THE

NEGRO IN ANCIENT HISTORY:

BY

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From the Methodist Quarterly Review, for January, 1869.

WASHINGTON CITY:
M'GILL & WITHEROW, PRINTERS AND STEREOTYPERS.
1869.

NOTE.

The author of the following treatise is a person of unmixed African extraction, born at St. Thomas, W. I., August 3, 1832, came to the United States in 1850, with the hope of securing admission to one of the Colleges in this country. The deep-seated prejudice against his race preventing the consummation of his wishes, he embarked, under the auspices of the Colonization Society for Liberia, reaching Monrovia, January 26, 1851.

He promptly entered the Alexander High School, and, in 1858, was placed in full charge of that useful Institution, continuing until 1861, when he was appointed a Professor in Liberia College. Ever looking forward to the Ministry, he was ordained by the Presbytery of West Africa in 1858.

Professor Blyden passed the summer of 1866 at the Syrian Protestant College, on Mount Lebanon, Syria, studying Arabic, and is now teaching that language in the College at Monrovia. The effect already produced is as wonderful as interesting—numerous chiefs, headmen, and Mohammedan priests showing much concern in the work, some of them having traveled several hundred miles from the interior of Africa to visit Liberia and see and converse with him.

Teage, Benson, Warner, Crummell, Blyden, and others in Liberia have shown that negroes of the darkest hue may possess eminent ability. And that in other lands the same incentive, under only the same fostering circumstances and the like favorable opportunities which have brought to the light the great minds of all ages, is needed to develop the talent of the negro race equally with those who have possessed a superiority attained by the educational influences of centuries. May we not hope that the black man in the United States of America will soon possess the stimulus now enjoyed by his brethren of the Republic of Liberia, and thus be enabled to rival them in scholarship and become, equally with them, the benefactors of mankind?

BENJAMIN COATES.

PHILADELPHIA, *July* 1, 1869.

THE NEGRO IN ANCIENT HISTORY.

Presuming that no believer in the Bible will admit that the negro had his origin at the head waters of the Nile, on the banks of the Gambia, or in the neighborhood of the Zaire, we should like to inquire by what chasm is he separated from other descendants of Noah, who originated the great works of antiquity, so that with any truth it can be said that "if all that negroes of all generations have ever done were to be obliterated from recollection forever the world would lose no great truth, no profitable art, no exemplary form of life. The loss of all that is African would offer no memorable deduction from anything but the earth's black catalogue of crimes."* In singular contrast with the disparaging statements of the naval officer, Volney, the great French Oriental traveler and distinguished linguist, after visiting the wonders of Egypt and Ethiopia, exclaims, as if in mournful indignation, "How are we astonished when we reflect that to the race of negroes, at present our slaves and the objects of our extreme contempt, we owe our arts and sciences, and even the very use of speech!" And we do not see how, with the records of the past accessible to us, it is possible to escape from the conclusions of Volney. If it cannot be shown that the negro race was separated by a wide and unapproachable interval from the founders of Babylon and Nineveh, the builders of Babel and the Pyramids, then we claim for them a participation in those ancient works of science and art, and that not merely on the indefinite ground of a common humanity, but on the ground of close and direct relationship.

Let us turn to the tenth chapter of Genesis, and consider the ethnographic allusions therein contained, receiving them

* Commander Foote, "Africa and the American Flag," p. 207.

in their own grand and catholic spirit. And we the more readily make our appeal to this remarkable portion of Holy Writ, because it has "extorted the admiration of modern ethnologists, who continually find in it anticipations of their greatest discoveries." Sir Henry Rawlinson says of this chapter: "The Toldoth Beni Noah (the Hebrew title of the chapter) is undoubtedly *the most authentic* record we possess for the affiliation of those branches of the human race which sprang from the triple stock of the Noachidæ." And again: "We must be cautious in drawing direct ethnological inferences from the linguistic indications of a very early age. It would be far *safer*, at any rate, in these early times, to follow the general scheme of ethnic affiliation which is given in the tenth chapter of Genesis."*

From the second to the fifth verse of this chapter we have the account of the descendants of Japheth and their places of residence, but we are told nothing of their *doings* or their *productions*. From the twenty-first verse to the end of the chapter we have the account of the descendants of Shem and of their "dwelling." Nothing is said of their *works*. But how different the account of the descendants of Cush, the eldest son of Ham, contained from the seventh to the twelfth verse. We read: "And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord. . . . And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land he went forth into Asshur, (marginal reading,) and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city."

We have adopted the marginal reading in our English Bible, which represents Nimrod as having founded Nineveh, in addition to the other great works which he executed. This reading is supported by authorities, both Jewish and Christian, which cannot be set aside. The author of "Foundations of History," without, perhaps, a due consideration of the original, affirms that Asshur was "one of the sons of Shem!" thus despoiling the descendants of Ham of the glory of having

*Quoted by G. Rawlinson in Notes to "Bampton Lectures," 1859.

"builded" Nineveh. And to confirm this view he tells us that "Micah speaks of the land of Asshur and the land of Nimrod as two distinct countries." We have searched in vain for the passage in which the Prophet makes such a representation. The verse to which this author directs us (Micah v: 6) is unfortunate for this theory. It is plain from the closing of the verse that the conjunction "*and*," in the first clause, is not the simple copulative *and* or *also*, but is employed, according to a well-known Hebrew usage, in the sense of *even* or *namely*, to introduce the words "land of Nimrod" as an explanatory or qualifying addition in apposition to the preceding "land of Assyria."*

We must take Asshur in Gen. x: 11, not as the subject of the verb "went," but as the name of the place whither—the *terminus ad quem*. So Drs. Smith and Van Dyck, eminent Oriental scholars, understand the passage, and so they have rendered it in their admirable Arabic translation of the Bible, recently adopted by the British and Foreign Bible Society, namely: "Out of that land he (Nimrod) went forth unto Asshur—Assyria—and builded Nineveh." De Sola, Lindenthall, and Raphall, learned Jews, so translate the passage in their "New Translation of the Book of Genesis."† Dr. Kalisch, another Hebrew of the Hebrews, so renders the verse in his "Historical and Critical Commentary on Genesis."‡ All these authorities, and others we might mention, agree that to make the passage descriptive of the Shemite Asshur is to do violence to the passage itself and its context. Asshur, moreover, is mentioned in his proper place in verse 22, and without the least indication of an intention of describing him as the founder of a rival empire to Nimrod.§ Says Nachmanides, (quoted by De Sola, etc.:) "It would be strange if Asshur, a son of Shem, were mentioned among the descendants of Ham, of whom Nimrod was one. It would be equally strange if the deeds of

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*See Conant's Gesenius's Hebrew Grammar, (17th edition,) section 155, (a;) and for additional examples of this usage, see Judges vii, 22; 1 Sam. xvii, 40; Jer. xv, 13, where *even* represents the conjunction *vau* (and) in the original.

†London, 1844.

‡London, 1858. See Dr. Robinson's view in Gesenius's Hebrew Lexicon, under the word Cush.

§See Kitto's Biblical Cyclopedia, article *Ham*. London, 1866.

Asshur were spoken of before his birth and descent had been mentioned."

The grammatical objection to our view is satisfactorily disposed of by Kalisch.* On the absence of the locale, he remarks: "The locale, after verbs of motion, though frequently, is by no means uniformly applied. (1 Kings xi: 17; 2 Kings xv: 14, etc.) Gesenius, whose authority no one will dispute, also admits the probability of the view we have taken, without raising any objection of grammatical structure."

But enough on this point. We may reasonably suppose that the building of the *tower of Babel* was also the work, principally, of Cushites. For we read in the tenth verse that Nimrod's kingdom was in the land of Shinar; and in the second verse of the eleventh chapter, we are told that the people who undertook the building of the tower "found a plain in the land of "*Shinar*," which they considered suitable for the ambitious structure. And, no doubt, in the "scattering" which resulted, these sons of Ham found their way into Egypt,† where their descendants—inheriting the skill of their fathers and guided by tradition—erected the pyramids in imitation of the celebrated tower. Herodotus says that the tower was six hundred and sixty feet high, or one hundred and seventy feet higher than the great pyramid of Cheops. It consisted of eight square towers, one above another. The winding path is said to have been four miles in length. Strabo calls it a pyramid.

But it may be said the enterprising people who founded Babylon and Nineveh, settled Egypt, and built the pyramids, though descendants of Ham, were not *black*—were not negroes; for, granted that the negro race have descended from Ham, yet, when these great civilizing works were going on, the descendants of Ham had not yet reached that portion of Africa, had not come in contact with those conditions of climate and atmosphere which have produced that peculiar development of humanity known as the Negro.

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* Historical and Critical Commentary on Genesis. Heb. and Eng. P. 263.

† It is certain that Mizraim, with his descendants, settled Egypt, giving his name to the country, which it still retains. The Arabic name for Egypt is *Misr*. In Psalm cv, 23, Egypt is called "the land of Ham."

Well, let us see. It is not to be doubted that from the earliest ages the black complexion of some of the descendants of Noah was known. Ham, it would seem, was of a complexion darker than that of his brothers. The root of the name Ham, in Hebrew, conveys the idea of *hot* or *swarthy*. So the Greeks called the descendants of Ham, from their black complexion, *Ethiopians*, a word signifying *burnt* or *black* face. The Hebrews called them Cushites, a word probably of kindred meaning. Moses is said to have married a Cushite or Ethiopian woman, that is, a *black* woman descended from Cush. The query, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin?" seems to be decisive as to a difference of complexion between the Ethiopian and the Shemite, and the etymology of the word itself determines that the complexion of the former was black. The idea has been thrown out that the three principal colors now in the world—white, brown, and black—were represented in the ark in Japheth, Shem, and Ham.

But were these enterprising descendants of Ham *woolly-haired?*—a peculiarity which, in these days, seems to be considered a characteristic mark of degradation and servility.* On this point let us consult Herodotus, called "the father of history." He lived nearly three thousand years ago. Having traveled extensively in Egypt and the neighboring countries, he wrote from personal observation. His testimony is that of an eye-witness. He tells us that there were two divisions of Ethiopians, who did not differ at all from each other in appearance, except in their language and hair. "For the eastern Ethiopians," he says, "are straight-haired, but those of Libya (or Africa) have hair more curly than that of any other people."†

He records also the following passage, which fixes the physi-

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*While Rev. Elias Schrenk, a German missionary laboring on the Gold Coast, in giving evidence on the condition of West Africa before a Committee of the House of Commons, in May, 1865, was making a statement of the proficiency of some of the natives in his school in Greek and other branches of literature, he was interrupted by Mr. Cheetham, a member of the Committee, with the inquiry: "Were those young men of *pure* African blood?" "Yes," replied Mr. Schrenk, "decidedly; thick lips and black skin." "And woolly hair?" added Mr. Cheetham. "And woolly hair," subjoined Mr. Schrenk. (See "Parliamentary Report on Western Africa for 1865," p. 145.)

