

THOMAS BRAY'S ASSOCIATES AND THEIR WORK AMONG THE NEGROES

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DOCTOR BRAY AND HIS PHILANTHROPIC DESIGNS

IT WOULD not be proper to consider the activities of the Associates of Doctor Bray without first taking a glance at the great man, whose philanthropic zeal and energy inspired his contemporaries with a sincere interest in those less fortunate than themselves. Thomas Bray, a native of Marton in Shropshire, became active in various societies for the reformation of manners, for the revival of Church discipline among the clergy, and for the reform of prison conditions, while still a young man. His "Catechetical Lectures," designed for the religious instruction of the poorer class of children and composed soon after he became rector of the parish Church of Sheldon in Warwickshire, attracted attention to his fine spirit and practical ideas; and the Bishop of London selected him as the proper person to appoint as his official representative or commissary in the province of Maryland. There the Church of England was on a very unstable foundation.

Thomas Bray was commissioned in April, 1696, at the age of forty. Circumstances stood in the way of his going to America at the time; and he spent the period between his appointment and his departure in studying the wants of the missionary clergy and the means of attaining greater efficiency. An investigation into the character of the ministers at work in the provinces convinced him that a higher type of men would offer their services for the remote fields if there were access to the channels of sound learning. Good reading matter hardly existed in the colonies; and the

clergy lacked the stimulus of books, universities, and intellectual companionship. So Bray began to evolve his library system; he devised rules for the preservation of the books, he solicited funds, and at length he broadened his plan into a parochial lending library. In consequence of his efforts, nearly fifty libraries were founded by him in America and other countries abroad.¹ Thirty-nine were founded in Maryland and other colonies.² Sixty-one parochial libraries were begun in England and Wales. Doctor Bray sent to America upwards of thirty-four thousand religious books and tracts.³

But Doctor Bray encountered difficulties in carrying out his library project; so he originated the plan of a society, to be incorporated by charter, for the spread of Christian knowledge at home and in the plantations. His design was laid before the Bishop of London in 1697; and out of it grew the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, known to this day as the S.P.C.K. The first sketch of the new Society, which Doctor Bray prepared, included the libraries at home and abroad, charity-schools, and missions both to colonists and heathens. Not only British settlers, but Indians and negroes were included in his scheme. Other aims grew out of the original design: the S.P.C.K. did not confine its task to that of circulating books and founding libraries at home and in the colonies, but later began translating books into foreign languages so as to increase their use. In order to improve the moral and spiritual condition of the mariners of England, books and tracts were distributed. The problem of reforms at Newgate and other prisons was taken up in due course; and through the efforts of the Society, the conscience of the nation was awakened to matters which were distressing. The Society was destined to

¹*Fund-Publication*, no. 37, pp. (71)-97 (Maryland Historical Society).

²Hurst, *Parochial Libraries in the Colonial Period*, p. 50.

³Appendix to 2nd ed. (1808) of "Public Spirit Illustrated in the Life and Designs of Reverend Thomas Bray, D.D."

prove itself the friend of the reformed religious communities of continental Europe; it helped the Salzburger emigrants to find homes in the new world and collected funds for their benefit. The S.P.C.K., step by step, developed into a great organization; and its work has continued ever since.

Doctor Bray set sail for Maryland on the 16th of December, 1699; in March, he reached his destination. What he found there was hardly calculated to satisfy him. The ministers were at a disadvantage, because they lacked the definite assurance of support and were planted in the midst of parishes too large to cover effectively. Bray remained in Maryland but a few months; but during that time he called the clergy of the province together and made suggestions looking to the improvement of their morale. He also sponsored an act for the establishment of the Church of England in Maryland. Furthermore, he took care that nearly all the thirty (or thirty-one) parishes in the province received a library. He felt, however, that he would render greater assistance to the Church by securing the approval of the act establishing the Church, thus strengthening the position of the clergy and restoring their confidence; and to attain this object, he returned home.

When he reached England, he found that the work of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge had grown. The organization which he had conceived, to render possible his splendid vision of an enlightened and educated clergy and people, had branched into diverse fields. It was expedient to form another corporation, which would concentrate its efforts on the missionary enterprise of the Church. The result was the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts—the S.P.G. To the Reverend Thomas Bray, that noble organization owes its inception. The charter was drawn by him; and it was granted by King William the Third on the 16th of June, 1701. The new Society lost no time in facing its special task. Im-

mediately enquiries were begun into the religious conditions of the colonies; the Reverend George Keith was sent to make a survey of the whole field from New Hampshire to Carolina. Letters were written to governors, congregations, and people of prominence in the plantations. The replies received were on the whole gloomy, and indicated that the Church in the colonies was having a hard struggle even to hold its members.

At its meeting the following February, the Society agreed that all bishops who were members should cause notice to be given out, offering an opportunity to clergymen to apply for missionary duty in America. As the Society was desirous of securing none but the sort fitted for the task, all applicants were required to meet certain qualifications. Funds were solicited, and some generous donations followed. The S.P.G. was destined to prove the foremost missionary force in colonial America. For more than two hundred years, throughout the world, the S.P.G. has been engaged in the labor of evangelization; it has a most remarkable record. Active in every province where the British have gone, it has lent aid to nearly every country in Europe where its help has been sought and has gone to the most distant outposts. Its chief enterprises have been furnishing and supporting missionaries under Anglican orders, establishing Church organizations, distributing Christian literature, maintaining schools and schoolmasters, distributing books and tracts to the missionaries, and assisting and founding colleges so as to provide a trained clergy. For more than eighty years, from 1702 to 1782, the majority of the Church of England missionaries in the American colonies were chosen, sent over, and to a large extent supported by the Society. Three hundred and nine men were employed during that period in the Society's service in America.¹

In 1706, Doctor Bray accepted the living of St.

¹S. P. G. Classified Digest, pp. 849-856.

Botolph Without Aldgate, where he remained till his death. His interest in the colonies never waned, however; and he continued his activities for their welfare. In order to seek royal patronage, he visited Holland; and while there, he met Monsieur Abel Tassin, who was commonly known as the *Sieur d'Allone*. That official was impressed with the clergyman's endeavors; and during his life, he made a donation of £900 to aid in the uplift and instruction of the negro. Bray undertook the expenditure of that sum. For years, the needs of the negro had been in his mind; in fact, he had outlined a plan for a society which would carry on work "amongst y^e Poorer sort of people, as also among y^e Blacks & Native Indians."¹ When D'Allone made his will in 1721, he bequeathed one-tenth of his English estate and the arrears of the pension due him from the Crown at the time of his death, as a fund, the income of which would be used by Doctor Bray and his Associates for erecting a school or schools for instructing the young children of negro slaves in the Christian religion "& such of their Parents as show themselves inclineable."² In 1723, Doctor Bray named certain trustees to execute the work made possible by D'Allone's benefactions, as well as other funds accumulated by him for the instruction of the Indians and negroes. Their authority was confirmed by a decree of chancery, June 24th, 1730; and the title of "Doctor Bray's Associates" has clung to them ever since.

Bray had long been interested in the prisoners of Whitechapel and Borough Compter. He was so moved by their wretched condition that in 1727 he undertook to solicit benefactions for their relief. The attention of the public was awakened; and Bray's efforts led to a more extended movement for the improvement of British prisons.³ The House of Commons was induced in 1729 to authorize an investigation. John Perceval,

¹Kemp, *Support of Schools in Colonial New York*, pp. 14-15.

²S. P. G. Series A, XIX., p. 17 (Library of Congress transcript); Kemp, as above, p. 15.

³Sprague, *Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit*, p. 21.

Earl of Egmont, was a member of the committee of inspection; he was already one of Doctor Bray's Associates. Another member of the committee was the celebrated General James Edward Oglethorpe, who later joined the Associates. At the time of the parliamentary enquiry, Bray and Oglethorpe conferred on the subject of the gaols and the alleviation of the condition of the debtors there. A plan for the colonization of the debtors took form; and Oglethorpe accepted the trust of such an undertaking. A legacy of £5000 was found available, provided it could be annexed to some trust already in existence. So Oglethorpe proposed that the original number of the Associates be augmented, thus combining the reforming group in Parliament with the philanthropists outside, in a constructive effort on behalf of the poor. By July, 1730, the organization was apparently completed.¹ In this way, the enlarged Associates of Doctor Bray formed the nidus of the Georgia Board of Trustees. The Associates included some eight individuals, who never served as trustees of Georgia; but no member of the board as first named was chosen from outside that composite charitable society. At the head of its membership were three of the original group of Associates. And even after the Georgia charter had passed the seals, for a time the business of the Associates and the Georgia Trustees was jointly transacted.²

Doctor Bray was active to the last. On the 15th day of February, 1730, he died. It is hard to exaggerate the far-reaching significance of his labors. He has been called the father of the modern lending library; and an examination of his plan for the collection, circulation, and preservation of the books shows that he foresaw the main problems of the librarian of the present day. Because of his efforts, a stream of the finest reading matter filtered into America. The S.P.C.K., with its cultural, ethical, and religious

¹Crane, "Genesis of Georgia" (*American Historical Review*, XXVII., pp. 65-66).

²*Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

activities; the S.P.G., with its schools and missions; the Associates, with their work among the humbler classes—all are memorials of Thomas Bray. And when one considers his relations with Oglethorpe and the connection between his Associates and the Georgia Trustees, one is tempted to include the inspiration which led to the colonization of Georgia among his contributions to America.

EARLY ACTIVITIES OF DOCTOR BRAY'S ASSOCIATES
AND THE STEPS LEADING TO THE COLONIZATION
OF GEORGIA

The minutes of the Associates of Doctor Bray, covering the first years of their corporate existence, would suggest that while they were imbued with a desire to carry out the same sort of philanthropic enterprise which had marked their late principal's efforts, they were slow in fixing on a definite and specialized program. For awhile, they continued the support of libraries; then they interested themselves in prison reform, and as a result of their activity an impetus was given to the colonization of Georgia; at length, they devoted most of their energies, so far as America was concerned, to the education of the negro.

The record of the first five-and-a-half years' meetings is contained in a manuscript minute book in the archives of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The little volume is inscribed as follows:

The Minutes of the Meetings of the Trustees for Instructing the Negroes in the Christian Religion and Establishing a charitable Colony for the better Maintainance of the Poor of this Kingdom, and for other good Purposes, according to Mr D'Allone's Charity from March 21st 1729, to Dec^r 3^d 1735.

There are two other minute books of the Associates, which include the proceedings of that group for the next seventy-three years.¹

¹Photofilm reproductions have been made for the Library of Congress; and the pages have been given new numbers, which will be used in the citations throughout this study.

