to perish! At Bexley too, a lovely spot at Bassa Cove, selected for the very purpose, an Episcopal mission has long since been proposed, and upwards of one thousand dollars subscribed. The last annual report of the Board of Missions approves the plan, so soon as the requisite funds shall be obtained.

But we are told that there is a mission at Cape Palmas. True—and there are twenty churches in this city; but will they supply the wants of perish ing souls in the remote corners of Pennsylvania? Neither will the light kindled at Cape Palmas, reach Bexley, 200 miles distant. A few intelligent blacks have already settled there—several more will join them by the