†Herodotus, iii, 94; vii, 70.

cal characteristics of the Egyptians and some of their mighty neighbors:*

"The Colchians were evidently Egyptians, and I say this, *having myself observed it* before I heard it from others; and as it was a matter of interest to me, I *inquired* of both people, and the Colchians had more recollection of the Egyptians than the Egyptians had of the Colchians; yet the Egyptians said that they thought the Colchians had descended from the army of Sesostris; and I formed my conjecture, *not only because they are black in complexion and woolly-haired*, for this amounts to nothing, because *others are so likewise*," etc., etc.†

Rawlinson has clearly shown‡ that these statements of Herodotus have been too strongly confirmed by all recent researches (among the cuneiform inscriptions) in comparative philology to be set aside by the tottering criticism of such superficial inquirers as the Notts and Gliddons, *et id omne genus*, who base their assertions on ingenious conjectures. Pindar and Æschylus corroborate the assertions of Herodotus.

Homer, who lived still earlier than Herodotus, and who had also traveled in Egypt, makes frequent mention of the Ethiopians. He bears the same testimony as Herodotus§ as to their division into two sections, which Pope freely renders:

> "A race divided, whom with sloping rays
> The rising and descending sun surveys."

And Homer seems to have entertained the very highest opinion of these Ethiopians. It would appear that he was so struck with the wonderful works of these people, which he saw in Egypt and the surrounding country, that he raises their authors above mortals, and makes them associates of the gods. Jupiter, and sometimes the whole Olympian family with him,

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* It is not necessary, however, to consider *all* Egyptians as negroes, black in complexion and woolly-haired; this is contradicted by their mummies and portraits. Blumenbach discovered three varieties of physiognomy on the Egyptian paintings and sculptures; but he describes the general or national type as exhibiting a certain approximation to the negro.

† Herodotus, ii, 104.

‡ Five Great Monarchies, vol. i, chap. 3.

§ Odyssey, i, 23, 24.

is often made to betake himself to Ethiopia, to hold converse with and partake of the hospitality of the Ethiopians.*

But it may be asked, Are we to suppose that the Guinea negro, with all his peculiarities, is descended from these people? We answer, yes. The descendants of Ham, in those early ages, like the European nations of the present day, made extensive migrations and conquests. They occupied a portion of two continents. While the Shemites had but little connection with Africa, the descendants of Ham, on the contrary, beginning their operations in Asia, spread westward and southward, so that as early as the time of Homer they had not only occupied the northern portions of Africa, but had crossed the great desert, penetrated into Soudan, and made their way to the West Coast. "As far as we know," says that distinguished Homeric scholar, Mr. Gladstone, "Homer recognized the African coast by placing the Lotophagi upon it and the *Ethiopians inland from the East all the way to the* extreme West."†

Sometime ago Professor Owen, of the New York Free Academy, well known for his remarkable accuracy in editing the ancient classics, solicited the opinion of Professor Lewis, of the New York University, another eminent scholar, as to the localities to which Homer's Ethiopians ought to be assigned. Professor Lewis gave a reply which so pleased Professor Owen that he gives it entire in his notes on the Odyssey, as "the most rational and veritable comment of any he had met with." It is as follows:

"I have always, in commenting on the passage to which you refer, explained it to my classes as denoting the black race, (or Ethiopians, as they were called in Homer's time,) living on the Eastern and Western Coast of Africa—the one class inhabiting the country now called Abyssinia, and the other that part of Africa called Guinea or the Slave Coast. The common explanation that it refers to two divisions of Upper Egypt, separated by the Nile, besides, as I believe, being geographically incorrect, (the Nile really making no such division,) does not seem

* Iliad, i, 423; xxiii, 206.

† Homer and the Homeric Age," vol. iii, p. 305.

to be of sufficient importance to warrant the strong expressions of the text. (Odyssey i, 22–24.) If it be said the view I have taken supposes too great a knowledge of geography in Homer, we need only bear in mind that he had undoubtedly visited Tyre, where the existence of the black race on the West of Africa had been known from the earliest times. The Tyrians, in their long voyages, having discovered a race on the West, in almost every respect similar to those better known in the East, would, from their remote distance from each other, and not knowing of any intervening nations in Africa, naturally style them the two extremities of the earth. Homer elsewhere speaks of the Pigmies, who are described by Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus as residing in the interior of Africa, (on a river which I think corresponds to what is now called the Niger.) It seems to me too extravagant language, even for poetry, to represent two nations, separated only by a river, as living, one at the rising, the other at the setting sun, although these terms may sometimes be used for East and West. Besides, if I am not mistaken, no such division is recognized in subsequent geography."*

Professor Lewis says nothing of the *Asiatic* division of the Ethiopians. But since his letter was penned—more than twenty years ago—floods of light have been thrown upon the subject of Oriental antiquities by the labors of M. Botta, Layard, Rawlinson, Hinks, and others. Even Bunsen, not very long ago, declared that the "idea of an '*Asiatic Cush*' was an imagination of interpreters, the child of dispair." But in 1858, Sir Henry Rawlinson, having obtained a number of Babylonian documents more ancient than any previously discovered, was able to declare authoritatively that the early inhabitants of South Babylonia *were of a cognate race with the primitive colonists both of Arabia and of the African Ethiopia.*† He found their *vocabulary to be undoubtedly Cushite or Ethiopian*, belonging to that stock of tongues which in the sequel were everywhere more or less mixed up with the Semitic languages, but of which we have the purest modern specimens in the

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*Owen's Homer's Odyssey, (fifth edition,) p. 306.

† Rawlinson's Herodotus, vol. i, p. 442.

"Mahra of Southern Arabia" and the "Galla of Abyssinia." He also produced evidence of the widely-spread settlements of the children of Ham *in Asia as well as Africa*, and (what is more especially valuable in our present inquiry) of the truth of the tenth chapter of Genesis as an ethnographical document of the highest importance.*

Now, we should like to ask, If the negroes found at this moment along the West and East Coast, and throughout Central Africa, are not descended from the ancient Ethiopians, from whom are they descended? And if they are the children of the Ethiopians, what is the force of the assertions continually repeated, by even professed friends of the negro, that the enterprising and good-looking tribes of the continent, such as Jalofs, Mandingoes, and Foulahs, are mixed with the blood of Caucasians?† With the records of ancient history before us, where is the necessity for supposing such an admixture? May not the intelligence, the activity, the elegant features and limbs of these tribes have been directly transmitted from their ancestors?

"The Foulahs have a tradition that they are the descendants of Phut, the son of Ham. Whether this tradition be true or not, it is a singular fact that they have prefixed this name to almost every district of any extent which they have ever occupied. They have Futa-Torro, near Senegal; Futa-Bondu and Futa-Jallon to the northeast of Sierra Leone."‡

Lenormant was of the opinion that Phut peopled Libya.

We gather from the ancient writers, already quoted, that the Ethiopians were celebrated for their beauty. Herodotus speaks of them as "men of large stature, *very handsome*, and long-lived." And he uses these epithets in connection with the Ethiopians of *West Africa*, as the context shows. The whole passage is as follows:

"Where the meridian declines toward the setting sun, (that is, southwest from Greece,) the Ethiopian territory reaches, being the extreme part of the habitable world. It produces

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*See article *Ham*, in Kitto's Cyclopedia, last edition.

† Bowen's "Central Africa," chap. xxiii.

‡ Wilson's Western Africa, p. 79.

much gold, huge elephants, wild trees of all kinds, *ebony*, and men of large stature, *very handsome*, and long-lived."*

Homer frequently tells us of the "handsome Ethiopians," although he and Herodotus do not employ the same Greek word. In Herodotus the word that describes the Ethiopians is a word denoting both beauty of outward form and moral beauty or virtue.† The epithet employed by Homer to describe the same people is by some commentators rendered "blameless," but by the generality "handsome." Anthon says: "It is an epithet given to all men and women distinguished by rank, exploits, or beauty."‡ Mr. Hayman, one of the latest and most industrious editors of Homer, has in one of his notes the following explanation: "*Amumon* was at first an epithet of distinctive excellence, but had become a purely conventional style, as applied to a class, like our 'honorable and gallant gentlemen.'"§ Most scholars, however, agree with Mr. Paley, another recent Homeric commentator, that the original signification of the word was "handsome," and that it nearly represented the *kalos kagathos* of the Greeks;‖ so that the words which Homer puts into the mouth of Thetis, when addressing her disconsolate son, (Iliad, i, 423,) would be: "Yesterday Jupiter went to Oceanus, to the *handsome* Ethiopians, to a banquet, and with him went all the gods." It is remarkable that the Chaldee, according to Bush, has the following translation of Numbers xii, 1: "And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the beautiful woman whom he had married; for he had married a beautiful woman."¶ Compare with this Solomon's declaration, "I am *black* but *comely*," or, more exactly, "I am black *and* comely." We see the wise man in his spiritual epithalamium selecting a black woman as a proper representative of the Church and of the highest purity. The word translated in our version *black* is a correct rendering. So Luther, *schwarz*. It cannot mean *brown*, as rendered by Ostervald (*brune*) and Diodati (*bruna*.) In Lev. xiii, 31, 37, it is applied to hair. The verb from which the adjective comes is used (Job xxx, 30) of the countenance

* Herodotus, lii, 114.
† Liddell & Scott.
‡ Anthon's Homer, p. 491.
§ Hayman's Odyssey, i, 29.
‖ Paley's Iliad, p. 215, (note.)
¶ Bush, *in loco*.

blackened by disease. In Solomon's Song, v. 11, it is applied to the plumage of a raven.* In the days of Solomon, therefore, black, as a physical attribute, was *comely*.