A little over a month after the Reverend Thomas Bray passed away, that is, on March 21st, 1730 (N. S.), there was a meeting of the "Trustees for Mr D'Allone's Charity for the Instruction of the Negroes in America." Those present were General James Edward Oglethorpe, Sir James Lowther, the Honourable George Carpenter, Captain Thomas Coram; Messrs. Adam Anderson, William Belitha, Edward Digby, Robert Hucks, Edward Hughes, John LaRoche, Robert Moor, and Thomas Tower; and the Reverend Messrs. Arthur Bedford, Richard Bundy, Stephen Hales, and Samuel Smith. At this session, General Oglethorpe proposed applying part of Mr. Joseph King's legacy of £15,000 to the establishment of a charitable colony for the better maintenance of the poor of the city of London and elsewhere within the kingdom. It was agreed that the Society was willing to do whatever should be thought proper to promote so good a design; and Oglethorpe was designed to take such measures as he should think appropriate for making the same successful. Mr. Bedford was asked to take charge of the books formerly in Doctor Bray's custody, designed for the use of missionaries in America. A parochial library in an English market town was discussed.¹

At the meeting of May 12th, the same year, a printed epistle of Doctor Bray to Mr. D'Allone's trustees was given to every person present. It was agreed to accept the trust and to execute the same under the direction of the high court of chancery; and Oglethorpe was requested to apply to the court for that purpose.²

The trustees met again July 1. There were new members present, including the Right Honourable Lord Perceval, Earl of Egmont. General Oglethorpe reported that on the 24th of June, the cause concerning

¹Minutes of the Meetings of the Trustees . . . (1729-35), p. 6 (Library of Congress photofilm).

²*Ibid.*

the charity of Mr. D'Allone and of Doctor Bray's foefment in pursuance of the same was heard before the master of the rolls, who had spoken with respect of the new society and had promised it all the encouragement in his power. He had also given a final decree, the most advantageous which could be desired, and had appointed the gentlemen who were Associates to Doctor Bray to act as trustees for executing Mr. D'Allone's will and "Instructing the Negroes of the British Plantations in the Christian Religion." The general was chosen chairman for the year; and the Reverend Samuel Smith and Arthur Bedford were made secretaries. Mr. Bedford reported that he had waited on the Lord Bishop of London, June 2nd, and had communicated to his Lordship the designs of the Society; whereupon the Bishop had expressed "his great Satisfaction therewith," and had promised "all the Encouragement and Assistance, which lay in his Power." The Bishop had already printed some tracts on the education of the negro;¹ and he had taken care to obtain "an exact List of all the Negroes in the Plantations in America, All which Particulars he was willing to lay before them, that so they might know how to proportion their Charity as there was Occasion." It was agreed that the new Society would try to cultivate "a good Understanding" with the older Anglican philanthropic organizations—the S.P.C.K. and the S.P.G. Furthermore, it was decided that efforts would be used, as soon as possible, to obtain "a Grant of Lands in America, that such poor Persons may be transplanted thither who shall be willing to go beyond the Seas for their better Maintainance, and that M^r Oglethorpe, and such other Persons of this Society, whom he shall desire for his Assistance do take Care of the same." Letters were to be written to all persons in England who had ever received a library

¹Edmund Gibson (1669–1748) was Bishop of London. He was particularly interested in the uplift of the negro; and had urged slave-owners to take their obligations in regard to the negro's spiritual welfare more seriously.

from Doctor Bray, asking them to give a particular account of those libraries; and correspondence with the American clergy who formerly corresponded with the doctor should be renewed.¹

The historical significance of the meeting just reviewed is evident. The Associates had become a body politic by decree of chancery. They were looking ahead with earnestness and determination; and to pursue their aims more effectively, they were enlisting the sympathy and co-operation of prominent ecclesiastics and well-established corporations. The philanthropic colony, which materialized in the next two years, was the subject of serious thought.

At the next meeting, two weeks later, donations to the good cause were reported.² The older societies, the S.P.G. and the S.P.C.K., graciously pledged their readiness to assist the new organization. July 30th, the Honourable James Vernon, who had become a member, laid a draft of a petition to the King before the trustees, soliciting the grant of certain lands to the southward of Carolina. The petition was engrossed and signed. In the minutes of that day, we first find the body referred to as the "Associates."³

Reports of an insurrection of the negroes in Virginia gave anxiety to the Associates, who were afraid that such rumors would hamper their efforts to obtain funds. It was determined to enquire into the truth of the same; and various Associates were requested to write to their correspondents in America.⁴ At a meeting six weeks later (November 12th, 1730), it was noted with satisfaction that there was no insurrection in Virginia, and that the uprising in Jamaica had not resulted from teaching the negroes the Christian religion. The reflexions caused thereby, so far from discouraging the Associates, "ought rather to induce them

¹Minutes of the Meetings of the Trustees . . . (1729-35), pp. 7-9 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, p. 11.

³*Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 18.

to go on with greater Diligence and Vigour for the Converting of those poor Souls to Christianity." At the same session, a proposal was made that a parliamentary law be taken for the constant performance of divine service in all the county gaols of this kingdom; and it was agreed that a treatise be drawn up, "to encourage all charitable Persons to contribute towards the charitable Colony intended to be fixed in some one of the American Plantations belonging to the King of Great Britain, and that M^r Oglethorpe do prepare the Same."¹ Also a sermon was decided upon, to be preached in Feburary "concerning the Instruction of Negroes in the Christian Religion." The date was later fixed as the 23rd of February, 1730 (1731). Thus ended the first year's deliberations of the Associates of Doctor Bray; they had made a real start.

On the 14th of January, 1731, arrangements for the anniversary sermon were practically perfected. The Reverend Samuel Smith, lecturer of St. Alban's, Wood-Street, and active as a trustee, was to preach the same in the parish Church of St. Augustin, near St. Paul's Cathedral. It was planned that a dinner should follow the sermon, at the King's Arms in St. Paul's Churchyard, and that Mr. Oglethorpe should be the steward for that purpose.² At that meeting it was "Agreed, that the Lord Percevall, Col. Carpenter, M^r Vernon, M^r Heathcote, M^r Hucks, M^r Towers, M^r Eyles, M^r LaRoche, and M^r Oglethorpe, and M^r Moore be a Committee for Solliciting the Grant for the Lands designed for the Charitable Colony in South Carolina in America."³ Thus we observe that the little charitable society, originally devised for the administration of a legacy for the education of the negroes in the colonies and to perpetuate Doctor Bray's scheme of parochial libraries, had widened its scope to include prison reform and the

¹Minutes of the Meetings of the Trustees . . . (1729-35), pp. 21, 23 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, p. 28.

³*Ibid.*, p. 29.

actual establishment of a debtor colony. As one of Bray's early biographers describes the evolution of that charitable enterprise—

For to these two designs of founding Libraries, and instructing the Negroes, a 3rd was now added, which tho' at first view appears to be of a different nature, has a perfect coincidence with them. . . . And therefore out of the same charitable regard to the bodies and Souls of Men, a design was form'd of establishing a Colony in *America*, than which none can be better entitled to consideration and encouragement.¹

The Reverend Mr. Smith preached his sermon, on Tuesday, February 23rd, 1731, as the title-page expresses it, "before the TRUSTEES for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America, And before the ASSOCIATES of the late Rev. Dr. THOMAS BRAY, for Converting the Negroes in the British Plantations, and for other good purposes." "Until the pious Former of these Designs"—Doctor Bray—"provided Missionaries to be sent into the several Provinces on the Continent of *America*," he said, "most of the first *English* Settlements there were for a long Time without Priest or Altar. Few were bless'd with an establish'd Ministry. . . . If Christianity now gains Ground but by slow and inconsiderable Advances, the Circumstances of the Clergy, and the Scarcity of Materials in our Plantations will in some Measure account for it." He mentioned the large number of Indians still unreached by Christianity. He declared that it was an obligation to found and augment parochial libraries, to convert the negroes in the British plantations, and to plant a Christian colony. At the time of the delivery of this sermon, the two bodies—the Georgia Trustees and the Associates of Doctor Bray—had not been separated; in fact, the Georgia trust was not even in existence.

After the sermon, the Associates met at the King's Arms. Oglethorpe and twelve others were present. It was agreed to print an account of Doctor Bray, "the Founder of these Associates"; and the Reverend Mr.

¹*Fund-Publication*, no. 37, p. 47 (Maryland Historical Society).

Bundy was desired to wait upon the Bishop of London and obtain an account of the number of the clergy and the negroes in the several islands and plantations in America, "with such other Particulars as his Lordship shall judge proper to promote their Designs in Instructing, Converting, and Baptising the said Negroes."¹

At a meeting soon afterwards, the Reverend Samuel Smith was asked to lay before the Associates the draft of a letter to be forwarded to the commissaries and clergy in the plantations, acquainting them with the trust created by Doctor Bray and desiring their counsel in promoting their good designs.²

At the meeting of the Associates, January 15th, 1732, the Reverend John Burton accepted an invitation to preach the second anniversary sermon. Copies of the letter of the Bishop of London to the masters and mistresses of slaves, to the value of five pounds, were ordered sent to the Commissary of the Church in Maryland. Mr. Burton's sermon was delivered "before the Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America, and before the Associates of the late Rev. Dr. Thomas Bray, for Converting the Negroes in the British Plantations, and for other good Purposes." He spoke (March 15th) in favour of the Christian education of the youth, and of the conversion of negroes and Indians.

There was a feeling of dissatisfaction, because the charter of the proposed colony of Georgia was still delayed. A good deal of interest had been aroused in this philanthropic venture; and donations had been solicited throughout the kingdom. At last, on June 9th, 1732, the charter was granted by King George the Second. Lord Viscount Perceval, Edward Digby, George Carpenter, James Oglethorpe, George Heathcote, Thomas Towers, Robert Moore, Robert Hucks, Roger Holland, William Sloper, Francis Eyles, John LaRoche, James Vernon, William Belitha, and the

¹Minutes of the Meetings of the Trustees - - - (1729-35), p. 31 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, p. 40.

Reverend Messrs. Stephen Hales, John Burton, Richard Bundy, Arthur Bedford, and Samuel Smith, as well as Adam Anderson and Thomas Coram, gentlemen, were made a body politic and corporate under the name of "The Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America." No one of the Board of Trustees as first named was chosen from outside that composite body of the original Associates and the reforming group of members of Parliament and philanthropists outside. At the head of the membership were three of the original group of Associates. There were fourteen members of Parliament, all of whom but one (or possibly two) had served some time on the committee on the gaols. Even after the Georgia charter had passed the seals, for a time the business of the Trustees and the Associates was jointly conducted.¹ They even used the same minute book and held their meetings at the same place. It was later that the Associates of Doctor Bray, having lent their organization, prestige, and membership to the inauguration of the Georgia colony, felt that the two enterprises should not be jointly conducted. It has been said that the Associates doubtless "performed their most notable service between October, 1730 and 1732, when they laid the foundation of the last successful English enterprise of colonization within the limits of the United States."²

It was not until the middle of the following year that the accounts of the two bodies, which had been managed jointly, were fully settled. At the meeting of the Associates in Palace Court, May 31st, 1733—Lord Perceval in the chair—it was decided to demand of the Georgia Trustees a balance of £109/18s./4d., due the Associates. At the July 2nd meeting, the balance was reported paid and invested; and it was ordered "that a

¹Crane, "The Philanthropists and the Genesis of Georgia" (*American Historical Review*, XXVII., pp. 67-68).

²*Ibid.*, p. 69; Crane, "The Promotion Literature of Georgia" (*Bibliographical Essays/ A Tribute to Wilberforce Eames*).

