THE WORKS

OF

SAMUEL HOPKINS, D. D.,

FIRST PASTOR OF

THE CHURCH IN GREAT BARRINGTON, MASS.,

AFTERWARDS PASTOR OF

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN NEWPORT, R. I.

WITH

A MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:

DOCTRINAL TRACT AND BOOK SOCIETY.

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laborers in England. We find that at this period he was engaged in a correspondence with Zachary Macaulay, so highly celebrated as editor of the Christian Observer, as the companion of Scott, Newton, and Wilberforce, and more recently as the father of the historian, Thomas Babington Macaulay. The correspondence is valuable, as it shows the care which both Macaulay and Hopkins took, in selecting worthy emigrants for the new settlement on the African coast. It corroborates the preceding assertion, that the colonization which Hopkins favored was not, in its early stages, to be promiscuous, but select; not limited, however, to the strictly pious Africans, but including also those who were apparently favorable to religion. Two of Mr. Macaulay's letters are here inserted, for the sake of illustrating the kind of missionary colonization in which Hopkins was engaged.

"Freetown, Sierra Leone, 19 March, 1795. Reverend Sir: We refer you to the enclosed paper, marked No. 1, for an explanation of the reasons which have induced us at this time to trouble you. We have considered it as a sufficient ground on which to solicit your good offices, that you are interested in the cause of humanity, and that you are zealous in the service of Christ. Believing, therefore, that you will regard no task as a burden which gives you an opportunity of manifesting these dispositions, we address you on the present occasion, with the full assurance that you will be favorable to our views, and that you will spare no pains in fulfilling them.

"You already know, that several families of people of color, belonging to Providence, have joined in making an application to us for a settlement at Sierra Leone; and though we be by no means desirous of an accession of colonists, yet their application has been so urgent, that we have been induced to comply with it. The number to be received is, however, limited to twelve families; and on perusing the conditions, you will see that even these are not to be received, unless they present satisfactory testimonials of their moral character, signed by you and another clergyman, and by the President of the Abolition Society.

"The difficulties which have already arisen, in forming this settlement, from the injudicious admission of persons of doubtful character, have led us to guard more carefully against a similar evil in the present instance. These difficulties have arisen, either from fallacious notions of civil rights, (a thing not to be wondered at in emancipated slaves,) from extreme vehemence of temper, or from low, confused and imperfect ideas of moral rectitude. The first of these may, no doubt, be corrected by enlightening their minds; the second may be curbed by wholesome laws; and the last may be amended and improved by the preaching of the gospel: but we should be much better pleased to have an accession of colonists who would strengthen our hands in accomplishing these purposes, than of men who would furnish us with additional employment in that way.

"There is another evil, however, which we fear may prevail among those with whom the present application has originated, and which we wish to guard against with more care than even against these. We mean the evil of speculative infidelity. From general circumstances which have passed under our observation, we are led to judge, that the poison of the 'Age of Reason' may have pervaded even this class of men. Now, we trust you will agree with us, in thinking that the introduction of one such unbeliever into a

* It may here be mentioned, that the author of the 'Age of Reason' had been actively engaged in behalf of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.
colony founded for the express purpose of spreading among the heathen the knowledge of a Saviour, might prove an evil beyond all calculation. We are not such bigots as to require subscription to creeds and articles; nor are we such latitudinarians, as to be willingly accessory to admitting into the colony one person who has learned to treat religion with contempt. However great the usefulness of such people might be in other respects, we should conceive ourselves to be more essentially serving the cause of God, by forming a colony of the blindest of those blind people who now inhabit this land. We do not look for characters of eminent piety, but we would expect a sober demeanor, good intentions, and a disposition favorable to religion. Without these, no man can make a good member of any community; much less of one established expressly for the purpose of preaching to Africa the acceptable year of the Lord. What we have, then, particularly to request of you, sir, is, that you would refuse your signature to any person's certificate with whom you have not reason to be satisfied in this respect, as well as in every other. Religion is not, indeed, expressly mentioned in the conditions, as necessary to form a part of their character who migrate hither; but as we think you will agree with us in opinion, that none can with propriety be entitled to the denomination of moral, of whose characters religion does not form the basis, the omission is of no moment.