But when in the course of ages, the Ethiopians had wandered into the central and southern regions of Africa, encountering a change of climate aud altered character of food and modes of living, they fell into intellectual and physical degradation. This degradation did not consist, however, in a change of color, as some suppose, for they were black, as we have seen, before they left their original seat. Nor did it consist in the stiffening and shortening of the hair; for Herodotus tells us that the Ethiopians in Asia were *straight-haired*, while their relatives in Africa, from the same stock, and in no lower stage of progress, were *woolly-haired*. The hair, then, is not a fundamental characteristic, nor a mark of degradation. Some suppose that the hair of the negro is affected by some peculiarity in the African climate and atmosphere—perhaps the influence of the Sahara entering as an important element. We do not profess to know the *fons et origo*, nor have we seen any satisfactory cause for it assigned. We have no consciousness of any inconvenience from it, except that in foreign countries, as a jovial fellow-passenger on an English steamer once reminded us, "it is *unpopular*."

"Vuolsi così colà, dove si puote
Ciò che si vuole: e più non dimandare."†

Nor should it be thought strange that the Ethiopians who penetrated into the heart of the African continent should have degenerated, when we consider their distance and isolation from the quickening influence of the arts and sciences in the East; their belief, brought with them, in the most abominable idolatry, "changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to *birds*, and *four-footed beasts*, and *creeping things*," Rom. i, 23; the ease with which, in the prolific regions to which they had come, they

*A correspondent of the New York *Tribune*, residing in Syria, describing the appearance of a negro whom he met there in 1866, says: "He was as *black* as a Mount Lebanon raven." (New York *Tribune*, October 16, 1866.) Had he been writing in Hebrew, he would have employed the descriptive word.

†Dante.

could secure the means of subsistence; and the constant and enervating heat of the climate, indisposing to continuous exertion. Students in natural history tell us that animals of the same species and family, if dispersed and domesticated, show striking modifications of the original type in their color, hair, integument, structure of limbs, and even in their instincts, habits, and powers. Similar changes are witnessed among mankind. An intelligent writer, in No. 48 of the "Dublin University Magazine," says:

"There are certain districts in Leitrim, Sligo, and Mayo chiefly inhabited by the descendants of the native Irish, driven by the British from Armagh and the South-of-Down about two centuries ago. These people, whose ancestors were well-grown, able-bodied, and comely, are now reduced to an average stature of five feet two inches, are pot-bellied, bow-legged, and abortively featured; and they are especially remarkable for open-projecting mouths, and prominent teeth, and exposed gums, their advancing cheek-bones and depressed noses bearing barbarism in their very front. In other words, within so short a period, they seem to have acquired a prognathous type of skull, like the Australian savage."

But these retrogressive changes are taking place in other countries besides Ireland. Acute observers tell us that in England, the abode of the highest civilization of modern times, "a process of de-civilization, a relapse toward barbarism, is seen in the debased and degraded classes, with a coincident deterioration of physical type." Mr. Henry Mayhew, in his "London Labor and London Poor," has remarked that—

"Among them, according as they partake more or less of the pure vagabond nature, doing nothing whatever for their living, but moving from place to place, preying on the earnings of the more industrious portion of the community, so will the attributes of the nomadic races be found more or less marked in them; and they are all more or less distinguished by their high cheek-bones and protruding jaws, thus showing that kind of mixture of the pyramidal with the prognathous type which is to be seen among the most degraded of the Malayo-Polynesian races."

In contrast with this retrogressive process, it may be observed that in proportion as the degraded races are intellectually and morally elevated, their physical appearance improves. Mr. C. S. Roundell, Secretary to the late Royal Commission in Jamaica, tells us that—

"The Maroons, who fell under my (his) own observation in Jamaica, exhibited a marked superiority in respect of comportment, mental capacity, and physical type—a superiority to be referred to the saving effects of long-enjoyed freedom. The Maroons are descendants of runaway Spanish slaves, who, at the time of the British conquest, established themselves in the mountain fastnesses." *

In visiting the native towns interior to Liberia, we have seen striking illustrations of these principles. Among the inhabitants of those towns, we could invariably distinguish the free man from the slave. There was about the former a dignity of appearance, an openness of countenance, an independence of air, a firmness of step, which indicated the absence of oppression; while in the latter there was a depression of countenance, a general deformity of appearance, an awkwardness of gait, which seemed to say, "That man is a slave."

Now, with these well-known principles before us, why should it be considered strange that, with their fall into barbarism, the "handsome" Ethiopians of Homer and Herodotus should have deteriorated in physical type, and that this degradation of type should continue reproducing itself in the wilds of Africa and in the Western Hemisphere, where they have been subjected to slavery and various other forms of debasing proscription?

The negro is often taunted by superficial investigators with proofs, as is alleged, taken from the monuments of Egypt, of the servitude of negroes in very remote ages. But is there anything singular in the fact that in very early times negroes were held in bondage? Was it not the practice among all the early nations to enslave each other? Why should it be pointed to as an exceptional thing that Ethiopians were represented

* "England and her Subject Races, with special reference to Jamaica." By Charles Saville Roundell, M. A.

as slaves? It was very natural that the more powerful Ethiopians should seize upon the weaker, as is done to this day in certain portions of Africa, and reduce them to slavery. And were it not for the abounding light of Christianity now enjoyed in Europe the same thing would be done at this moment in Rome, Paris, and London. For the sites of those cities in ancient times witnessed all the horrors of a cruel and mercenary slave-trade, not in negroes, but Caucasian selling Caucasian.*

But were there no Caucasian slaves in Egypt? If it be true that no such slaves are represented on the monumental remains, are we, therefore, to infer that they did not exist in that country? Are we to disbelieve that the Jews were in the most rigorous bondage in that land for four hundred years?

"Not everything which is not represented on the monuments was, therefore, necessarily unknown to the Egyptians. The monuments are neither intended to furnish, nor can they furnish, a complete delineation of all the branches of public and private life, of all the products and phenomena of the whole animal, vegetable, and mineral creation of the country. They cannot be viewed as a complete cyclopædia of Egyptian customs and civilization. Thus we find no representation of fowls and pigeons, although the country abounded in them; of the wild ass and wild boar, although frequently met with in Egypt; none of the process relating to the casting of statues and other objects in bronze, although many similar subjects connected with the arts are represented; none of the marriage ceremony, and of numerous other subjects."†

But we are told that the Negroes of Central and West Africa have proved themselves essentially inferior, from the fact that

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*Cicero in one of his letters, speaking of the success of an expedition against Britain, says the only plunder to be found consisted "Ex emancipiis; ex quibus nullos puto te literis aut musicis eruditos expectare;" thus proving, in the same sentence, the existence of the slave-trade. and intimating that it was impossible that any Briton should be intelligent enough to be worthy to serve the accomplished Atticus. (Ad. Att., lib. iv, 16.) Henry, in his History of England, gives us also the authority of Strabo for the prevalence of the slave-trade among the Britons, and tells us that slaves were once an established article ef export. "Great numbers," says he, "were exported from Britain, and were to be seen exposed for sale, like cattle, in the Roman market." *Henry*, vol. ii, p. 225. Also, Sir T. Fowell Buxton's "Slave Trade and Remedy"—Introduction.

†Dr. Kalisch: "Commentary on Exodus," p. 147. London, 1855.

in the long period of three thousand years they have shown no signs of progress. In their country, it is alleged, are to be found no indications of architectural taste or skill, or of any susceptibility of æsthetic or artistic improvement; that they have no monuments of past exploits; no paintings or sculptures; and that, therefore, the foreign or American slave-trade was an indispensable agency in the civilization of Africa; that nothing could have been done for the Negro while he remained in his own land, bound to the practices of ages; that he needed the sudden and violent severance from home to deliver him from the quiescent degradation and stagnant barbarism of his ancestors; that otherwise the civilization of Europe could never have impressed him.

In reply to all this we remark: 1st, that it remains to be proved, by a fuller exploration of the interior, that there are no architectural remains, no works of artistic skill; 2dly, if it should be demonstrated that nothing of the kind exists, this would not necessarily prove essential inferiority on the part of the African. What did the Jews produce in all the long period of their history before and after their bondage to the Egyptians, among whom, it might be supposed, they would have made some progress in science and art? Their forefathers dwelt in tents before their Egyptian residence, and they dwelt in tents after their emancipation. And in all their long national history they produced no remarkable architectural monument but the Temple, which was designed and executed by a man miraculously endowed for the purpose. A high antiquarian authority tells us that "pure Shemites had no art."* The lack of architectural and artistic skill is no mark of the absence of the higher elements of character.† 3dly, With regard to

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*Rev. Stuart Poole, of the British Museum, before the British Association. 1864.

†Rev. Dr. Goulburn, in his reply to Dr. Temple's celebrated Essay on the "Education of the World," has the following suggestive remark: "We commend to Dr. Temple's notice the pregnant fact, that in the earliest extant history of mankind it is stated that arts, both ornamental and useful, (and arts are the great medium of civilization,) took their rise in the family of Cain. In the line of Seth we find none of this mental and social development,"—*Replies to Essays and Reviews*, p. 34. When the various causes now co-operating shall have produced a higher religious sense among the nations, and a corresponding revolution shall have taken place in the estimation now put upon material objects, the effort may be to show, to his disparagement—if we could imagine such an unamiable undertaking as compatible with the high state of progress then attained—that the Negro was at the foundation of all material development.

the necessity of the slave trade, we remark, without attempting to enter into the secret counsels of the Most High, that without the foreign slave trade Africa would have been a great deal more accessible to civilization, and would now, had peaceful and legitimate intercourse been kept up with her, from the middle of the fifteenth century, be taking her stand next to Europe in civilization, science, and religion. When, four hundred years ago, the Portuguese discovered this coast, they found the natives living in considerable peace and quietness, and with a certain degree of prosperity. Internal feuds, of course, the tribes sometimes had, but by no means so serious as they afterward became under the stimulating influence of the slave trade. From all we can gather, the tribes in this part of Africa lived in a condition not very different from that of the greater portion of Europe in the Middle Ages. There was the same oppression of the weak by the strong; the same resistance by the weak, often taking the form of general rebellion; the same private and hereditary wars; the same strongholds in every prominent position; the same dependence of the people upon the chief who happened to be in power; the same contentedness of the masses with the tyrannical rule. But there was industry and activity, and in every town there were manufactures, and they sent across the continent to Egypt and the Barbary States other articles besides slaves.