Library shall be sent to Georgia for the Use of the Minister in the Town of Savannah as soon as the Trustees hear of the Rev^d Mr Quincy's Arrival and Settlement"; and that the people in the next embarcation to the new colony be furnished with Bibles, prayer books, and other works.¹

THE WORK OF THE ASSOCIATES IN GEORGIA

The new colony, with which the Associates were so intimately connected, had the first claim on the attention of the society. In November, 1734, Mr. Herman Verelst, who acted as agent of the Georgia Trustees, reported to Doctor Bray's Associates that he had sent to Savannah three parcels of books (Bibles, primers, spelling books, horn-books, testaments, and psalters). It was ordered at the same time that books should be sent to Charles Town, South Carolina, and to New England, for the instruction of the negroes.²

In the meanwhile, General Oglethorpe had returned from Georgia, whither he had gone with the colonists. He presided at a meeting of the Associates at Palace Court, February 3rd, 1735; and several of the Trustees of Georgia, who were likewise Associates, were present. It was agreed that the Earl of Egmont, Doctor Bundy, Doctor Hales, and the Reverend Mr. Smith wait on the Bishop of London as a committee, to communicate "the Associate's great Desire to forward the good work of Converting the Negroes"; and in order to accomplish their desires, they felt it would be "necessary to obtain a Royal Instruction to the Legislative Powers of the several Colonys to Consider of the most proper means for Establishing Itinerant Catechists in the said Colonys towards the Conversion of the Negroes." Hence the good offices of his Lordship and of the S.P.G. were desired.³

Gradually the efforts of the Associates became more

¹Minutes of the Meetings of the Trustees . . . (1729-35), pp. 62-65 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

³*Ibid.*, p. 79.

specialized. Other and larger organizations were devoting their energies to the sending of missionaries, the support of schools, and the distribution of libraries. The Associates felt that their best avenue of service was the instruction of the negro. The S.P.G. had emphasized negro work from the beginning; catechists were maintained in several places under the auspices of the Church of England; the present Bishop of London was a well-known advocate of religious instruction among those benighted people. Still the progress was slow; the whites were on the whole indifferent to the training of their slaves, if not positively hostile.

On March 3rd, 1735, a gift of £50 from an unknown benefactress was reported to the Associates; and five-eighths of the Associates' assets in South Sea Annuity stock were voted for use in the conversion of the negroes.¹ So serious and determined were the members that a joint meeting was held with a committee from the S.P.G., April 21st, 1735, so as to confer on the proper means to be taken for instructing the black people in the plantations. It was a distinguished gathering. The Venerable Society was represented by the Lord Bishop of Rochester, the Secretary (Doctor Philip Bearcroft), and others; the Associates present included the Earl of Egmont, Mr. Vernon, Captain Coram, and the Reverend Messrs. Hales, Bundy, Smith, and Bedford. It was proposed that the two societies make application to the King, for instructions to the Governor of South Carolina, to recommend that his Assembly pass an act for establishing one or more catechists for the instruction of the negroes "in the Christian and true Protestant Religion in that Colony." The Associates had sent books to Mr. Hugh Bryan, of Port Royal, South Carolina, for converting the negroes.²

As fast as their funds permitted, the Associates sent books to the American colonies, for the instruction of

¹Minutes of the Meetings of the Trustees . . . (1729-35), pp. 82-83.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 87-88, 96.

the black race. But they also tried to follow out their founder's plan of establishing parochial libraries. On the 2nd of June, 1736, they sent a parish library to Savannah.¹ A library was sent to Connecticut about the same time. At a meeting of the Associates, November 2nd, 1737, it was reported that since the late Doctor Bray's death, the Associates had endowed between twenty and thirty libraries. "But the Fund being so low They have not been able to make so considerable a progress as they could wish." A large number of books remained in store, but they were insufficient for complete libraries. So it was resolved that the Associates meet every month, and that every benefaction received be applied in the best way to promote the design and answer the intentions of the donor.²

Although the Associates had given great impetus and encouragement to the founding of Georgia, the colony did not offer a field at the beginning for their special work of instructing and uplifting the negro. There were no slaves in the first years of the settlement; and the constant menace of the Spaniards of Florida hindered the colonists from a well-ordered life. But Georgia was not forgotten; and after the Associates resolved (April 10th, 1749) "that to promote the Conversion of the Negroes, it is necessary to endeavour to send over a proper Person as an Itinerant Teacher in the Principles of Christianity, to go to such Colonies as he shall be appointed,"³ it was in Georgia that they carried out this experiment.

The Reverend Bartholomew Zouberbuhler, a native of Switzerland, was the resident clergyman at Savannah; he was a man of industry, interested in the welfare of the negro. In fact, for the first time in its history, the colony possessed a clergyman ready to concentrate his energies on the local needs of the

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., July 7, 1736 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, Nov. 2, 1737.

³*Ibid.*, April 10, 1749.

parish. There had been ministers in Georgia of unusual gifts, who had apparently used Savannah principally as a basis for their wider activities; and other clergymen had left the colony after a short stay. Upon a man of Zouberbuhler's calibre, the Associates could rely.

The Associates secured the help of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, since that society kept in touch with desirable men ready to go to the colonies. The man chosen was Joseph Ottolenghi, a convert from Judaism; and the Associates obligated themselves to pay Mr. Ottolenghi £25 a year for his services as catechist to the negroes, while the S.P.G. added £15 to that amount.¹ Ottolenghi was a native of Casole in Italy.² In making formal application for the appointment, he promised "to use his best endeavours, with the Divine Assistance," towards "the Conversion of these ignorant People, so as that the Honour of Almighty God, the good of his Fellow Creatures, and the Designs of this Venerable Society may be Answered by his Undertaking."³

Ottolenghi arrived in July, 1751.⁴ He was a rather colorful figure—a man of culture, conversant not only with English but with the languages of the Orient; he soon became involved in the silk industry of the Trustees, who had great hopes of success in that enterprise. He was the most prominent Jew in colonial Georgia. Ten years later, he was elected a member of the Georgia Assembly, and remained a member till 1765. He was appointed at one time a commissioner to repair the public wharf; he was also named a commissioner to erect forts, collect taxes, and look after other public duties. In 1774, he was allowed an annuity of a hundred pounds, "in consideration of his long and faithful services in promoting silk culture in

¹S. P. G. *Abstract*, 1751, p. 55.

²Dr. Bray's *Associates*: Minute Book I., Jan. 14, 1751 (L. C.).

³S. P. G. Series B, XVIII., p. 80 (L. C.).

⁴S. P. G. *Journal* XII., 175½-1754 (L. C.).

Georgia." He was the first Jew to represent the masses in a popular assembly, so far as can be ascertained.¹

Zouberbuhler acquainted the S.P.G. with Mr. Ottolenghi's arrival, and expressed his opinion as to the most effectual method in teaching the negroes—visiting them in their several habitations and appointing schools in the different districts.²

Ottolenghi reported to the Society, September 9th, 1751, that he had the slaves with him three times a week, in the evenings when their owners could best spare them. He instructed those who were grown, advanced in years, and not capable of learning to read, in as plain a manner as he could, in "such Principles of our Holy Religion as suits best with their Condition & Capacity;" and found them apparently willing and desirous to learn what they must do to be saved. He promised to spare no pains to improve the younger ones—those capable of learning to read—and he prayed God's blessings upon his efforts.³

On the 4th of June, 1752, Ottolenghi wrote expressing great satisfaction in the good progress of his catechumens, to whom he taught the catechism. "After talks to them upon some of the moral Duties, and by these Means, through God's blessing, he hath brought most of them through the Catechism, and some of their Masters have acknowledged, that their Slaves are grown much better than heretofore." He had run across two Jewish families, both very poor; and he had taken their children for instruction, hoping to show them the real way of entering the true Canaan.⁴

The Associates replied to Ottolenghi that they approved of his method of instructing the negroes; and suggested that they would be glad if he would encourage white children to partake of the same knowl-

¹*Publications of American Jewish Historical Society*, no. 9 (1901), pp. 89-112.

²*S. P. G. Journal* XII., 175 $\frac{1}{2}$ -1754 (L. C.).

³*S. P. G. Series B*, XII., p. 149 (L. C.).

⁴*S. P. G. Abstract*, 1753, p. 54.

edge, and assist Mr. Zouberbuhler in the preparation of people for the sacraments.¹ That the efforts were bearing fruit is evident from Zouberbuhler's letter of April 13th, 1753, in which he informed the S.P.G. that more than sixty negroes joined in his worship. He added that Mr. Ottolenghi was diligent and doing good service.²

As Ottolenghi became more closely identified with civil affairs, the school became subordinate. In June, 1757, he received a letter from the Secretary of the Associates, expressing surprise that he had given no account of his labours the preceding year.³ The S.P.G. had similar cause of complaint, and in 1758 stopped his stipend.⁴ In June, 1758, another letter was received from the Associates, reminding Ottolenghi that nothing had been heard from him in three or four years, and therefore no future drafts would be honoured. Thereupon Ottolenghi expressed surprise himself, and avowed that some malicious person had done him a disservice; he asserted that he had never omitted his annual account or neglected his duty towards the negroes.⁵

The Reverend Mr. Zouberbuhler wrote the Secretary of the Associates, July 25th, 1758, his own views on the subject of negro instruction. He said that he had once proposed the erection of a public school for the purpose; but he had concluded that such an institution was both too limited and attended with many inconveniences. Georgia was thinly inhabited; hence such a school could only reach a few adjoining neighbours. There were not many masters who would spare their negroes in the daytime, though they might be induced to excuse them for instruction after their daily work. "The best & most effectual Method then of delivering these poor Creatures out of their Darkness

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., July 10, 1752 (L. C.).

²S. P. G. Abstract, 1754, pp. 63-64.

³S. P. G. New Photostats, Georgia (L. C.), pp. 21-22.

⁴S. P. G. Abstract, 1758, p. 52.

⁵S. P. G. New Photostats, Georgia (L. C.), pp. 22-23.

& to make them Partakers of the Light of the Gospel, is, to attend them at their respective Habitations & to embrace all favourable Opportunities of instructing them in the Fundamental Truths of xty." Two or three itinerant schoolmasters, going from one district to another and staying two or three months in each, would be about the best way of reaching the negroes.¹

Meanwhile, Ottolenghi was able to get reinstated in the favour of the S.P.G. Several men wrote letters commending him; and it was suggested to the Society that his annual reports must have miscarried. But on the 3rd of April, 1760, the Associates resolved that they could no longer continue the experiment in Georgia. They felt that it did not answer the intent and purpose of Mr. D'Allone's bequest; so Ottolenghi was informed that his engagement was terminated. There is no record of further work in that colony under the direction of the Associates.²

NEGRO UPLIFT IN THE COLONIAL CAROLINAS

South Carolina was one of the first scenes of the Associates' activity in behalf of the negro; but prior to that time, a certain missionary of the English Church had been filled with remarkable zeal for the welfare of that subject people. The Reverend Francis LeJau, a native of Angiers, France, was reared a Huguenot; but he embraced the Church of England and received episcopal orders in London. He arrived in Carolina in October 1706; and ministered at St. James's Church, Goose Creek, for the rest of his life. He received an annual allowance from the S.P.G. of fifty pounds, beside the provision under the South Carolina Church Act. Both the Indians and the negroes were special objects of his attention; and he persisted in his endeavours in spite of discouragement and lack of

¹Dr. Bray's records—copy of original letter in possession of the Rev. J. B. Lawrence, Americus, Ga.

²Lawrence, "Religious Education of the Negro in the Colony of Georgia" (*Georgia Historical Society Quarterly*, XIV., no. 1, March, 1930).

co-operation from his white parishioners. Soon after his arrival, he realized that the slave-owners were not merely indifferent to the spiritual welfare of their dependents but positively opposed to his efforts to impart Christian instruction to them.

In this regard, South Carolina was not unique; in all the colonies where there were slaves, the idea had become prevalent that baptism would automatically free them. Hence, human nature being the sordid thing that it so often shows itself, the clergy had a difficult time winning the master's consent. Property rights were concrete realities; the implications of the Golden Rule were suffered to bide their time.