"We have written on this subject to you alone; but we beg of you to communicate our sentiments to the Chairman of the Abolition Society, and to any other clergyman you may think proper to associate with you.

"We enclose a paper, No. 2, which will give you some notion of the extent to which the slave trade is carried on in our neighborhood by Americans. We hoped that the act of your Congress would have effectually abolished it; but we find, on the contrary, that it has considerably increased since the time of the passing of that act. Had we had time, we should have sent you, by this opportunity, a sketch of the history and nature of this settlement, but we shall embrace an early opportunity of doing it. We think it right to say, that the behavior of Mr. James MacKenzie, as far as we have had the means of observing it, has been proper and becoming.

"Requesting your pardon for the liberty we have now presumed to take, and wishing you continued and increasing health and happiness,

"We remain, reverend sir, your very faithful and obedient servants,

ZACHARY MACaulay, Acting Governor.
JAMES WATT, Councillor P. S.

"Rev. Mr. Hopkins, Providence, Rhode Island."

"Freetown, October 20, 1796. Dear Sir: On my return from England in March last, I was favored with your much esteemed letter of the ninth of September, 1795, and had also an opportunity of seeing your obliging communications to the Governor and Council. In their name, I beg to make the heartiest acknowledgments for the attention you were pleased to pay to their requests. They feel themselves particularly indebted to you, for the considerateness with which you withheld your recommendation from persons who might otherwise have caused them much trouble; a circumstance, which will lead them to receive with much regard any recommendation which, at any future period, you may be induced to make them.

"I beg now to return you my best thanks for the pleasure afforded me by your letter, as well as by the tracts accompanying it. I have perused them with profit, and have only to regret, that an oversight of Captain Benson's, should have deprived me of the satisfaction of perusing some more bulky productions of the same pen. During my late visit to Europe, I had an opportunity of passing some time at Edinburgh. My very excellent and venerable friend, Dr. Erskine, communicated to me the substance of the interesting account you give of your labors in behalf of this benighted land. It is to be regretted, that they should have hitherto proved so fruitless. We may, however, regard that and every similar effort that has been made, however to our
view they may have appeared vain, as silently operating in producing that striking and unexampled eagerness, with which the Christian world in Europe is now pursuing the benevolent object of evangelizing the heathen. During my short stay at home, I had the satisfaction of seeing a mission undertaken by the Baptists to India, and another to Africa, one undertaken by the Wesleyan Methodists to the interior of the same country, and one put in a fair way of being undertaken by the Moravians. A society for missions had also been formed, which embraced all sects of Evangelical Pede-Baptists, to the funds of which £10,000 sterling had been subscribed, whose object, in the first instance, is the South Sea Islands. It is with some concern I add, that the Methodist mission to this country has entirely failed, through the unfitness of the instruments, and that the Baptist mission near us languishes from the same cause.

"One of my objects in visiting Edinburgh was, to procure some pious men to accompany me on my return, as servants of the Company; and in this I succeeded to my wish. I was so fortunate as to meet with a young man of the name of Clarke, who, possessed of great gifts, was also possessed of uncommon piety, and embraced with gladness an offer of the chaplaincy here, in the hope of an opportunity of doing good. He has, since his arrival, formed a church, as far as circumstances admit, on the Presbyterian plan, (though we banish names: — here we are not Presbyterians, but Christians,) and there is a prospect of his doing much good. His usefulness has indeed been much marred, by a number of would-be preachers, who started up among the people, while they were without any regular instructor, and who find the continuance of their influence so much involved in Mr. Clarke's success, that they use every effort to cause dissensions and maintain a party spirit. We may regard even that unpleasant circumstance as, in some measure, a token for good. If Satan be busy, we may judge he trembles for his kingdom.

"You have a copy, if I am not mistaken, of the conditions on which I agreed with MacKenzie to receive free blacks. Should the people around you be disposed to give the requisite assistance to a few families who might wish to migrate, and whom you could safely recommend, they would be received on the same terms.

"I have the pleasure of enclosing a printed report of the progress of our colony, till the time of its devastation by the French. Almost all the facts are detailed from my own actual observation. I understand from Captain Benson, that a very unfavorable report respecting my conduct at that time has reached America. Misrepresentation is a part of that cross which, so very peculiarly situated as I am, I must be content to bear. The report to which I allude, took its rise from the ill will of a shipmaster bound hence to Jamaica, whom I had forced to perform an act of common humanity to some seamen in distress, and was eagerly retailed by the people of Jamaica, to whom, from a residence of six years in that island, I am well known, and who, regarding me, with some justice, as an apostate from their party, gladly seize every opportunity of marking their dislike.