The permanence for centuries of the social and political status of the Africans at home must be attributed, first, to the isolation of the people from the progressive portion of mankind; and, secondly, to the blighting influence of the traffic introduced among them by Europeans. Had not the demand arisen in America for African laborers, and had European nations inaugurated regular traffic with the coast, the natives would have shown themselves as impressible for change, as susceptible of improvement, as capable of acquiring knowledge and accumulating wealth, as the natives of Europe. Combination of capital and co-operation of energies would have done for this land what they have done for others. Private enterprise, (which has been entirely destroyed by the nefarious traffic,) encouraged by humane intercourse with foreign lands, would have developed agriculture, manufactures, and com-

merce; would have cleared, drained, and fertilized the country, and built towns; would have improved the looms, brought in plows, steam-engines, printing-presses, machines, and the thousand processes and appliances by which the comfort, progress, and usefulness of mankind are secured. But, alas! *Dis aliter visum.*

"Freighted with curses was the bark that bore
The spoilers of the West Guinea's shore;
Heavy with groans of anguish blew the gales
That swelled that fatal bark's returning sails:
Loud and perpetual o'er the Atlantic's waves,
For guilty ages, rolled the tide of slaves;
A tide that knew no fall, no turn, no rest—
Constant as day and night from East to West,
Still widening, deepening, swelling in its course
With boundless ruin and resistless force."—MONTGOMERY.

But although, amid the violent shocks of those changes and disasters to which the natives of this outraged land have been subject, their knowledge of the elegant arts, brought from the East, declined, they never entirely lost the *necessary* arts of life. They still understand the workmanship of iron, and, in some sections of the country, of gold. The loom and the forge are in constant use among them. In remote regions, where they have no intercourse with Europeans, they raise large herds of cattle and innumerable sheep and goats; capture and train horses, build well-laid-out towns, cultivate extensive fields, and manufacture earthenware and woolen and cotton cloths. Commander Foote says: "The negro arts are respectable, and would have been more so had not disturbance and waste come with the slave trade."*

And in our own times, on the West Coast of Africa, a native development of literature has been brought to light of genuine home-growth. The Vey people, residing half way between Sierra Leone and Cape Mesurado, have within the last thirty years invented a syllabic alphabet, with which they are now writing their own language, and by which they are maintaining among themselves an extensive epistolary correspondence. In 1849 the Church Missionary Society in London, having heard of this invention, authorized their Missionary, Rev. S. W. Koelle, to investigate the subject. Mr. Koelle traveled

* "Africa and the American Flag." p. 52.

into the interior, and brought away three manuscripts, with translations. The symbols are phonetic, and constitute a syllabarium, not an alphabet; they are nearly two hundred in number. They have been learned so generally that Vey boys in Monrovia frequently receive communications from their friends in the Vey country, to which they readily respond. The Church Missionary Society have had a font of type cast in this new character, and several little tracts have been printed and circulated among the tribe. The principal inventor of this alphabet is now dead; but it is supposed that he died in the Christian faith, having acquired some knowledge of the way of salvation through the medium of this character of his own invention.* Dr. Wilson says:

"This invention is one of the most remarkable achievements of this or any other age, and is itself enough to silence forever the cavils and sneers of those who think so contemptuously of the intellectual endowments of the African race."

Though "the idea of communicating thoughts in writing was probably suggested by the use of Arabic among the Mandingoes," yet the invention was properly original, showing the existence of genius in the native African, who has never been in foreign slavery, and proves that he carries in his bosom germs of intellectual development and self-elevation, which would have enabled him to advance regularly in the path of progress had it not been for the blighting influence of the slave trade.

Now are we to believe that such a people have been doomed, by the terms of any curse, to be the "servant of servants," as some upholders of Negro slavery have taught? Would it not have been a very singular theory that a people destined to servitude should begin, the very first thing, as we have endeavored to show, to found "great cities," organize kingdoms, and establish rule—putting up structures which have come down to this day as a witness to their *superiority* over all their contemporaries—and that, by a Providential decree, the people whom they had been fated to serve should be held in bondage by them four hundred years?

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*Wilson's "Western Africa," p. 95, and "Princeton Review for July, 1858," p. 488.

"The remarkable enterprise of the Cushite hero, Nimrod; his establishment of imperial power, as an advance on patriarchal government; the strength of the Egypt of Mizraim, and its long domination over the house of Israel; and the evidence which now and then appears, that even Phut (who is the obscurest in his fortunes of all the Hamite race) maintained a relation to the descendants of Shem which was far from servile or subject; do all clearly tend to limit the application of Noah's maledictory prophecy to the precise terms in which it was indited: 'Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he' (not Cush, not Mizraim, not Phut, but he) 'be to his brethren.' If we then confine the imprecation to Canaan, we can without difficulty trace its accomplishment in the subjugation of the tribes which issued from him to the children of Israel from the time of Joshua to that of David. Here would be verified Canaan's servile relation to Shem; and when imperial Rome finally wrested the scepter from Judah, and, 'dwelling in the tents of Shem,' occupied the East and whatever remnants of Canaan were left in it, would not this accomplish that further prediction that Japheth, too, should be lord of Canaan, and that (as it would seem to be tacitly implied) mediately, through his occupancy of the tents of Shem?"*

A vigorous writer in the "Princeton Review" has the following:

"The Ethiopian race, from whom the modern Negro or African stock are undoubtedly descended, can claim as early a history, with the exception of the Jews,† as any living people on the face of the earth. History, as well as the monumental discoveries, gives them a place in ancient history as far back as Egypt herself, if not farther. But what has become of the contemporaneous nations of antiquity, as well as others of much later origin? Where are the Numidians, Mauritanians, and other powerful names, who once held sway over all Northern Africa? They have been swept away from the earth, or dwindled down to a handful of modern Copts and Berbers of doubtful descent."

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*Dr. Peter Holmes, Oxford, England.

†The Jews not excepted. Where were they when the Pyramids were built?

"The Ethiopian, or African race, on the other hand, though they have long since lost all the civilization which once existed on the Upper Nile, have, nevertheless, continued to increase and multiply, until they are now, with the exception of the Chinese, the largest single family of men on the face of the earth. They have extended themselves in every direction over that great continent, from the southern borders of the Great Sahara to the Cape of Good Hope, and from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, and are thus constituted masters of at least three-fourths of the habitable portions of this great continent. And this progress has been made, be it remembered, in despite of the prevalence of the foreign slave trade, which has carried off so many of their people; of the ceaseless internal feuds and wars that have been waged among themselves; and of a conspiracy, as it were, among all surrounding nations, to trample out their national existence. Surely their history is a remarkable one; but not more so, perhaps, than is foreshadowed in the prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures. God has watched over and preserved these people through all the vicissitudes of their unwritten history, and no doubt for some great purpose of mercy toward them, as well as for the display of the glory of His own grace and providence; and we may expect to have a full revelation of this purpose and glory as soon as the everlasting Gospel is made known to these benighted millions."*

One palpable reason may be assigned why the Ethiopian race has continued to exist under the most adverse circumstances, while other races and tribes have perished from the earth; it is this: *They have never been a blood-thirsty or avaricious people.* From the beginning of their history to the present time their work has been constructive, except when they have been stimulated to wasting war by the covetous foreigner. They have built up in Asia, Africa, and America. They have not delighted in despoiling and oppressing others. The nations enumerated by the reviewer just quoted, and others besides them—all warlike and fighting nations—have passed away or dwindled into utter insignificance. They

*"Princeton Review, July, 1858," pp. 448, 449.

seem to have been consumed by their own fierce internal passions. The Ethiopians, though brave and powerful, were not a fighting people, that is, were not fond of fighting for the sake of humbling and impoverishing other people. Every reader of history will remember the straightforward, brave, and truly Christian answer returned by the King of the Ethiopians to Cambyses, who was contemplating an invasion of Ethiopia, as recorded by Herodotus. For the sake of those who may not have access to that work we reproduce the narrative here. About five hundred years before Christ, Cambyses, the great Persian warrior, while invading Egypt, planned an expedition against the Ethiopians; but before proceeding upon the belligerent enterprise he sent "spies, in the first instance, who were to see the table of the sun, which was said to exist among the Ethiopians, and besides, to explore other things, and, to cover their design, they were to carry presents to the King. * * * When the messengers of Cambyses arrived among the Ethiopians, they gave the presents to the King, and addressed him as follows: 'Cambyses, King of the Persians, desirous of becoming your friend and ally, has sent us, bidding us confer with you, and he presents you with these gifts, which are such as he himself most delights in.'"

But the Ethiopian, knowing that they came as spies, spoke thus to them:

"Neither has the King of Persia sent you with these presents to me because he valued my alliance, nor do you speak the truth, for you are come as spies of my kingdom. Nor is he a just man; for if he were just he would not desire any other territory than his own; nor would he reduce people into servitude who have done him no injury. However, give him this bow, and say these words to him: 'The King of the Ethiopians advises the King of the Persians, when the Persians can thus easily draw a bow of this size, then to make war on the Macrobian Ethiopians with more numerous forces; but until that time let him thank the gods, who have not inspired the sons of the Ethiopians with the desire of adding another land to their own.'"*

*Herodotus, iii, 17–22.

Are these a people, with such remarkable antecedents, and in the whole of whose history the hand of God is so plainly seen, to be treated with the contempt which they usually suffer in the lands of their bondage? When we notice the scornful indifference with which the Negro is spoken of by certain politicians in America, we fancy that the attitude of Pharaoh and the aristocratic Egyptians must have been precisely similar toward the Jews. We fancy we see one of the magicians in council, after the first visit of Moses demanding the release of the Israelites, rising up with indignation and pouring out a torrent of scornful invective such as any rabid anti-Negro politician might now indulge in.

What privileges are those that these degraded Hebrews are craving? What are they? Are they not slaves and the descendants of slaves? What have they or their ancestors ever done? What *can* they do? They did not come hither of their own accord. The first of them was brought to this country a slave, sold to us by his own brethren. Others followed him, refugees from the famine of an impoverished country. What do they know about managing liberty or controlling themselves? They are idle; they are idle. Divert their attention from their idle dreams by additional labor and more exacting tasks.