When LeJau observed the low sexual standards of the black race, he was driven to wonder whether the white man was really not responsible. "I am sure we cou'd prevent all those evils if we wou'd take pains about it," he said; "but Masters are content if their slaves labour much and cost them little trouble and charges."¹ He had not been long in his new field before several negroes applied to him for baptism; but he felt that he should wait until he had proof of their good character from the testimony of their masters. At first, he did not seem to suspect that the people would fail to support him in his efforts of uplift, but at length he realized the bitter truth. On February 18th, 1709, he wrote to the Society:

Since the beginning of December last I took a particular day in the Week and invited the Children Servants, and Slaves to come to be instructed in the Church, leaving to the discretion of the Parents and Masters to send such of their families as they cou'd spare, by turns, and whom they thought best disposed: I am sorry I can give no satisfactory Account of Success in that particular, perhaps it will be better in time. . . . I am not blamed openly, for all honest People stand with me; but it seems by their Whispers & Conduct they would not have me urge of Contributing to the Salvation, Instruction, and human usage of Slaves and free Indians.²

¹S. P. G. Series A, IV., #125 (L. C.)—Sept. 15, 1708.

²S. P. G. Series A, IV., #101 (L. C.).

A month later he bewailed the fact that negro and Indian slaves had not been sent to him for instruction, even though he had offered to set apart a time for the same. "Many Masters can't be persuaded that Negroes and Indians are otherwise than Beasts, and use them like such. I endeavour to let them know better things.¹"

The notion that baptism would emancipate the slaves was so general that letters were despatched from London on the subject, and special laws were passed in certain colonies, in order to assure the slave-owner that there was no ground for apprehension. LeJau, in his anxiety to gain the master's consent, drew up a declaration which adult slaves assumed at baptism. They were required to give consent to the following:

You declare in the presence of God and before this Congregation that you do not ask for the holy baptism out of any design to free yourself from the Duty and Obedience you owe to your Master while you live, but merely for the good of Your Soul and to partake of the Graces and Blessings promised to the Members of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Finding that the slaves were continually changing their wives and husbands, he told those whom he baptized: "The Christian Religion does not allow plurality of Wives, nor any changing of them; You promise truly to keep the Wife you now have till Death dos part you." The slaves were also required to promise that they would not spend the Lord's Day in feasts, dances, and merry meetings.²

In one of his letters, LeJau described his method of religious instruction. After his Sunday service, the negroes and Indian slaves were invited to stay for half an hour.

We begin and end Our particular Assembly with the Collect prevent us O Lord & teach 'em the Creed, the Lords Prayer, and the Commandments; I explain some portion of the Catechism. I give them an entire Liberty to ask questions I

¹S. P. G. Series A, IV., #142 (L. C.)—March 22, 1709.

²S. P. G. Series A, V., #49 (L. C.)—Oct. 20, 1709.

endeavour to proportion my answers and all my Instructions to their want and Capacity; I must acknowledge that the hand of God dos visibly appear on this particular occasion. . . . The Most Pious among their Masters stay also and hear; others not so zealous wou'd find fault, if possible, their Murmuring sometimes reach my Ears, but I am not discouraged.

He felt that his habit of doing nothing without the masters' consent had brought fruit, as certain of them had grown to recognize the benefits to be derived from the instruction of their slaves. In fact, the slaves were found to render better service, "and do better for their Masters profit than formerly, for they are taught to serve out of Christian Love & Duty; they tell me openly that they will ever bless God for their knowing good things which they knew not before."¹

LeJau's ardour was considerably dampened when he learned the strong prejudice that lurked in the minds of some of his people. One lady had asked, "Is it possible that any of my slaves could go to heaven, and must I see them there?" A certain young gentleman had remarked some time before that he would never partake of the holy communion where slaves also received the sacrament.² In spite of all LeJau's pains to emphasize the co-operation which he received from the owners of slaves, one cannot read his letters without suspecting that he was carrying most of the burden alone and with little help or sympathy. The members of the pioneer community were engrossed in their own affairs, and the hard exactions of a new and strange country crowded out some of the finer emotions.

When an epidemic of sickness began to sweep the country in August, 1711, LeJau felt that the visitation was a sign of God's anger because of the barbarous usage to which the Indians and negroes had been subjected. He dwelt on this theory in his sermons, and kept hoping that the calamities would bring the masters to their senses. A law had been enacted in

¹S. P. G. Series A, V., #120 (L. C.)—June 12, 1710.

²S. P. G. Series A, VI., #142 (L. C.)—Sept. 18, 1711.

the province before his coming, providing for the mutilation of runaway slaves; and he busied himself opposing its execution. He found that some of the masters had invented contrivances whereby to torture their slaves as punishment; and in one of his letters to the S.P.G. he gave a description of one of the devices.¹

He had great confidence in the reality of the negroes' conversion. "It is a singular comfort to me to see that while so many professed Christians appear but Luke-warm, it pleases God to raise to himself faithfull and devout Ser^{ts} from among the heathens, who are very zealous in y^e Practice of our Christian dutyes. I have no Complaining of our Proselytes, their masters commend them for their faithfullness, and from what I am going to relate, the Hon^{ble} Society should have a satisfactory instance that their Pious designs are not fruitless." Then he proceeded to relate that there had been an uprising among some of the negroes, due to the agitation of a slave brought from Martinique; but there "has not been so much as one of our Goose Creek Negroes accused of having knowledge of the Plot, far from having consented to so great a Crime. The most sensible of our Slaves whom I have admitted to the holy Sacraments have solemnly protested to me that if ever they hear of any Ill design of the Slaves I shall know it from them that it may be prevented."² To the end of his active ministry—he died September 10th, 1717—LeJau was assured that he had begun a good work, so far as the conversion of the negro was concerned. He approached his task in sincerity and zeal, and persevered in the face of indifference and opposition.³

We now turn to the specific efforts of the Associates of Doctor Bray. On the 16th of March, 1737, General

¹S. P. G. Series A, VII., pp. 395-396 (L. C.).

²S. P. G. Series A, IX., pp. 257-260 (L. C.).

³Pennington, "The Reverend Francis LeJau's work among Indian and Negro Slaves" (*Journal of Southern History*, I., no. 4, Nov. 1935).

Oglethorpe, who had returned from Georgia, informed the Associates at their meeting that Count Zinzendorff had procured two catechists from Frankfort, Peter Boehler and George Schoeleus, to be sent to convert the negroes of South Carolina. The Associates thereupon voted 12d. a day for the subsistence of the two men, until they could embark with Oglethorpe; and a couple of grammars were bought for them.¹ The two teachers were Moravians; and they were sent to the new settlement of Purysburg. Two years later, the Associates requested the Reverend George Whitefield, who was active in canvassing the country, to ascertain what progress the catechists were making.²

The Commissary of the Bishop of London for South Carolina, the Reverend Alexander Garden, was much interested in the religious instruction of the negroes. His efforts were impeded, however, not only because of the indifference of the whites but also because of the fear lest the negroes, once mentally awake, would prove a rebellious lot. On the 16th of September, 1739, an insurrection occurred among the negroes of St. Paul's parish, and twenty-two of the Reverend Andrew Leslie's parishioners were murdered; others escaped to Charles Town.³ Such happenings frustrated the efforts of those who advocated kindly consideration for the negro.

The fears of negro uprising grew very tense. Colonel William Stephens of Savannah wrote the Trustees of Georgia, December 31st, 1741, that "in Carolina, they are so continually apprehensive of their Rising, that upon all the Festivals, such as Easter, Whitsuntide, & Christmas, when by Custom they (the negroes) are allow'd some Cessation from Labour; Patroles of Horse are always travelling to & fro', to prevent their Assembling in Numbers; & at Charles Town itself, 'tis so dangerous to walk the Streets late at Night, that tis

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., March 16, 1737 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, May 2, 1739.

³S. P. G. Series B, VII., part 2, pp. 243-244 (L. C.).

customary with such People at such a Season to walk armed, for fear of being insulted by the Negroes."¹

In the face of this adverse sentiment, Commissary Garden, by far the most influential clergyman in Carolina, bought two negroes in January, 1742, in order to educate them. He kept them under his own roof; sent them daily to school; and found that their progress was considerable.² He made a proposition to the S.P.G., whereby a few of the most promising negro boys would be chosen and placed under tutors, and trained to understand the principles of Christianity; he expected them to be employed as school-teachers for their race. The Society authorized the purchase of two boys at their expense.³ The two negro lads, aged fourteen and fifteen respectively, were bought; and Mr. Garden reported to the Society that they were baptized in their infancy and knew the Church catechism at the time of their purchase, although they did not know a letter of the alphabet. On the 2nd of April, 1742, he wrote that they had been ever since under his roof, and sent daily to school, and would be continued till qualified for the intended service. Five months later, he found that one of the boys "proves of an excellent Genius, & can now (in the Space of eight Months) read the N. Testament exceeding well. In six Months more he will be thrōly qualified for the intended Service; & by that time, with God's Blessing, I shall have a Schoolhouse ready near my own, & every thing necessary prepared for his entering upon it here at Charlestown; and make no Doubt but by this time twelve Month, I shall be able to acquaint the Society of a very considerable Number of Negroe Children under his Tuition, regulated by my own Care & Direction. As to the other Boy, he is of a somewhat slower Genius, but of a milder & better Temper, & to the best of my Judgement will require less Authority &

¹*Georgia Colonial Records*, XXIII., p. 190.

²Brewer, *Education in the Episcopal Church*, p. 46.

³*S. P. G. Abstract*, 1741, p. 68.

Inspection over him, when he comes to the intended Service, tho possibly three or four Months later than the former."¹

Mr. Garden's school in Charles Town, for training negro youths, was opened September 12th, 1743. The school continued with success for more than twenty years; and many adult slaves attended the evening sessions. "This was done by the Church in the face of many difficulties and obstructions, and at a time when the Government had not one institution for the education of the fifty thousand slaves in the Colony."² The good Christian people of Charles Town made voluntary contributions to the building of the schoolhouse; and Garden was confident that he would not be compelled to call on the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for further donations. A month after the school was opened, he wrote to the Society:

Thus the Society have charitably opened a Door (& with Gods Blessing an effectual One) by w^{ch} the Light of the Blessed Gospel will speedily & plentifully pour in among the poor Negroes of Charlestown; & without the least farther Charge to the Society (a few Books only excepted) for many Years. After the first two Years, the School will annually turn out thirty or forty young ones, capable to read the Scriptures, & instruct in the Chief Principles of X^{nty} to nigh half the Negroes of this Parish; & who will all along be diffusing the same Light & Knowledge to the others, their Parents, Relations, Countryman & Fellow-Servants.³

The audit for the "Negroe School-House at *Charles-Town*," published in the local Gazette, dated November 26th, 1743, showed cash items for timber, boards, carpenter's work, nails, shingles, iron-work, benches, desks, lime, brick, and plastering, amounting to £308. 8s. 6d. To cover the costs there were benefactions amounting to £226. 10s. The largest gift was an anonymous contribution of fifty pounds.⁴

Mr. Garden's example was stimulating to other

¹S. P. G. Series B, X., pp. 138, 139 (L. C.).

²Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G.*, p. 18.

³S. P. G. Series B, XI., pp. 204-205 (L. C.).