"I shall not fail to send you the continuation of the printed reports, as they make their appearance. In the mean time, you will like to hear that our schools thrive, under the superintendence of Mr. Clarke, to a degree I could hardly have expected. For particulars respecting them and many other points, I must refer you to Captain Benson, whose representations I should expect (if not from partiality a little too highly colored) would be very fair.

"You will be sorry to learn that, during the last year, the number of American slave traders on the coast has increased to an unprecedented degree. Were it not for their pertinacious adherence to that abominable traffic, it would, in consequence of the war, have been almost wholly abolished in our neighborhood. By letters from my excellent friends, Messrs. Wilberforce and Thornton, whose names I dare say are not unknown on your side of the water, I find that, nothing daunted by their frequent defeats, they mean to pursue without any relaxation their measures for a total abolition. The
question was lost, in March last, only by a majority of four, and that not till
the last reading.

"The continuation of your correspondence will be highly gratifying to me,
and I shall have pleasure in writing to you, from time to time, on such topics
as from this far country will be likely to interest you.

"Dr. Hopkins," Dr. Erskine, and the Rev. John Newton, have severally
told me that, were they young, they should strongly desire to migrate to
Sierra Leone. Their actual presence is a happiness which we dare not ex-
pect; but we feel ground for indulging a hope that their hearts are with us,
and that they sometimes breathe out a prayer in our behalf to Him whose
blessing can alone make our work prosper. That he may bestow on you, sir,
the best of blessings, is the warmest prayer of your faithful friend and obliged
and humble servant,

ZACHARY MACAULAY.

"P. S. I send, herewith, a number of little tracts, which are published
monthly in England, chiefly by my valuable friend Mrs. Hannah More.
Their object is, to supplant licentious and seditious ballads and pamphlets, by
affording amusement to the common people, at an equally cheap rate, or at a
cheaper rate than those pernicious writings are sold at; whereby people may
be surprised, as it were, into some profitable reading. The success of the
tracts has been truly astonishing. The plan began only in March, 1795, and
before last March, two millions of tracts had been sold."

We have already seen that two, of the first three candidates for the
African mission, died before their education was completed. Still, the projector of that mission clung to it; and as late as
1799, when he was about eighty years of age, and had been laboring
twenty-six years in its behalf, he writes in the last book which he ever
published:"

"It may here be added, that the way to this proposed mission yet lies open;
and the importance of it and the encouragement to it are as great as ever. All
that is wanted is money, exertion, and missionaries to undertake it. There
are religious blacks to be found, who understand the language of the nations in
those parts, who might be improved, if properly encouraged. And if they
were brought to embrace Christianity, and to be civilized, it would put a stop
to the slave trade, and render them happy. And it would open a door for a
trade which would be for the temporal interest of both Americans and Afri-
cans. As attention to sending the gospel to the heathen appears to be now
spreading and increasing in America, it is hoped that the eyes of many will
be opened to see the peculiar obligations they are under to attempt to send
the gospel to the Africans, whom we have injured and abused so greatly, even
more than any other people under heaven; it being the best and the only
compensation we can make."

In none of his letters, even to his most confidential friends, does
Hopkins intimate, that his original views of an African settlement, or

* Was there a Dr. Hopkins of England, who had seen Mr. Macaulay, and "told" him what is here asserted? Or does Mr. Macaulay speak of Dr. Hopkins of America, as having written to him what is here stated? It was common, especially in that day, to allude in the third person to the individual addressed; but Mr. Macaulay, in the preced ing letter, does not address the Rhode Island pastor as Dr., but as "Mr. Hopkins."

† John Quincy had lost his life in the revolutionary war. Dr. Patten says, (Reminiscences, pp. 86, 87,) that he "entered on board a privateer, with the desire not only to support in this way the cause of the army, but to obtain money to purchase the freedom of his wife; but he was slain in the first battle."

‡ Memoirs of Mrs. Osborn, pp. 78, 79.