But what have the ancestors of Negroes ever done? Let Professor Rawlinson answer, as a summing up of our discussion. Says the learned Professor:

"For the last three thousand years the world has been mainly indebted for its advancement to the Semitic and Indo-European races; *but it was otherwise in the first ages.* Egypt and Babylon, Mizraim and Nimrod, both descendants of Ham, led the way, and acted as the pioneers of mankind in the various untrodden fields of art, literature, and science. Alphabetic writing, astronomy, history, chronology, architecture, plastic art, sculpture, navigation, agriculture, textile industry, seem all of them to have had their origin in one or other of these two countries. The beginnings may have been often humble enough. We may laugh at the rude picture-writing; the uncouth brick pyramid, the course fabric, the homely and ill-shapen instruments, as they present themselves to our notice in the remains of these ancient nations; but they are really worthier of our admiration than of our ridicule. The

inventors of any art are among the greatest benefactors of their race, and mankind at the present day lies under infinite obligations to the genius of these early ages." *

There are now, probably, few thoughtful and cultivated men in the United States who are prepared to advocate the application of the curse of Noah to all the descendants of Ham. The experience of the last eight years must have convinced the most ardent theorizer on the subject. Facts have not borne out their theory and predictions concerning the race. The Lord by His outstretched arm has dashed their syllogisms to atoms, scattered their dogmas to the winds, detected the partiality and exaggerating tendency of their method, and shown the injustice of that heartless philosophy and that unrelenting theology which consigned a whole race of men to hopeless and interminable servitude.

It is difficult, nevertheless, to understand how, with the history of the past accessible, the facts of the present before their eyes, and the prospect of a clouded future, or unvailed only to disclose the indefinite numerical increase of Europeans in the land, the blacks of the United States can hope for any distinct, appreciable influence in the country. We cannot perceive on what grounds the most sanguine among their friends can suppose that there will be so decisive a revolution of popular feeling in favor of their *protegés* as to make them at once the political and social equals of their former masters. Legislation cannot secure them this equality in the United States any more than it has secured it for the blacks in the West Indies. During the time of slavery everything in the laws, in the customs, in the education of the people was contrived with the single view of degrading the Negro in his own estimation and that of others. Now is it possible to change in a day the habits and character which centuries of oppression have entailed? We think not. More than one generation, it appears to us, must pass away before the full effect of education, enlightenment, and social improvement will be visible among the blacks. Meanwhile they are being gradually absorbed by the Caucasian; and before their social equality comes to be conceded they will have lost their identity altogether, a

* "Five Great Monarchies," vol. i, pp. 75, 76.

result, in our opinion, extremely undesirable, as we believe that, as Negroes, they might accomplish a great work which others cannot perform. But even if they should not pass away in the mighty embrace of their numerous white neighbors; grant that they could continue to live in the land, a distinct people, with the marked peculiarities they possess, having the same color and hair, badges of a former thraldom—is it to be supposed that they can ever overtake a people who so largely outnumber them, and a large proportion of whom are endowed with wealth, leisure, and the habits and means of study and self-improvement? If they improve in culture and training, as in time they no doubt will, and become intelligent and educated, there may rise up individuals among them, here and there, who will be respected and honored by the whites; but it is plain that, as a class, their inferiority will never cease until they cease to be a distinct people, possessing peculiarities which suggest antecedents of servility and degradation.

We pen these lines with the most solemn feelings—grieved that so many strong, intelligent, and energetic black men should be wasting time and labor in a fruitless contest, which, expended in the primitive land of their fathers—a land that so much needs them—would produce in a comparatively short time results of incalculable importance. But what can we do? Occupying this distant stand-point—an area of Negro freedom, and a scene for untrammeled growth and development, but a wide and ever-expanding field for benevolent effort; an outlying or surrounding wilderness to be reclaimed; barbarism of ages to be brought over to Christian life—we can only repeat with undiminished earnestness the wish we have frequently expressed elsewhere, that the *eyes of the blacks may be opened to discern their true mission and destiny;* that, making their escape from the house of bondage, they may *betake themselves to their ancestral home, and assist in constructiug a Christian* AFRICAN EMPIRE. For we believe that as descendants of Ham had a share, as the most prominent actors on the scene, in the founding of cities and in the organization of government, so members of the same family, developed under different circumstances, will have an important part in the closing of the great drama.

"Time's noblest offspring is the last."

LIBERIA:

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED JULY 26, 1866, ON MOUNT LEBANON, SYRIA,

AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE

Nineteenth Anniversary of the Independence of Liberia,

HELD BY

AMERICAN MISSIONARIES AND OTHER CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES RESIDING IN SYRIA,

BY

REV. EDWARD W. BLYDEN, A. M.,

Fulton Professor in Liberia College.

WASHINGTON CITY:

M'GILL & WITHEROW, PRINTERS AND STEREOTYPERS.

1869.

LIBERIA—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

Ladies and Gentlemen: It was the suggestion of my friend, the President of the Syrian Protestant College,* that, as there was sojourning on Mount Lebanon a citizen of Liberia, the nineteenth anniversary of the independence of that Republic should not be allowed to pass by without some suitable demonstration on the part of the missionaries and other citizens of the United States now residing here. It was, therefore, proposed that the day should be celebrated in as fine style as the very short notice would permit. The Consul of the United States† at once approved the idea, and generously proffered the use and hospitalities of his house for the purpose; and to your humble servant was assigned the task of delivering, on the heights of Lebanon, a Twenty-Sixth of July Oration.

In acceding to the request to fill this honorable position, I promised to occupy not more than half an hour in the performance of the duty; but one present, who was to take a very prominent part in making the preparations for the occasion, insisted that it would be hardly worth while to make any preparation, and invite friends from the neighboring village, just to hear an address of half an hour on Liberia; and as the person thus remonstrating belonged to that sex whose mere word gallantry makes law, I beg that you will attach no responsibility to me, if, under the pressure of the inexorable enactment, I should be so unfortunate as to weary your patience while I call your attention to LIBERIA—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

The great epochs of the history, whether of mankind generally or of one particular section of the human race, are not

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*Rev. Daniel Bliss, D. D. †J. Augustus Johnson, Esq., of Beirut.

unusually preceded by occurrences more or less extraordinary. These occurrences, cursorily viewed, inspire opinions as to their ultimate results, which subsequent experience and the development of the results themselves prove to have been entirely erroneous; and often what would seem to be the natural and necessary interpretation of the tendency of any particular train of events is discovered to be as wide from the truth as possible. Hence, while there may be formed the most plausible conjectures as to the true character and bearing of any given circumstance or combination of circumstances, the uncertainty of results necessarily precludes the possibility of a just appreciation of any event at the time of its occurrence.

The hatred which, we learn from sacred story, existed in the large family of Jewish brothers against one of their number, upon whom the head of the family seemed to lavish all the affection of old age, the bitterness with which they persecuted him, and the unnatural and cruel indifference with which they consigned him to slavery, were circumstances which seemed to justify the anticipation that the object of their malignity would suffer, pine away, and die in miserable obscurity. But his bondage was the means of introducing him to a position, whence in after years, during a period of pressing exigency, he could administer to the relief and deliverance of the whole family. So before the permanent establishment of the nation which God had chosen to be the depository of His will, and to preserve a knowledge of Himself amid the general apostasy of mankind—whose conservative character was to influence, either remotely or directly, other portions of the human family—they must go down into Egypt, and there, in a land of strangers, be afflicted "four hundred years;" their moral and intellectual powers must pass under the withering and blighting influence of a pernicious bondage—circumstances which seemed entirely at variance with the preparation required by a people destined to occupy the high and important position which the Jews afterward filled in the world. So, also, according to classic story, when there was to be established the nation which was to conquer the world and subject it to the dominion of law as preparatory to the advent of the "Prince of Peace," one of the most ancient and powerful States must pass through a series

of unprecedented calamities, and, at length, levelled to the dust by the unsparing steel and devouring flames of relentless foes; from its ashes must spring forth the germ of the destined people—the all-conquering Romans.

So, again, in modern times, when the period draws near for the redemption and delivery of Africa from the barbarism and degradation of unnumbered years, there must take place circumstances so horrible in their character and so revolting to the nobler instincts of man, as to find few disposed to recognise in them the hand of a supreme and merciful Ruler.

"Sunt lachrymæ rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt."

Almost coeval with the invention of printing and the discovery of America—two great eras in the history of human improvement—was the beginning of the African slave-trade. As soon as the empire of Europe, following the guiding "star" of destiny, began to move "westward," she dragged Africa, rather tardy in the march of nations, along with her to the place which seems to have been designed for the rejuvenescence of Eastern senility—for the untrammeled exercise and healthful growth of the principles of political and ecclesiastical liberty, and for the more thorough development of man. And it cannot be denied that the Africans, when first carried to the Western world, were benefited. The men, under whose tutelage they were taken, regarded them as a solemn charge, entrusted to their care by Providence, and felt bound to instruct them and in every way to ameliorate their condition. They were not only indoctrinated into the principles of Christianity, but they were taught the arts and sciences. The relation of the European to the African, in those unsophisticated times, was that of guardian and *protege*. And the system, if slavery it was, bore a strong resemblance to slavery as it existed among the Romans, in the earlier periods of their history, when the "slave was the teacher, the artist, the actor, the physician, the man of science." Hence, many good men, in view of the benefits which they saw accrue from the mild and generous system, embarked their capital in, and gave their influence to, the enterprise of transporting negroes from Africa. The distinguished William Penn, Rev. George Whitefield, and President Edwards

were *slaveholders*. The slave trade was regarded as a great means of civilizing the blacks—a kind of missionary institution.

But it was not long before the true character of the traffic began unmistakably to discover itself. Its immense gains brought men of various characters into competition. The whole Western Coast of Africa became the haunt of slave-traders, and the scene of unutterable cruelties as the result of their operations. The more powerful native chiefs, impelled by those avaricious and sordid feelings which, in the absence of higher motives, actuate men, made war upon their weaker neighbors, in order to capture prisoners to supply the demand of the traders; and a state of things was induced which awakened the commiseration and called forth the remonstrance of the thoughtful and philanthropic in Christian lands. Wilberforce, Granville Sharp, and others, ably exhibited to the British public the horrible effects of the trade; pointed out its disastrous influence upon the peaceful communities of Africa; showed its agency in the disintegration of African society, and in the feuds and guerrillas which distracted the African Coast; discovered it as depopulating the continent, and giving rise to multifarious and indescribable evils; and proposed as a remedy the immediate abolition of the traffic.

In 1792, Mr. H. Thornton, Chairman of the Sierra Leone Company, said, in the course of a discussion consequent upon a motion made by Mr. Wilberforce for the abolition of the slave-trade, "It had obtained the name of a *trade*, and many had been deceived by the appellation; but it was a *war*, not a TRADE. It was a *mass of crimes*, and not *commerce*. It alone prevented the introduction of trade into Africa. It created more embarrassments than all the natural impediments of the country, and was more hard to contend with than any difficulties of climate, soil, or natural disposition of the people."