⁴*South Carolina Gazette*, #523 (April 2, 1744).

parts of the province. On the 4th of January, 1744, the vestry of St. Andrew's parish, agreed that their minister (the Reverend William Guy) should assure Mr. Garden "that many others, our Neighbours, as well as ourselves, are ready to use our best endeavours to promote so pious & laudable a Design, & accordingly do earnestly desire that the other Negro Schoolmaster as soon as he is thought sufficiently qualify'd may be sent into the Parish we represent, under the Direction of our Minister, there to be employ'd in those pious Services for which he is design'd."¹

In 1746, Mr. Garden visited England. He reported that the negro school had sent out twenty-eight children sufficiently instructed according to the intention of that school; that fifty-five children were taught during the day; and that fifteen grown slaves were taught in the evenings. He plainly perceived a very general and earnest desire among negro parents to have their children instructed. The Associates of Doctor Bray sought the benefit of his advice; and Garden was invited to become a corresponding member of the Associates, and was asked to transmit to them his opinion of what they could do towards promoting the negroes' instruction.²

The Commissary was becoming worn out in his strenuous service; but his interest in the negro school did not abate. When a storm blew the schoolhouse down in 1752, he wrote the Society for a donation of books to replace those which the poor negroes had lost. Soon afterwards, he built another school.³ He died September 27th, 1756; he had been a great uplifting factor in colonial South Carolina. His successors did not show the same interest in the work among the blacks. After 1764, the school was discontinued. One of the teachers had died; the other had proved a profligate. Individual missionaries throughout the prov-

¹S. P. G. Series B, XII., p. 84 (L. C.).

²Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., March 19, 1747 (L. C.).

³S. P. G. Abstract, 1753, pp. 53-54.

ince kept trying to promote the religious instruction of the slaves; but the Associates were unable to make any substantial contribution to their favoured objective, so far as South Carolina was concerned.

In North Carolina, we find that the proprietary government of Albemarle, as early as 1669 or 1670, sought to pave the way for the conversion of the negro. An act was passed at that time, denying that a slave was freed by the act of baptism. The assemblies in those colonies where slaves were most numerous were anxious to remove the doubt respecting the effect of baptism. For a long time, however, North Carolina suffered from thinness of population and lack of ministers, and there was little done to improve the religious life of the negro. In no part of America, up to the last decade prior to the Revolutionary War, did the clergymen have larger stretches of territory to cover or greater natural obstacles to overcome.

The Reverend Ebenezer Taylor, an S.P.G. missionary whose service was terminated by a tragical death, reported in 1719 that the masters were on the whole opposed to the conversion, baptism, and salvation of their slaves.¹ Missionaries frequently reported the baptism of negroes, and even their instruction in the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, although they were not able adequately to attend even to the spiritual needs of their white parishioners. In 1724, the Reverend Hugh Jones of Virginia declared that North Carolina needed Christian assistance, "not only for the Conversion of the *Indians* and *Baptism of Negroes* there, but for the Christening and Recovery to the Practical Profession of the Gospel great Numbers of English, that have but the bare name of God and Christ; and that too frequently in nothing but vain Swearing, Cursing and imprecations."²

¹*North Carolina Colonial Records*, II., p. 332.

²Hugh Jones, *Present State of Virginia*, p. 79.

Throughout most of the British occupation, there were fewer than half a dozen Anglican missionaries in all of North Carolina; yet that province was blessed by some of the most energetic and self-sacrificing men in colonial Church history. For example, the Reverend Clement Hall reported to the Society, May 21st, 1750, that in Easter-week he set off and journeyed about 427 miles through his south mission, and in about thirty days preached nineteen sermons, baptised about 425 white and 47 black children, besides adults.¹ The Reverend Alexander Stewart, missionary at Bath, gave special attention to the negroes and Indians in Beaufort, Hyde, and Pitt counties.

The Associates of Doctor Bray agreed at their meeting, April 2nd, 1761, to open two schools for negro children in the Carolinas.² They evidently considered the Reverend Daniel Earl, who had recently gone to Edenton, as their representative. Earl wrote them, October 3rd, that he had tried to recommend "this beneficent and charitable Design" to the Edenton people, but his exhortations and remonstrances had not had the desired effect. The inhabitants "all allow of the great Expediency of the Design but say that as their Circumstances are low and distressed (which is generally the Case) they cannot spare their Negroes from Service at the Age that they are Susceptible of Erudition, and those that are in affluent Circumstances are so few that the Number of Children sent by them would be so inconsiderable as not to be worth any persons acceptance, as the Teaching of Negroes precludes the taking of White Children, the parents not allowing their Children to be educated among Such." In reply, the Associates asked that Mr. Earl continue his efforts for the instruction of the negroes.³

Next the Associates sought the co-operation of the

¹Hawkins, *Historical Notices of the Missions of the S. P. G.*, p. 82.

²Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., p. 148 (L. C.).

³*Ibid.*, pp. 167-168.

Reverend Alexander Stewart. That missionary replied from Bath, August 12th, 1762, that he had made public the Associates' intentions of supporting a negro school, but few people at Bath and in his several chapelries approved of the scheme. There were difficulties: the towns were small, and the number of negroes sufficient for a school could not be found in any single town. The towns which abound in negroes were situated on rivers which were generally impassable. None the less, he had advertised for a school-mistress and would attempt to carry out the plan. He suggested that school-masters already in charge of white schools be employed.¹

On the 6th of November, 1763, Stewart informed the S.P.G. that he had fixed a school-mistress among the Indians of Hyde county. She was teaching four Indian and two negro boys, and four Indian girls, to read and to work; and he had supplied them with books for that purpose. He hoped that God would open the eyes of the whites everywhere, that they might no longer keep the ignorant in distress, but assist the Associates' design.²

Stewart wrote the Associates, May 1st, 1764, that he had hopes of erecting three schools in his own and the neighbouring counties. He had distributed the books sent him for the school-masters and had encouraged those men to his utmost ability, but had found that it was but "Labour and Sorrow owing to the mean low Prejudices of the People." His attempt the year before had failed. At Altamuskeet, in Hyde county, he had tried to maintain a school for Indians and negroes. There the master, James Francis, had instructed six Indian boys, and Stewart had baptised them.³

Soon afterwards Mr. Stewart moved to Beaufort county, where he hoped to find easier labours. For some time his health had been bad.

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., pp. 182-183.

²*North Carolina Colonial Records*, VI., pp. 995-996.

³Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., pp. 213-214 (L. C.).

In April, 1763, the Associates proposed that a school be opened at Wilmington for thirty negroes.¹ They sent a box of books to Mr. Lewis DeRossett, their local correspondent; and he tried to put their plan into execution. He was unable to find anybody properly qualified to teach the black children; and the teachers would not agree to instruct both whites and blacks, because of the feeling entertained against mixing with the slaves.

The Reverend John Barnett, who was stationed at Brunswick, was asked to establish a school for the Associates in his parish. He encountered considerable prejudice; and in his letter of August 17th, 1767, he expressed his fear of failure. He had agreed with a school-mistress to teach the girls to sew, knit, and mark; but his people "would rather their slaves remain ignorant as Brutes."² Still he was not deterred by the indifference of his parishioners. He continued to apply to the Associates for prayer books, spellers, and easy tracts. On the 9th of June, 1770, he informed the Associates that about sixty adult negroes had joyfully accepted the offer of instruction, and their owners, to their honour, were willing to indulge them with opportunities for learning to read on Sundays and all evenings. For six months, he had employed two men to teach in different parts of his neighbourhood; and the good progress many of the negroes had made sufficiently "evidences their Diligence and the Teachers Faithfulness."³

Unfortunately the storm broke just as this zealous missionary was beginning to see the fruits of his toil. There was strong resentment towards the Mother Country in North Carolina; and the war, soon to follow, put an end to the pious efforts of the Associates in that province. There they had done their best to improve the negro's condition, even though their work aroused little interest.

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., p. 190.

²*Ibid.*, p. 267.

³Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 13 (L. C.).

THE CHURCH AND THE NEGRO IN EARLY VIRGINIA

Negro slaves were first introduced into Virginia in 1619, when a Dutch ship carrying the Africans put in at Jamestown for the purposes of trade. The strong sentiment against slavery had not arisen at that time; in fact, the memorials of slave-traders extol their commerce as little short of a philanthropic venture, enabling the poor savages to rise out of an environment of darkness. The slave was regarded as a chattel; and, while there were organized efforts to convert the Indian to Christianity even in the earliest days of Virginia, the negro was overlooked. The slaves were not numerous at first; and they are seldom mentioned in the letters of the pioneer days.

The unsettled state of the province, the poverty of the settlers, the constant menace of the Indian, and the want of churches and ministers contributed to a general demoralization. A report to the Lord Bishop of London, who was in fact diocesan of the province though not officially the ecclesiastical head, speaks of the deplorable conditions. "The most faithfull and vigilant Pastors, assisted by the most carefull Churchwardens, cannot possibly take notice of the Vices that reign in their Families, of the spiritual defects in their Conversations." This report, published in 1662 under the title of "Virginia's Cure," advised collections for the benefit of the heathen. By this term the red man was designated; nevertheless, some of the clergy had been urging the importance of having the slaves baptised and instructed in Christianity.

The Reverend Morgan Godwyn, a clergyman of most prominent connections, took up his residence in Virginia in 1665. During his short stay in the province, he was horrified at the immorality and the abject state of the negroes and Indians. On his return to England, he engaged in a crusade against slaveholding. He found the masters fearful lest the baptising of their slaves would mean their freedom. A sermon preached by him in Westminster Abbey was entitled,

"Trade preferred before religion, and Christ made to give place to mammon." In 1680, he published a book known as "The Negro's and Indians Advocate." It contained severe criticism of the masters in the plantations; and in it he implored relief "for those Myriads of hungry and distressed Souls abroad . . . our Peoples Slaves and Vassals, but from whom alas the Bread of Life is most sacrilegiously detained."¹

The instructions by the King to the Council for Foreign Plantations, dated December 1st, 1660, had already stressed the duty of christianising the slaves. In 1667, the Virginia Assembly passed an act, probably under Godwyn's influence, declaring that those who were slaves by birth were not freed upon baptism. The preamble states that the act was passed because doubt had arisen on this point, and "diverse masters, freed from this doubt, may more carefully endeavour the propagation of Christianity by permitting children, though slaves, or those of greater growth if capable to be admitted to that sacrament."² Another act was passed in 1670, providing that only those negroes who were imported by shipping, and were not already Christians, could be made slaves for life. This act was repealed in 1683; but the attitude which it discloses is significant. The prospect of having one's slaves freed would discourage a selfish master from permitting their instruction and conversion.³

The Church of England made commendable efforts towards the conversion of the slaves; it advocated religious instruction by both masters and clergy, and urged the latter to persuade slave-owners to allow their slaves to attend church and be admitted as communicants. The Church did not raise the question of the moral right of its members to hold slaves; in fact, no religious body except the Quakers seemed to have

¹Jernegan, "Slavery and Conversion in the Colonies" (*American Historical Review*, XXI., p. 509).