The slave-traders, by pampering their cupidity, had so ingratiated themselves with the native rulers of the country, and had acquired such an influence on the coast, that nothing could be suffered which would at all interfere with the activity of the trade. The establishment of any settlement or colony opposed to the traffic was, of course, out of the question, unless protected by powerful forts and garrisons.

The close of the eighteenth century, when experience had proved the traffic to be at variance with the laws of God, and an outrage upon humanity, witnessed the inauguration of vigorous efforts on the part of the philanthropists of England for the destruction of its legality. Mr. Wilberforce having introduced the motion into Parliament "that the trade carried on by British subjects for the purpose of obtaining slaves on the African Coast ought to be abolished," the friends of the motion ceased not in their efforts until, on the 10th of February, 1807, a committee of the whole House passed a bill "that no vessel should clear out for slaves from any port within the British dominions after May 1, 1807," fifteen years after the introduction of Mr. Wilberforce's motion. The legality of the traffic being thus overthrown by England, and by other nations following in her wake, its horrors on the coast manifestly declined, and honorable commerce could again be prosecuted with some measure of safety.

It was during the temporary immunity of the coast from the horrors attendant upon the slave-trade, caused by the passage of the British "Abolition Act," that the colony of Liberia, the anniversary of whose national independence we to-day celebrate, was founded. The brief interval or repose enjoyed by West Africa furnished an opportunity to certain philanthropists in America to carry out an idea which had originated years previously of planting on the coast of Africa a colony of civilized Africans, but which had seemed impracticable on account of the unlimited and pernicious sway which the slavers held on the coast.

In the year 1816, a Society was organized, under the title of the "American Colonization Society," for the purpose of colonizing in Africa, with their own consent, free persons of color of the United States. In 1820, the necessary preparations having been made, the ship Elizabeth, the Mayflower of Liberian history, sailed from the United States with a company of eighty-eight emigrants for the West Coast of Africa. After various trials and difficulties, they landed on Cape Mesurado, and succeeded in establishing themselves. But scarcely had they intrenched themselves when the slavers, a few of whom still hovered on the coast, and had factories in the vicinity of

Mesurado, began to manifest their hostility to the settlers, endeavoring in every possible way to break up the settlement; while the aboriginal neighbors of the colonists, finding that the presence of the colony was diminishing very considerably their gains from the unhallowed trade, indulged a lurking enmity, which only awaited opportunity to develop itself. But the opportunity was not long in offering, for the colony was hardly two years old when it was desperately assailed by untold numbers of savages, who came down in wild ferocity upon the feeble and defenseless company, and must have swept away every trace of them had not a merciful Providence vouchsafed deliverance to the weak. The settlers triumphed against overwhelming odds.

The slave-traders, notwithstanding the signal defeat of their native allies in the nefarious traffic, were not willing to abandon a scene which for scores of years they had unmolestedly and profitably infested. They still lingered about the settlement. "From eight to ten, and even fifteen, vessels were engaged at the same time in this odious traffic almost under the guns of the settlement; and in July of the same year, (1825,) contracts were existing for eight hundred slaves to be furnished in the short space of four months within eight miles of the Cape."* During the same year, Mr. Ashmun, Superintendent of the colony, as Agent of the American Colonization Society, wrote to the Society: "The colony only wants the right, it has the power, to expel this traffic to a distance, and force it at least to conceal some of its worst enormities." From this time the Society began to take into consideration the importance of enlarging the territory of the colony, and thus including within its jurisdiction several tribes, in order both to protect the settlement against the evil of too great proximity to slave factories, and to place it within the competency of the colonial authorities to "expel the traffic to a distance." But even after the limits of the colony had been greatly extended, and several large tribes brought under its jurisdiction, the slavers would every now and then attempt to renew their old friendships, and frequently occasioned not a little trouble to the col-

*Gurley's life of Ashmun.

onists by exciting the natives to acts of insubordination and hostility against the colony.

The feelings of some of the natives, who had surrendered themselves to Liberian authority, became, under the guidance of the "marauding outlaws," so embittered against the colony that they more than once boldly professed utter indifference to the laws of Liberia. This, together with the fact that every once in a while slavers would locate themselves, erect barracoons, and purchase slaves on Liberian territory, under the countenance and protection of aboriginal chiefs, rendered several "wars" against the latter necessary, in order to convince them that Liberians had power to compel them to obedience. The news of the presence of slave-traders on any part of the Liberian Coast would make Liberians lay aside their peaceful occupations, put on their armor, and cheerfully go through the roughest and most fatiguing campaign. If there was fighting to be done, they went into it as trained soldiers, with an unflagging courage, inspired by a sense of the justice of their cause. If there was no fighting, they gladly returned to their homes, leaving the aborigines undisturbed, but impressed with a salutary lesson of the promptness and determination with which the Liberians were bent on putting down the slave-trade. The last war of this character was carried, in 1849, to New-Cess, a region of country about eighty miles southeast of Monrovia. The condign punishment inflicted upon the slavers by that military expedition, the regular cruising of the Liberian Government vessels, and the scattering of settlements at various points, have entirely driven away the slavers from the Liberian Coast. The country, in consequence has enjoyed a grateful repose, and the aborigines have been peaceably prosecuting a legitimate traffic both with Liberians and foreigners.

A slight interruption to this state of things occurred, however, in 1857 and 1858. A new element of discord was introduced on the Liberian Coast in the shape of the enlistment of emigrants by French vessels. These vessels visited the coast for the ostensible purpose of employing free laborers for the French West-India colonies. Of course it was understood or presumed that all emigrants embarking on board these vessels did so of their own accord. If this had been the case, the

trade would have been as lawful as any emigration trade. But it must be borne in mind that the aborigines are not settled along the coast in independent republican communities. They are under the most despotic rule, the king or head man having absolute control over his boys. All the employer of emigrants had to do, then, was to offer, which he did, liberal conditions to the chiefs for the number of laborers required. The chiefs immediately sent around and compelled their boys to come; or, if they had not a sufficient number of their own people to answer to the demand, predatory excursions were made, in which they kidnapped the weak and unsuspecting; or a pretext was assumed for a war with a neighboring tribe. Cruelty, bloodshed, carnage ensued. Prisoners were taken, driven down to the beach, and handed over to the captain of the emigrant ship, who—his business being to employ all the laborers he could get—did not stop to inquire as to the method employed for obtaining the parties brought to him. The result was, a state of things as bad as that occasioned by the slave-trade in its most flourishing period. The bond which we had hoped Liberia had formed for the linking together of tribe to tribe in harmonious intercourse and mutual dependence was thus rudely snapped asunder. The natives, according to complaints made by some of them to the Liberian Government, were being agitated with reciprocal fears and jealousies, their lives and property were in danger, and a check was imposed upon all their industrious efforts.

Just as the Liberian Government was taking steps by diplomatic proceedings to put a stop to this false and injurious system of emigration from its shores, an occurrence took place which, though sad, clearly developed the character of the system and permanently arrested its operations on the coast. In the early part of 1858, the Regina Cœli, a French ship engaged in the enlistment of laborers, in the manner described above, was lying at anchor off Manna, a trading point a few leagues northwest of Monrovia, having on board between two and three hundred emigrants, among whom, in consequence of some of their number being manacled, considerable dissatisfaction prevailed. During the absence of the captain and the chief officer a quarrel broke out between the cook and one of

the emigrants. The cook struck the emigrant, the latter retaliated, when a scuffle ensued, in which other emigrants took part. This attracted the attention of the rest of the crew, who, coming to the assistance of the cook, violently beat the emigrants, killing several of them. By this time those emigrants who had been confined below were unshackled. They repaired in haste to the deck, took part in the fight, and killed all the crew, save one man, who fled aloft and protested most earnestly his freedom from any participation in oppressing them. Listening to his piteous cries, they spared his life, but ordered him ashore forthwith.

The surviving emigrants, having sole charge of the vessel, awaited the arrival of the captain, to dispatch him as soon as he touched the deck. But he, learning their design, did not venture on board, but sought and obtained aid from the Liberian authorities at Cape Mount, to keep the exasperated savages from stranding the vessel. The unfortunate ship was subsequently rescued and towed into Mesurado roads. Thus ended the operations of the French emigration system on the coast of Liberia.

In 1861, the Liberian Government having learned that a Spanish slaver had secretly entered the Gallinas river, within Liberian territory, for the purpose of purchasing slaves, immediately sent the Government schooner Quail to capture the invader. Meanwhile news of the slaver also reached the captain of an English man-of-war, then in the vicinity. The impetuous British officer, hurrying to the scene, took the business out of the hands of the Liberian man-of-war, captured and utterly destroyed the slaver. Complaints were at once made by the crew of the demolished vessel to certain Spanish officials at Fernando Po of what had happened in Liberian waters, representing the vessel as a lawful trader. The Government of Fernando Po, without any preliminary inquiries of the Government of Liberia, and with the same precipitancy which marked the commencement of the recent abortive war against Chili, sent a Spanish gunboat to Monrovia to chastise, as it was alleged, the Liberians, by destroying their capital; but she was so warmly received by our batteries and by the Government schooner Quail, then lying in the harbor, and gallantly com-

manded by the late Commander James L. Benedict, that she found it convenient to effect a precipitate retreat and hasten to some neutral port to repair damages. Had there been some Pareja on board, he would certainly have made his inglorious enterprise memorable by some method as fatal as that adopted by the Chilian hero. This occurrence took place on the 11th of September, 1861, and was the last blow struck by Liberians in self-defense against the aggressions of slave-traders, who are irreconcilable in their antipathy to a small community which has done more to cripple and destroy their iniquitous operations on that part of the coast than the combined squadrons of England, France, and the United States.

For about twenty-five years the colony of Liberia remained under the control of the American Colonization Society, which had planted and up to that time had fostered it. But the Society could not protect it against the impositions of jealous foreigners, who, finding a youthful but growing civilized and Christian community on the coast, having no official connection with any powerful government, did all they could to annoy and crush this young people. The community could not appeal to any government for protection—could not avail itself of the rights guaranteed by the law of nations, for it was not a nation. The only way left to the people to secure themselves from annoyances and impositions was to assume the control of their own political affairs, declare themselves a sovereign and independent state, secure recognition, and thus be able to treat with foreign nations. The people met in convention, earnestly discussed the matter, and agreed to declare themselves an independent State. The Society interposed no objection, but quietly withdrew its supervision and left them to the government of themselves. On the twenty-sixth of July, 1847, they presented to the world a Declaration of Independence.

The nationality of Liberia then came into existence under peculiar circumstances. Our independence was achieved peaceably, without the accessories of battle and smoke, the noise of the warrior, and garments rolled in blood. When, therefore, we speak of the independence of Liberia, we do not speak of it in an antagonistic or aggressive sense as *against* any other nation, but simply in a particular, individual, or distinctive

sense, in contradistinction to, or separation from, any other nation.

But peaceably and quietly as this nationality has been brought about, it has done and is now doing immense good. The declaration of the independence of Liberia, the establishment of the first republican government on the western shores of Africa, did not, it is true, solve any intricate problem in the history of nations. It did not shed any new light upon mankind with reference to the science of government. It was not the result of the elaboration of any novel principle in politics. But it has poured new vigor into the poor, dying existence of the African all over the world. It has opened a door of hope for a race the long-doomed victims of oppression. It has animated colored men everywhere to fresh endeavors to prove themselves men. It has given the example of a portion of this despised race, far away in the midst of heathenism and barbarism, under the most unfavorable circumstances, assuming the responsibilities and coming forward into the ranks of nations; and it has demonstrated that, notwithstanding the oppression of ages, the energies of the race have not been entirely emasculated, but are still sufficient to establish and to maintain a nationality.

Soon after the Declaration of Independence, we were welcomed into the family of nations by Great Britain and France. Then followed, one after another, all the great nations of Europe, except Russia, and that great empire has recently given us tokens of friendship. The Emperor sent to the capital of Liberia, in January last, on a complimentary visit, a first-class Russian frigate, the Dneitry Donskoy; and it is expected that a treaty of amity and commerce will soon be negotiated between Liberia and that great power. We are in treaty stipulations with Great Britain, France, the Hanseatic States, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, Italy, Portugal, the United States, and Hayti. The United States, though rather tardy in according to us a formal acknowledgment, has, nevertheless, always treated us as a *de facto* government. Her squadrons on the coast have always been at the service of the Government of Liberia; and their gallant officers, whether Northerners or Southerners, Red Re-

publicans, Abolitionists, or Democrats, have always cheerfully responded to the call of our Government; and the highest diplomatic representative we have yet had the pleasure of receiving from abroad is the accomplished Abraham Hanson, Esq., United States Commissioner and Consul-General.

We are now gradually growing in all the elements of national stability. The resources of the country are daily being developed. Our exports of sugar, coffee, arrow-root, ginger, palm-oil, camwood, ivory, etc., are increasing every year—a fact that gives assurance of the continued growth, progress, and perpetuity of our institutions.

The form of our government is republican. We have copied, as closely as possible, after the United States—our legislative, judicial, military, and social arrangements being very similar to those of that country. A writer in Fraser's Magazine for last month, (June,) in quoting the dictum of Sir George Cornwall Lewis, that "man is an historical animal," says that it is "confirmed by the remarkable definiteness with which new nations repeat, in embryonic development, the stages through which their ancestral nations have passed." Liberia is another illustration. In organizing a government for themselves on that far-off coast, there seemed to be an historic necessity that the people should adopt the republican form, and adopt it with nearly all the defects of the Republic whence they had emigrated and for which they entertained a traditional reverence. But we are learning by experience. The people are now occupied with the discussion of fundamental changes, and it is very likely that the ideas of the progressive portion of the Republic will soon become a part of the organic law of the land; and when once the country is freed from the frequent recurrence of seasons of political conflicts, which, among a small people, must always be injurious, there will be nothing to interfere with our progress.

Our present ruler, the Hon. Daniel B. Warner, is a most earnest worker. From his youth up all his desires seem to have been not his own ease and gratification, but work, work, work for the building up of his country and the honor of his race. He was born in the State of Maryland, and taken by his parents to Liberia when about nine years of age. If any

man has ever earned the presidential chair purely on the ground of personal merit, Mr. Warner is that man. He is one of the men whom Thomas Carlyle would honor—no sham about him. He has worked in nearly all departments of industry, and in each he has left his mark as a stimulus to his fellow-citizens and as an inspiring example to the young. He has worked as merchant, ship-builder, ship-owner, and agriculturist, deeming it important to remove, by his own untiring example, whatever foolish feeling there might be as to the want of dignity in honest physical labor; and he has, at the same time, qualified himself by hard study for the higher departments of national duty. He is of unmixed African descent, and therefore owes nothing to hereditary Caucasian bias. He is now about fifty years of age, but the soundness of his sense and his honorable principles gained the respect and admiration of his fellow-citizens while he was still very young, and he was elected to distinguished positions when he had not attained the constitutional age to fill them. By the most rigid economy and personal self-denial, he has succeeded in carrying the Republic safely through the darkest pecuniary season it has ever witnessed. All he needs now is to have his hands sustained by the devotion of truthful and patriotic men—and there are not wanting such in Liberia—and, before he retires from office, he will lead the Republic on to an exalted position among the nations of the earth.

Our Constitution does not admit Europeans to the right of exercising the elective franchise or of holding real estate. This regulation is protective, and by no means vindictive, as any one may readily perceive who will take the trouble to examine into our peculiar circumstances. We have again and again explained our reasons for this prohibition to the world. Still in travelling one meets with persons who, professing great knowledge of Liberia, yet pretend to misunderstand—perhaps conceiving that they have a right to misunderstand, or a right to pretend to misunderstand—our motives for the restriction in question. We have frequent suggestions from Europeans, and appeals more or less direct, to admit them to the enjoyment of political rights. But as yet we do not deem it safe to expose our infant institutions to the influence, which might

easily become uncontrollable, of unprincipled Europeans who would flock in upon us for the sole purpose of enriching and aggrandizing themselves without reference to the political character and moral progress of the country.

Owing to our peculiar circumstances, we cannot just now, as the genius and spirit of our republican institutions would lead us to do, throw open our doors indiscriminately to all mankind. What the United States can do with safety, and perhaps advantage, and will likely very soon do, we cannot yet do. The United States are unbounded in their resources and in their assimilating power. They take up at once and incorporate and assimilate the diversified and incongruous elements which pour in upon them from all parts of Europe. Liberia cannot do this. Our resources—intellectual, physical, moral, and political—are limited.

We have had experience enough, furnished by the conduct of some of the few Europeans who have lived among us only as aliens, to know that, if admitted to the rights of citizenship, they would study to build up Liberia only when by so doing they also build up themselves. They would honor her laws only in those instances in which they could fulfil the expectations of their own ambition. But in other cases, when the matter was reduced to a bare question of the honor of the Republic, the elevation of the African—when the dignity of the Government and respectability of the nation were alone concerned—then they would be found exercising the liberty to do as they pleased. And what is worst of all is, that there would certainly be produced a very large mixture of blood in the country. For even if this mixture could be effected without that utter corruption of morals, which is always its concomitant, still this species of amalgamation, however desirable in America, would by no means be a matter of congratulation to us. The presence of a half-breed population, such as would result in that case, would form an element of discord in the land, and, instead of being a link between the European and the native, would be an instrument in the hand of one for opposing the other; and, under its most favorable aspects, such a population would be found entirely unsuited to the incipient

civilization of a new country, and to the task of building up new states.*

We believe, therefore, that absolutely and totally to secure the Republic from falling into premature political and moral decay is absolutely and totally to shut out Europeans, for the present, from all interference in our political affairs.

But we are told in reply to this, "Europeans bring wealth into your country, which is indispensable to your speedy growth and development." We do not deny the abounding power of wealth. But we do not think it desirable that Liberia should grow rich too suddenly. Foreigners who are anxious to introduce capital among us for the benefit of the country may do so under our present laws with great pecuniary advantage to themselves. We believe that we have been planted on that coast for purposes higher than mere earthly fame and glory. Money and a large population are not all that a state needs. We do not envy the astounding growth and rapid enrichment of those countries whose sparkling deposits have attracted to their shores, in a short time, countless numbers of adventurers; for we know the effect upon the intellectual and moral character of such abnormal material progress. Wealth and luxury have always been the bane of rising states. There are many individuals in Liberia who, if they considered wealth the great aim of life, would not have left the United States. And I may say of the people of Liberia generally, that if they regarded money as a thing of transcendent importance they would have long since have compromised the independence of their conntry for gold; for if money and luxury are the great ends of life, what does it signify whether a state be independent or in servitude?

It may be that in years to come, when the aborigines of the country shall have been more generally enlightened, and sufficiently interested in national independence to insure that the majority of them shall not be unduly influenced by contact with avaricious and unprincipled foreigners, then our Constitution may be so amended as to admit indiscriminately all mankind. If, however, we could be sure that only philanthropists

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*Numbers 11, 4.

and persons interested in the Christian upbuilding of Africa would come among us, we should be disposed to remove the restrictions to-morrow. But as we have not that assurance, we must be content to surrender for the present all prospects of speedy pecuniary advancement for the more desirable acquisition of untrammeled national growth and development. We must chose rather to "bide our time,"

"Far from the maddening crowd's ignoble strife,"

than fall victims to that excessive refinement and that over-ripe civilization which are the grave of national honor and self-respect.

In educational matters, we are far in advance of what we were a few years ago. We have now a College established with its preparatory department, its corps of professors, its library, and all the appliances which are possessed by youthful colleges in America. And there is a prospect that the Alexander High School, a Presbyterian institution, which has been instrumental in doing great good in Liberia, but which has been for some time suspended, will be re-opened on the banks of the St. Paul's for the purpose of training young men for the ministry and missionary work.

Our great need is a good institution for the training of girls. We have been making some effort to supply this serious deficiency; but as yet our success has been only partial. We would wish that some Burdett Coutts of England, or Alexander Stewart of New York, would give us the means of establishing and carrying on such an institution. Such a philanthropist would do incalculable good, and inscribe his name indelibly on the gratitude of a rising people.