²Hening, *Statutes of Virginia*, II., p. 260.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 283, 491.

scruples on the subject in those days. But the Church encountered serious obstacles; it was argued that the conversion of the negroes would increase the cost of their maintenance. It required time to teach them; besides, Sunday labour was often demanded of the slaves. It was feared that the slaves would acquire notions of equality, and become haughty and dissatisfied. Thus the danger of insurrection would be increased. Then there were objections on social grounds. The negroes were looked upon as hardly above beasts. "Savages of the lowest type were quite different in appearance and character from the negro of the present generation, so much changed by white blood and contact with a Christian civilisation. . . . To mingle with him in church, or to receive him on terms of equality at the communion table, was not only undesirable but positively dangerous."¹ A real impediment to the negro's conversion lay in the fact that there was a shortage of clergymen to carry on even the most usual tasks of the ministry, and the parishes were too extensive for effective missionary enterprise among all classes of people. Such handicaps, coupled with the extremely primitive mentality of the slave, but newly brought over from Africa, made the undertaking exceedingly difficult.

Lord Culpeper, who became governor of Virginia in 1680, was instructed to enquire what would be the best means of facilitating the conversion of the slaves; but he was warned not to throw in jeopardy individual property rights in the negro or to render less stable the safety of the colony.² Another governor, Colonel Francis Nicholson, about the close of the century, recommended to the Assembly the passage of laws ensuring the education of both Indians and negroes in the Christian faith. He had been directed so to do by the authorities back home. In reply, the Burgesses

¹Jernegan, "Slavery and Conversion in the Colonies" (*American Historical Review*, XXI., p. 517).

²Bruce, *Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century*, II., p. 97.

said that "the negroes born in this country are generally baptised and brought up in the Christian religion; but for negroes imported hither, the gross bestiality and rudeness of their manners, the variety and strangeness of their languages, and the weakness and shallowness of their minds, render it in a manner impossible to make any progress in their conversion." The Indians were pronounced more promising.¹

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was concerned over the conversion of the negro from the outset; and in the manuscript of Doctor Bray's plan for the Society, one finds the object described as the carrying on work "amongst y^e Poorer sort of people, as also amongst y^e Blacks & Native Indians."² One of the first announcements of the S.P.G. was as follows:

The Society looks upon the instruction and conversion of the negroes as a principal branch of their care; esteeming it a great reproach to the Christian name, that so many thousands of persons should continue in the same state of Pagan darkness under a Christian government, and living in Christian families, as they lay before under, in their own heathen countries.

Speaking of the S.P.G., Jernegan says, that the Society was "destined to be the most important single agency in furthering the conversion of the negro. . . . From 1702 to 1785 it sent to the American colonies numerous missionaries, catechists, and schoolmasters with instructions to promote the conversion of negro slaves. Indeed the catechists were appointed for this express purpose. Besides, the Society distributed sermons, catechisms, and other literature, to aid the work, and established several schools especially for religious instruction of negroes. Appeals were made by the Society for funds to be used for christianising the negro, and by 1741, they amounted to about £2500. The Society also prepared a bill, to be offered to Parliament, to oblige masters to cause children of

¹Bruce, *Institutional History of Virginia*, I., p. 9.

²Fulham MS., cited in Kemp, *Support of Schools in Colonial New York*, pp. 14-15.

slaves to be baptised. The annual sermons preached before the S.P.G. by noted clergymen of the Church of England were printed, together with abstracts of the proceedings of the Society; and both were effective agencies in furthering interest in the conversion of negro slaves."¹

In 1724, the Reverend Hugh Jones, who had been chaplain to the Virginia Assembly as well as minister at Jamestown, published a small volume, "The Present State of Virginia, and Short View of Maryland and North Carolina," which gave a rather forlorn picture. Regarding the baptism of the Indians and negroes, Mr. Jones said that some of the whites disapproved, saying that "it often makes them proud, and not so good Servants. But these and such Objections, are easily refuted, if the Persons be sensible, good, and understand *English*, and have been taught (or are willing to learn) the *Principles of Christianity*, and if they be kept to the Observance of it afterwards; for *Christianity* encourages and orders them to become more humble and better Servants, and not worse, than when they were *Heathens*."² Mr. Jones said that the children of both races, who were to live with Christians, ought to be baptised. As for the negroes, he said that "each Owner ought to take Care that the Children born his Property, and all his intelligent adult Negroes be taught their Catechism and some short Prayers, be made to frequent the Church and be baptised, and hindered as much as may be from Swearing, Lying, Intemperance, Prophaneness, and Stealing and Cheating."³

When Doctor Edmund Gibson became Bishop of London, he sought diligently to raise the moral and spiritual tone of the American colonies and to maintain a high standard of activity among the clergy.

¹Jernegan, "Slavery and Conversion in the Colonies" (*American Historical Review*, XXI., p. 510).

²Hugh Jones, *Present State of Virginia*, pp. 70-71.

³*Ibid.*, p. 94.

In 1727, he published three letters, addressed to the masters and mistresses of slaves, to the missionaries, and to serious Christians, asking for money to promote the work of christianising the slaves, and exhorting them to encourage and promote the instruction of the negroes in the faith. Several thousands of these papers were distributed. As a result, by 1741, a fund for the instruction of negroes was raised, amounting to £1600 of stock in Old South-Sea Annuities and £890 in four per cent loans.¹ The Bishop expressed his regret that "all attempts towards (the conversion of the negroes) had been by too many industriously discouraged and hindered." He exhorted the families in the plantations to remember their responsibility for the spiritual well-being of their slaves. He brushed aside the assumption that the negroes were necessarily of a licentious behaviour and could never be raised to the moral standard of Christians. He suggested overcoming the difficulty of the language by instructing a few of the more intelligent slaves first, leaving them to proselytise the rest, and ensure that the children be taught to understand English and the Christian faith. He declared that no Christian master should deny his negroes the opportunities of instruction or permit them to labour on the Lord's day; and he argued that the Christian would inculcate greater diligence in the slaves through implanting a sense of moral obligation. All ministers were urged by the Bishop to use their best endeavours in bringing the negroes to baptism and Christian teaching. The school-masters were invited to contribute their part, by bestowing some of their leisure time, especially on Sundays, to their instruction.²

On the 28th of June, 1729, the Reverend James Blair wrote the Bishop of London from Virginia, that his letters had caused several masters and mistresses to start instructing their slaves. The negroes in his

¹*S. P. G. Abstract, 1741, p. 67.*

²*Dalcho, Historical Account . . . Church in South Carolina, pp. 104-112.*

neighbourhood, that is, around Williamsburg, were "very desirous to become Christians"; after instruction, they frequented the Church, and the negro children were commonly baptised. "I doubt not some of the Negroes are sincere Converts, but the far greater part of them little mind the serious part, only are in hopes that they shall meet with so much the more respect, and that some time or other Christianity will help them to their freedom.¹ Doctor Blair was the official representative of the Bishop of London, and he was well qualified to speak for the Church throughout the province. He reported on the 20th of July, 1730, that "there is a very great number of Negroes lately instructed in the Church-catechism; at least in the Lords prayer, the Apostles Creed and the ten Comandments, and baptizd, and great numbers of them frequent the Church. Some allege it makes them ponder, and inspires them with thoughts of freedom; but I take this to be rather a common prejudice than anything else."²

There was a good deal of apprehension lest the negroes prove dangerous foes to the white people, and there were rumours of threatened uprisings. Thus Bishop Gibson's strenuous efforts were lost on those who were afraid that improving the negro's mind would inflate his self-assertiveness. On the 28th of October, 1730, the Council of Virginia ordered that persons going to church or chapel be required to carry arms, to prevent surprises, because of the frequent gatherings of negroes and other slaves.³ Doctor Blair declared in a letter to the Bishop of London, May 14th, 1731, that his former fears of a negro insurrection were all over, and that he felt it was loose talk. None the less, the sincere efforts of the church had been misconstrued by the slaves themselves; and their behaviour had hindered the progress of the good work. Blair

¹Fulham MSS., Va., Box II., #109 (L. C.).

²Fulham MSS., Va., Box I., #131 (L. C.).

³*Executive Council Journals, Virginia, IV., p. 228.*

wrote that notwithstanding all the precautions which the ministers took to assure them that baptism did not alter their servitude, the negroes fed themselves with a secret fancy that it did, and that the King designed that all Christians should be made free. And when they saw that baptism did not change their status, they grew angry and saucy, and met in the night-time in great numbers and talked of rising. "But by patrouling, and whipping all that were found abroad at unreasonable hours, they quickly broke all this design, and in one County, where they had been discovered to talk of a general cutting off of their Masters, there were four of the Ringleaders hanged. So now all is very quiet; as indeed there is a general quietness and Contentment in the Country."¹

Governor William Gooch of Virginia also wrote the Bishop of London about the negroes. In his letter of May 28th, 1731, he spoke of the apprehension caused by the meetings of the negroes; "but no discovery could be made of any formed Design of their Rising, only loose Discoveries that an order from His Majesty was brought in by M^r Spotswood to sett all those slaves free that were Christians, and that the order was Suppressed, a Notion, in their Circumstances, sufficient to Incite them to Rebellion, were they Masters of a more peaceable Disposition than generally they have." The disturbance was soon quashed; and peace seemed restored, till about six weeks afterwards, when in Norfolk and Princess Anne counties, about two hundred negroes gathered on a Sunday while the people were at Church, and chose leaders for their intended insurrection. This plot was discovered; and four of the ring-leaders were executed. By this means the negroes were restored to quiet. Governor Gooch admitted that the Bishop's criticism was true, so far as certain masters were concerned: "they use their Negros no better than their Cattle, and I can see no help for it; tho' far the greater Number, having kind

¹Fulham MSS., Va., Box II., #110 (L. C.).

Masters, live much better than our poor labouring Men in England."¹

The Reverend Adam Dickie, of Drysdale parish, reported to the mother country, June 27th, 1732, that he had disoblged "some of the more Loose and unthinking" of his parishioners by "an over active Zeal in instructing and Baptising Negroe Slaves." He explained his method of instructing the negroes; and expressed his confidence that a very great harvest of souls could be reaped among those poor creatures, of whom many were "very Serious and Devout attenders upon the worship of God and very Earnest of being more and more Instructed in Christian Knowledge."

My Method is to Examine in the Catechism every Sunday morning before Service all the Negroes who will come and if any are to be batpized I particularly examine them by themselves in the most necessary parts as of their Duty towards God and their Neighbour In the Articles of their belief, and especially upon Baptism, this method of Examining in the Morning I was obliged to because White People thought it a Mighty Scandal to have their Children repeat the Catechism with Negroes; But anything of this Nature never had and I hope never will have any Influence upon me to Desist from a Design which I believe answers so Good an End. But People who have Effectually tryed the Experiment are very sensible of the advantage of having their Slaves made Christians for they who formerly were theives, lyars, Swearers, prophaners of the Sabbath, and neglecters of their business, from a Sense of Religion and of their Duty have left off all these things and make Conscience of every thing they do Nay many of them (as I am credibly Informed) attend more in Awe of a Repri mand from me than formerly they did of a whipping, and think it below them to do any thing unworthy the Christian name.²

There were three questions on which Mr. Dickie desired the Bishop's opinion. First, should not Christian slaves marry and live after their own manner? Or, should slaves belonging to two different families be considered separated, in case one of the masters moved away or sold the slave and thus pre-

¹Fulham MSS., Va., Box II., #111 (L. C.).

²Fulham MSS., Va., Box III., #39 (L. C.).

vented all opportunity of union—"they being as Effectually Separated as by Death, not of Choice but necessity?" Secondly, should not slaves be admitted as sponsors in baptism for each other's children, since very few white people were willing to stand godparents for their slaves? Thirdly, should not Christian slaves be allowed the privileges of Christianity when they so desired, such as the churching of mothers after childbirth?¹ As Mr. Dickie's letter shows, the economic status of the negro, which interfered with the sanctity of the marriage bond, offered an almost insuperable obstacle to the Church's program of evangelisation.