In religious matters we have also done some good. Most wonderful have been the changes which, within a few years, the moral and religious aspects of that portion of Africa have undergone. Where a few years ago stood virgin forests or impenetrable jungle, we now behold churches erected to the living God, we hear the sound of the church-going bell, and regular Sabbath ministrations are enjoyed. If you could see Liberia as she now is, with her six hundred miles of coast, snatched from the abominations of the slave-trade; her thriv-

ing towns and villages; her spacious streets and fine houses; her happy homes, with their varied delights; her churches, with their Sabbath-schools, and their solemn and delightful services—could you contemplate all the diversified means of improvement and enjoyment, the indications on every hand of ease and happiness, the plodding industry of her population, without those feverish and distracting pursuits and rivalries which make large cities so unpleasant—could you behold these things and contrast the state of things now with what it was forty years ago, when the eighty-eight negro pilgrims first landed on those shores, when the primeval forests stood around them with their awful unbroken solitudes—could you listen as they listened to the rush of the wind through those forests, to the roar of wild beasts, and the savage music of the treacherous foes all around them—were you, I say, in a position to make this contrast, you would certainly exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" You would acknowledge that the spirit of Christianity and civilization has moved upon the face of those turbid waters, and that beauty and order have emerged out of materials rude and unpromising. You would recognize on that coast a germ of moral renovation, which shall at length burst into glorious efflorescence all over the land—the wilderness and the desert shall bloom and blossom as the rose.

And this work will certainly advance with wonderfully increased velocity, when the thousands of our brethren in America, who are evidently destined to achieve the mighty and glorious task of building up the waste places of their fatherland, shall come over and help us. The personal freedom, which they have just received in so astounding a manner, is an indication—an earnest of the fuller freedom to be bestowed upon Africa. The song of triumph which, on the morning of their resurrection from the dark and dismal grave of slavery, echoed on the banks of the Mississippi, the Tennessee, the Potomac, the James—the gladsome shout everywhere heard,

"It must be now the kingdom coming,
And the year of Jubilo,"

is yet to be re-echoed along the rivers and on the mountain-tops of Africa. The deep interest now being taken by Christian philanthropists all over the United States in the general in-

struction of the freedmen is an inspiration from above. It is furnishing an important element in the preparation which the exiles need before entering upon their inheritance in the land of their fathers.

Any one who has travelled at all in Western Africa, especially in the interior of Liberia, and has seen how extensive and beautiful a country, marvelously fertile, lies uninhabited, with its attractive and perennial verdure overspreading the hills and valleys, cannot but come to the conclusion that this beautious domain is in reserve for a people who are to come and cultivate it; and we can see no people so well prepared and adapted for this work as the negroes of the United States. They are now in America carried away by fascinating and absorbing speculations about the rights and privileges they are to enjoy in that land. [Numerous politicians are endeavoring to advance their own ambitious purposes by agitating questions of the black man's future in the United States. But unless they can succeed in thoroughly altering the estimation of the negro entertained by the mass of white men in that country—unless they can effectually remove the predominant, if not instinctive, feeling that he is in some way an alien and an inferior being—unless they can succeed in bringing to pass general and honorable amalgamation, so as to render the social and domestic interests of the two peoples identical—they will contribute really nothing to the solution of the black man's difficulties.] [The agitation they are keeping up will result only in the determination by the white man in the different States of the exact proportion of self-government to be doled out to the man of color; and it matters not what may be the extent of political rights and privileges which may be thus conferred, deprived of the ability to rise in the social scale, according to his personal merit, as Europeans can, the black man will always find his condition anomalous and galling. If intelligent and enterprising, he will not be content with political position and influence, with finding himself respected and honored in political gatherings, for political purposes raised to the stars at public meetings, and on returning home finding his family, his mother and sisters, pining and withering under the influence of social caste. It will be worse than a descent from the

sublime to the ridiculous, for it will not be altogether of the character of an occasional transition; but it will be a continued and pervading state of elevation on the one hand and degradation on the other. Of much that is desirable and pleasant united to a great deal that is mortifying, annoying, and humiliating, the political and social counterpart of the artistic and literary incongruity which Horace ridicules when

> "turpiter atrum
> Desinit in piscem mulier formosa superne." *

Black men of refinement and energy of character will feel more sensitively than ever the burden of existence in America; they will appreciate more and more keenly the enormous difficulties in the way of their ever enjoying full political rights and privileges in a country in which they must maintain an ever-increasing numerical inferiority. They will find that, under such circumstances, in a popular government, a people cannot grow in all the elements of a true and perfect manhood, but must limp through life with crippled energies, always in the rear of their superiors in number. They will then come to a wiser interpretation of their mission and destiny. Abandoning the disappointing and fretful illusions which harrass them in the land of their birth, they will look abroad for some scene of untrammeled growth, and Africa will, without doubt, be the final home and field of operation for thousands, if not millions, of them. And the powerful agency that will thus be brought into that land—of family influences and the diversified appliances of civilized life in the various mechanical, agricultural, commercial, and civil operations—will rapidly renovate the spirit and character of the African communities, and whole tribes, brought under the pervading influence of Christian principles, will be incorporated among us; and then Anglo-American Christianity, liberty, and law, under the protection of the Liberian flag, will have nothing to impede their indefinite spread over that immense continent. I say, nothing to impede their indefinite spread; for if we look toward the interior, we find the aborigines tractable and anxious for improvement. They do not, as the people of these Eastern countries, cling to

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* Ars Poetica, 3, 4.

old customs because they are old. They are not so wedded to their old practices, to the mental and moral habitudes of their ancestors, as to prefer, like the American Indians, rather to surrender life itself than their old ways. They have no hoary systems, venerable with the dust of centuries, which they feel bound to uphold. When colonization presents itself to their doors, the old state of things gradually dies, apparently a natural death, without violence or any desperate struggle—it dies amid the tears and embraces of the aged, who love it because it nursed their infancy, supported their manhood, and furnishes the retrospect of their old age, but who with quiet resignation see it fall into decay, exclaiming, in melancholy yet hopeful accents, with reference to the future, "I am too old for this, teach it to my children." If then we only had the civilized population to advance our settlements into the interior, Liberian rule would be everywhere gladly accepted. If, on the other hand, we look along the West Coast, we find, here and there, European possessions, but held for the most part merely as military stations, fortresses, and harbors of refuge for their naval and mercantile interests. No large expenditures have been made for their extension or aggrandizement; and even if it should not be possible for the Republic to acquire them in the course of time, in an honorable and quiet manner, still they will never rise to sufficient importance to cause us external anxieties or to become elements of international discord.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, Christian friends and brethren, in recapitulation and conclusion, I point you to a score of thousands of Christian emigrants and their descendants from the United States engaged in a work of the grandest importance. When, forty years ago, the small band of eighty colored persons settled on Cape Mesurado, far away, nearly five thouand miles across the sea, from the place of their birth, in a strange and insalubrious climate, surrounded by hostile tribes and other unpropitious influences, owning only a few acres of land, no one would have supposed that in less than forty years, in the lifetime of some of the settlers, that people would so enlarge and spread themselves, so extend their influence as to possess over six hundred miles of coast, holding under their jurisdiction over two hundred thousand souls. Tribes which,

when they first landed on those shores, could easily have overwhelmed them and swept them into the sea, they now compel to cease intercourse with the slave-traders, to forget their mutual feuds in obedience to Christian law, and to cease from wars and bloodshed. They induce them instead of the sword to use the plowshare, and instead of the spear the pruning-hook. And, as I have told you, this influence is growing. Liberia is known and respected for hundreds of miles in the interior, and a great work is being accomplished.

If in our higher institutions of learning we could furnish the means of Arabic education, so as to put our missionaries and enterprising young men in possession of a fair knowledge of that language, to enable them to hold intelligent intercourse with the Mussulmans who throng our interior, and who will increase among us as our settlements extend back from the coast, I am persuaded that we should attract to ourselves and beneath our influence, as to a common centre, thousands of the vagrant Moslems, who wander as traders or propagandists of their faith throughout the interior of West Africa. It is because of the great importance which I attach to this subject that I am among you to-day. When the means were granted me by friends in America to travel for the improvement of my impaired health wherever I pleased, I chose to come among you to see how much Arabic I could gather in the short time I might have to spend here to take back to Africa.

Though the time during which I shall sojourn among you is extremely short, for the very ambitious object of learning a foreign and difficult language, yet I am glad I have come. I have already learned a great deal which I could not have learned merely from books. Indeed, it is impossible for one not to learn some Arabic, however short one's residence may be here. The air is impregnated with it; it is taken in on the food one eats and the water one drinks; it is inhaled with every breath; it is absorbed through every pore, until, after a while, it becomes a settled habit of life and is worn as regularly as a daily garment.

But, apart from the study of Arabic, my residence among you will be to me one of the most interesting events in the history of my life, and the coming together of so intelligent an

assembly on this occasion, to show their respect for and sympathy with my country, must take an imperishable place in my memory. Sure I am that the heart of every Liberian, who shall hear of the proceedings of to-day, will swell with delightful and grateful emotion, to know that the flag of his country has been honored in this distant land, and upon this "goodly mountain," distinguished in Holy Writ as the place which, above all others, the aged patriarch and leader of Israel desired, ere his death, to behold.*

I congratulate you and bid you God-speed in the noble work you are doing here—in this land so highly favored in ancient times. May you succeed in speedily arousing its slumbering inhabitants from the sleep of ages, in overcoming their apathy, and subjugating their prejudices by Christian education and culture.

I beg to tender the greetings of Liberia College to the important institution—the Syrian Protestant College—now rising under your auspices. The two institutions bear a striking similarity to each other. They are alike in the grandeur of their conception and the magnificence of their purpose; alike in the importance of their location on the borders of great needy countries; alike in the awful responsibility resting upon them. May they be happily alike in successful efforts to roll away the clouds of darkness, prejudice, and selfishness now enveloping the millions of minds upon which it will be their part, either directly or indirectly, to operate!

I trust that we may be able to send you from Liberia College a youth to enter the Syrian College, for the cultivation of an acquaintance with the Arabic language and literature, to return and introduce it into Liberia.†

Thus the two colleges, conceived by American philanthropy, founded by American benevolence, and fostered by American and English Christians, may be able to present to the world ere long, in the two countries, some of the best characters and best minds of the age, as the natural and genuine products of

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*Deut. 3: 25.

†Rev. Dr. W. M. Thomson, author of "The Land and the Book," who was present, suggested that two or three youths ought to be sent.

an advancing civilization, and an impressive illustration of the spirit and power of a pure Christianity.

I cannot, for my part, escape the conviction that the founding of these two colleges, almost simultaneously, is the pledge given by God of better days for these Eastern countries; that all the coarser passions and brutal instincts and superstitions of the people shall rapidly disappear amid the increasing and abounding light of knowledge and love.

"Even now we hear, with inward strife,
A motion toiling in the gloom;
The spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix itself with life."