But the slow, painful efforts of the ministers were gradually breaking the ground. Three years later, the Reverend Charles Bridges, stationed at Williamsburg, sent the Bishop of London a proposal for promoting and encouraging the instruction of the negroes in the Christian faith. On October 20th, 1735, he wrote the Bishop that he was pleased with his Lordship's letter to the masters and owners of negroes; and he in turn advocated a proposal for teaching them Christian duties. This he felt would prove as great a charity as the setting up of charity schools for the children of the poor in London. He enclosed his plan, and expressed the hope that it would be recommended to the merchants trading in Virginia, then to the local Commissary in the province, so that he might introduce it to the Governor. When the charity is once started at Williamsburg, he said, it will make progress elsewhere. Since Sunday was generally allowed the slaves as a day of liberty, he suggested that the instruction of the negroes might be encouraged by:

- (1) A sermon every first Sunday, and catechising every second Sunday afternoon;
- (2) Subscribing what everyone pleases to contribute quarterly towards the expense of such sermon and catechising;
- (3) Meeting every third Sunday, or once a month, to consult about the plan and to keep account of the money received;

¹Fulham MSS., Va., Box III., #39 (L. C.).

- (4) Using proper means and arguments to encourage ministers to preach and catechise, "in such a plain affecting way as may move their hearers to be Concern'd for the Instruction of these poor Souls";
- (5) Engaging a teacher, if subscriptions are sufficient, whose whole business would be to encourage and instruct the negroes in Christianity;
- (6) Obliging the teacher to be always upon the spot at reasonable hours, to look after those who would attend at such times as they could be spared, "& to make it his whole business to teach the Negroes & no others."¹

Probably all the Virginia clergymen baptised negroes; and the masters grew more concerned over the souls of their dependents as the years went by. Certainly there was little or no interference with the christianising of the negro, even though co-operation may have been lacking. The Reverend Anthony Gavin wrote the Bishop of London from St. James's parish, Goochland county, August 5th, 1738, that on a trip to the frontier and the mountainous district he had baptised 209 white people and 172 blacks. He deplored the fact that the greatest part of his brother ministers had taken up farming and buying slaves, which he considered "unlawful for any Christian and particularly for clergymen."² The public conscience was more and more aroused. In 1748, an act was passed to prevent masters from hindering their slaves' attendance upon church on Sundays.³

In the meantime, the Reverend William Dawson, who had succeeded Doctor Blair as Commissary of the Bishop of London, was seriously pondering the needs of the negro. In 1743, he wrote the Secretary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, asking for tracts on "charity schools, work-houses and hospitals which will be useful in the establishment of Negro schools in our metropolis."⁴ Later he informed the

¹Fulham MSS., Va., Box II., #40 (L. C.).

²Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families*, I., pp. 456-457.

³Jernegan, "Slavery and Conversion in the Colonies" (*American Historical Review*, XXI., p. 509).

⁴Goodwin, "Christianizing and Educating the Negro in Colonial Virginia" (*Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, I., p. 147).

Secretary of the S.P.G. that his Lenten lectures in the College of William and Mary were attended by "near forty white servants, Indians and Negroes, and as many of them as can conveniently be present, daily resort into the House of God."¹ It was his plan to recommend to the members of the General Assembly the instruction of negroes in the Christian faith, and to put in the hands of the members the Bishop of London's letter on that subject. In 1750, he wrote to a friend concerning negro schools: "Many tell me that such schools are wanted here. I cannot deny it, and therefore am now endeavouring to get such erected in all our parishes. There are three such schools in my parish, these I sometimes visit."²

The Associates of Doctor Bray held a meeting on the 17th of January, 1760, which Benjamin Franklin, who was then in London, attended. Doctor Franklin was already a trustee of the school maintained by the Associates in Philadelphia, and was interested in the uplift of the negro. He recommended New York, Williamsburg, and Newport as the most proper places for such schools, and suggested fit persons to serve as trustees. The Associates agreed that one school for thirty children be opened at each place named, with all convenient speed; and Doctor Franklin was requested to write to the gentlemen named and enlist their help in the establishment of the institutions.³ Colonel William Hunter, who was deputy postmaster general, wrote Franklin from Williamsburg that he was pleased with the commission to open the school under the Associates' auspices, and that he would do so with the help of Doctor Dawson.⁴

Colonel Hunter and the Reverend William Dawson consulted together, and agreed with Mrs. Annie Wager for the opening of the school at Michaelmas

¹Goodwin, "Christianizing and Educating th Negro in Colonial Virginia" (*Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, I., p. 147), quoting Dawson papers in the Library of Congress.

²*Ibid.*

³Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., pp. 129-130 (L. C.).

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 142-143.

(September 29th). The school began with twenty-four scholars. Their progress and improvement was encouraging. Dawson died soon afterwards; and Robert Carter Nicholas, Treasurer of the colony, was appointed to serve as joint trustee with Colonel Hunter in Dawson's place.¹ Soon Hunter himself passed away; and the school was continued under the care of Mr. Nicholas and the successive incumbents of Bruton parish, Williamsburg, until it closed with the death of its faithful mistress in 1774. Dawson's successor was the Reverend William Yates, who was described as "a Gentleman of Learning, great Moderation and Piety, and well acquainted with the College affairs."²

The Associates did not confine their work to the principal centres of population. The same year, the Reverend James Marye, Jr., of St. Thomas's parish, Orange county, to whom the Associates had sent a parcel of books for distribution, wrote the donors that his parishioners had promised, on receipt of a second parcel of books, to build a house solely for a library. His parish was sixty miles long, and contained four churches. There were many negroes in his parish, and they brought their children to baptism.³ When the Associates met the 4th of March, 1762, it was agreed that proposals for opening schools for negroes be sent to several towns, including York on the York river and Norfolk.⁴ The proposal of a negro school at Norfolk was refused, as the parish had been divided, and there were not many negroes; the salary allowed by the Associates was small. The design was postponed.⁵ Mr. Marye, of St. Thomas's parish, declined the Associates offer to set on foot a negro school, because of the depressed condition of the inhabitants of his parish and the various employments which they had for the young negroes.⁶

¹Dr. Bary's Associates: Minute Book I., pp. 150-151 (L. C.).

²Letter of Rector Dudley Digges to Bishop of London, July 15, 1767: Fulham MSS., Va., Box II., #23 (L. C.).

³Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., p. 158 (L. C.).

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 188-189.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 200.

The Reverend Jonathan Boucher, who began his Virginia ministry in 1763, gave the Associates his hearty support. He was a remarkable man. Born at Blencogo, Cumberland county, England, March 12th, 1738, he moved to America when sixteen years of age. In 1761, the vestry of Hanover parish, King George county, Virginia, nominated him to the rectorship before he was in orders. He proceeded to England, and was ordained. Returning, he took charge of Hanover parish; but not long afterwards, he removed to St. Mary's parish, near Port Royal, in Caroline county, Virginia. There he established a boarding school in his own house; once he had thirty pupils. Among those sent to him for schooling was young John Parke Custis, the step-son of General George Washington. In 1768, Mr. Boucher was appointed rector of St. Anne's, Annapolis, and afterwards of Queen Anne's parish, Prince George's county, Maryland. A stalwart Tory, he was ejected from the last-named parish at the breaking out of the Revolution, in 1775. The rest of his life was spent in his native country, where he did considerable literary and linguistic work. He died on the 27th of April, 1804. He entertained a profound respect for General Washington; and his book on the consequences of the American Revolution was dedicated to him. He was interested in the slaves; and preached to large numbers of them and baptised more than three hundred negro adults.¹

On the 1st of April, 1762, the Associates received Mr. Boucher's assurance that he would use his best endeavours to instruct the negroes of Hanover parish in religious principles. Thereupon they voted him a parcel of books.² Two years later, he informed the Associates (April 28th, 1764), that, to remedy the want of a school for negroes, he had employed "a very sensible well disposed Negroe belonging to a Gentle-

¹Boucher, *Reminiscences of an American Loyalist*. A good sketch of Boucher may be found in Sprague, *Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit*, pp. 211-214.

²Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., p. 174 (L. C.).

man who lives about a Mile from Him, to endeavour at instructing his poor fellow Slaves in reading and some of the first Principles of Religion"; and that twenty-eight or thirty attended his instruction. Boucher would give this instructor personal lessons two or three times a week; and at least once a month the negro teacher would bring his scholars to Boucher for examination. He expected to introduce a similar plan in St. Mary's parish, where he was planning to go.¹

Boucher continued his work among the negroes in St. Mary's parish—his new field. He distributed the Associates' books among the poor slaves; and, although he found it impractical to establish a school there, he tried to find an old negro or conscientious overseer, who could read and to whom he could assign the duty of instructing the slaves in the neighbourhood.² In August, he wrote the Associates that he felt that no considerable service could be done amidst the slaves anywhere in America; yet it was in the power of the clergy to give them some little instruction, and it was in their power to receive the same. He had found the negroes in his parish too numerous for his Church to contain all if they constantly attended services. "Their numbers are complained of by the white people, during the hot weather months, when they really are very offensive." Still they were regularly baptised at St. Mary's, and their interest was evident.³

The Reverend James Marye, of Orange county, still attempted to assist the negroes, notwithstanding the general indifference. On the 25th of September, 1764, he wrote the Associates that he had lately visited Fredericksburg, and had enquired how many young negroes might be sent for instruction, should a school be opened there. He could not learn that it would be possible to get over four or five pupils; and those would have to attend only at such spare times as suited the

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., pp. 212-213 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, p. 263.

³*Ibid.*, p. 266.

owners. Mr. Marye said that there were about a thousand adult negroes in his own parish, and about the same number of young negroes. There were generally thirty to forty in attendance upon Sunday services; sometimes there were sixty or more. The negro communicants were not over half a dozen; but all who understood English and were tolerably conveniently situated brought their children to baptism.¹

Colonel Fielding Lewis was prominently connected with a school which the Associates operated at Fredericksburg for about five years. The school was opened in April, 1765; and in a few months, there were sixteen children, all of whom showed improvement. The Reverend James Marye, Sr., who was rector of the parish, had given him all the help that he could and had promised to call frequently to examine the children.² On the 12th of December, 1766, Colonel Lewis wrote the Associates that he was apprehensive that the school would not succeed, since the masters were unwilling to have the children remain long enough to derive the benefit. He said that he would admit none in the future unless the masters would engage to keep the pupil at school at least five years; two or three years would be too short a time. So he recommended that the Associates discontinue the school after the year was over, unless the proprietors agreed for the time proposed. There were then seventeen children in school, ranging in age from five to eight.³

Colonel Lewis did not give up the school. The attendance fell off to nine by October, 1768; and it was feared that even that number would be reduced. Several had left school as soon as they could read tolerably. Still Colonel Lewis hoped that the little time they remained there might be of service, as great care was taken by the mistress of the school to impress the duties of religion on the minds of the pupils.⁴ It was

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I, pp. 222-223 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, p. 235.

³*Ibid.*, p. 258.

⁴Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II, p. 232 (L. C.).

not until the last of the year 1771 that the school was abandoned.¹

All this time, the school at Williamsburg was being conducted with more or less success. The people of the city were very willing to send their young children to the school; but Mr. Nicholas and the Reverend Mr. Yates feared that many of them would not let the children stay long enough for proper instruction. In fact, the planters were urging that it was impolitic to enlarge their slaves' understanding, as it would make them impatient of slavery. There was a likelihood that the good example made on the children's minds would be effaced by the bad example of the older slaves.² By the 27th of December, 1765, there were thirty-seven negro children in the Williamsburg school; the duration of their stay was from six months to two-and-a-half years. Some rules had been drawn up by Mr. Nicholas, and approved by the Associates; but they could not be observed, as the masters and mistresses were averse to everything that looked like compulsion. Mr. Nicholas remarked that "the owners, as soon as the Children are able to do little Offices about the House, either take them away from School entirely, or keep them from it at times so that they attend only when there is no Employment for Them at Home." Few were able to stay the three years which he proposed. The mistress of the school took pains, although she was old.³ Seven years later, the number of pupils was still fluctuating. Some few of the Williamsburg inhabitants began to contribute towards the support of the school; but there was no general disposition to promote its success.⁴

The year 1774 closed the active work of the Associates in Virginia. On the 5th of January, Mr. Nicholas reported that there were between twenty and thirty pupils, and that the mistress was giving proper

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 50-51 (L. C.).

²Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., pp. 186-187 (L. C.).

³*Ibid.*, p. 243.

⁴Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 55 (L. C.).

attention. November 17th, he wrote the Associates that Mrs. Wager, the faithful mistress, had passed away, and that he had discontinued the school.¹ The Associates passed a resolution of thanks at their meeting. Thus ended a noble experiment. The war brought the activities of the Associates to a close in America, except in Philadelphia, where there was a considerable investment.

THE NEGRO WORK IN COLONIAL MARYLAND

It is a strange irony that the Associates of Doctor Bray should have failed to gain a foothold in the very province with which their illustrious founder was identified. The Reverend Thomas Bray went to Maryland as the Commissary of the Lord Bishop of London; and his short stay in America was largely confined to Maryland and its affairs. But the interests of the inhabitants did not lend themselves to the fostering of one of his favourite projects—the instruction of the negro. Still there was a certain amount of activity on the part of the clergy. In fact, the Governor of Maryland, on the 19th of March, 1699, called the attention of the Council of that province to his instructions relating to the conversion of the negroes and Indians. He stated that he had been informed that several persons had hindered and obstructed their negroes from attending Church, though baptised; and he advised that a law be recommended to the Assembly to remedy that evil.² The officials and a number of ministers showed a readiness to promote the uplift of the negro; but the clashing of conflicting factions and the general indifference of the people prevented activities in his behalf on any appreciable scale.

The Reverend William Tibbs, of St. Paul's, Baltimore county, was one of the first Maryland clergymen to mention an effort to convert the negroes. He

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 67, 71-72 (L. C.).

²*Archives of Maryland*, XXV., p. 57.

entered on his field of operations at the beginning of the century; and in 1724, he declared that he had not been absent from his charge one month in twenty-four years. His large parish, forty miles square, included one native Indian and many negroes and mulattoes, all slaves. He had baptised and taught many; but most of them refused instruction.¹

All through the colonial period, various clergymen reported their efforts to convert the blacks. The Reverend Alexander Adams, for sixty-five years rector of Stepney parish, Somerset county, spoke of baptising the negroes after instruction in the Church's catechism. They attended the regular public services.² The Reverend John Fraser, of King George's parish, in Prince George's county, wrote that he had baptised "a great many [negroes], both infants, but particularly of adults. They frequent my Churches ordinarily, & say their Catechism."³

The slave-owners were tardy in their co-operation. The Reverend Christopher Wilkinson complained that the negro slaves had no time allowed them save on Sundays. He was stationed at St. Paul's parish, Queen Anne county.⁴ Yet some of the masters and mistresses took pains to instruct their slaves. The Reverend Samuel Skippon, of St. Ann's, Annapolis, reported in 1714, that many negro slaves, after instruction from their masters and himself, presented themselves for baptism. "Masters are press'd to instruct [slaves] & allow liberty to attend Divine service: & other means of instruction; several have been baptized, & 2 are communicants," wrote the Reverend Jonathan Cay, of Christ Church, Calvert county.⁵ Other letters from the resident clergy bear similar testimony.

An act was passed in 1704, declaring that freedom was not a consequence of baptism, and designed to

¹Perry, *Historical Collections, Maryland*, pp. 180-192.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 211-213.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 205-207.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 215-217.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 195-196.

encourage the slave-owners to bring their slaves to Christianity. Another act similar in language was passed April 26th, 1705.¹ In the preamble, it set forth that "forasmuch as many People have neglected to Baptize their *Negroes*, or suffer them to be Baptized, on a vain Apprehension, that *Negroes*, by receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, are manumitted and set free; Be it hereby further Declared and Enacted, by and with the Authority, Advice and Consent aforesaid, That no *Negroe* or *Negroes*, by receiving the Holy Sacrament of *Baptism*, is hereby manumitted or set free, nor hath any Right or Title to Freedom or Manumission, more than he or they had before any Law, Usage or Custom to the contrary notwithstanding." Doubtless some of the masters were eased in mind by this act, for references to their opposition to the slaves' conversion become rarer. The Reverend Giles Rainsford, of St. Paul's parish, Prince George's county, wrote in 1724 that negro slaves "have free liberty from their masters to attend divine service & other means of instruction, & one of these slaves is a constant communicant. & at least 40 are baptized in a year, Infants & adults."² The Reverend Christopher Wilkinson, who had been appointed Commissary of the Bishop of London for the Eastern Shore, wrote his diocesan, October 18th, 1728, that the masters would hardly allow the slaves to attend instruction on week-days; but he advised sending a deacon to catechise the negro, and he offered to give the said catechist one-third of his revenue for his support.³

Doctor Edmund Gibson was then Bishop of London—a man eager to promote the evangelisation of the negroes. His pamphlets and queries did much to stimulate the clergy to activity in this direction. The answers to his questions revealed the fact that the tenures of the clergy were in many cases precarious,

¹Trott, *The Laws of the British Plantations in America*, p. 171.

²Perry, *Historical Collections, Maryland*, pp. 200-202.

³Fulham MSS., Md., #189 (L. C.).

and that the ministers were helpless in the face of lay opposition and inertia.

The Reverend Jacob Henderson, the Bishop's Commissary for the Western Shore, became Commissary for both the Eastern and the Western Shores in 1730. At his first visitation on the Eastern Shore, June 24th, 1730, he delivered an inspiring address, which he repeated to the assembled clergy on the opposite shore three weeks later. He said that there is one thing in which both pastors and people must confess themselves blameworthy; it was, that greater care was not taken about the instruction of the negroes. "It cannot be denied that they are part of our cure, & that we shall be accountable to God for the discharge of our duty to them." Still it was impossible for the clergymen to become schoolmasters and tutors to them any more than to others; yet the masters and mistresses ought to be urged to teach and instruct them, or procure others to do it for them. The clergy should represent to them that it is their duty, "that their own Salvation depends upon the faithful discharge of it"; and the ministers should appoint fixed times for their public instruction in the church.

I cannot give myself leave to think that any Master or Mistress will be so barbarous as not to engage in this laudable design, especially if they seriously peruse the Lord Bishop of London's letter to them, Exhorting them to encourage and promote the instruction of their Negroes in the Christian faith.¹

At his visitation on the Eastern Shore next year, June 16th, 1731, Commissary Henderson reiterated his appeal, and received accounts from the clergymen under his supervision. He said that "he had last Summer read prayers in the Afternoons Every Sunday, & Catechized Negroes and others that came, and spent near half an hour in explaining; that he confesses such numbers did not attend as he expected, but that did not discourage him: he would persist in sowing the good seed, and doubted not but it would take root

¹Perry, *Historical Collections, Maryland*, p. 292.

in some or other." On that occasion, the Reverend Thomas Fletcher, of All Hallows parish, Somerset county, reported that "his parishioners were generally so brutish that they would not suffer their Negroes to be instructed, catechized, or baptized." The Reverend Thomas Thompson, of Dorchester parish, Dorchester county, said that he had "taken pains to convince the people of the necessity of having their negroes instructed"; he had baptised several, but they were generally remiss. The Reverend Thomas Airey, of Great Choptank, Dorchester county, stated that his people were "very inclinable to have their Negroes instructed, but they will not be at the pains and trouble of it." Another clergyman, the Reverend Henry Nicholls, of St. Michael's parish, Talbot county, announced that he had urged that his parishioners instruct the negroes; and "the best answer he can get even from the best people is that they are very sorry, and lament that they cannot comply with it." The parishioners of the Reverend James Cox, of St. Paul's parish, Queen Anne's county, "generally excuse themselves as thinking it to be impracticable." The Reverend Alexander Williamson, of St. Paul's, Kent county, said that he had taken pains in instructing the negroes; and had found them to be of three sorts—"the first whereof are so grossly Ignorant, that there is no possibility of Instructing them in the principles of Christianity; the 2^d are capable of instruction, and learn the answers to the questions of the church Catechism, but are so egregiously wicked as to render Baptism ineffectual. The 3rd are duly qualified, and of Exemplary Lives, some of whom are baptised, & others are soon to be Baptized, so that he has good hopes to succeed with the latter sort, Especially their Masters and Mistresses being Assistant." The Reverend George Ross, of St. Mary Ann's parish, Cecil county, reported that his people were poor and owned few negroes; hence the masters were not yet thoroughly instructed.¹

¹Perry, *Historical Collections, Maryland*, pp. 304-305.

When Commissary Henderson visited the Western Shore, the same year, he received reports from the clergy of that section. The Reverend Hugh Jones, of William and Mary parish, Charles county, said that he had constantly examined the negroes and expounded the catechism on Sundays after the second lesson. He had several classes of them, "that can give as good an account of their Faith as the white youth whom he Catechizes all holidays." He had baptised negro adults after instruction, and had taken negroes as sponsors. He published the banns in Church and married those who applied to him for that purpose, with the consent of the masters and owners. The Reverend John Fraser, of St. John's parish, Prince George's county, said that he catechised on Sundays; and that he baptised negroes, both adults and infants, their masters and mistresses being sureties. He visited them in sickness, and married them when asked to do so. The Reverend John Eversfield, of St. Paul's parish, Prince George's county, baptised the negroes; but found that the parishioners refused to bring them to Church for catechising. The Reverend George Murdock said that he had frequently exhorted his parishioners to instruct the negroes, but they were very remiss. All his slaves had been baptised, and were learning to read. He was the incumbent of Prince George's parish, Prince George's county. The Reverend Peter Fustian, of St. James parish, Ann Arundel county, announced that he continued to baptise; and that he distributed among the masters and mistresses catechisms and primers. The Reverend Stephen Wilkinson, of St. George's, Baltimore county, was able to report having recently baptised four adult negroes, "who could read and answer pertinently." The Reverend James Magill declared that he had taken all opportunities to help the negro, and catechised after the second lesson every Sunday, in his parish [Queen Caroline, Ann Arundel county]. The Reverend William Cawthen, of St. John's, Baltimore

county, had prevailed with some masters to instruct their children.¹

The Reverend Thomas Bacon, who became rector of St. Peter's parish, Talbot county, was a clergyman of unusual parts. A native of the Isle of Man, he arrived in Maryland in 1745, and became active in a variety of charitable enterprises. He was zealous in inculcating in the slave-owners a sense of responsibility for the spiritual welfare of their slaves. A versatile man, he published a small volume, containing two sermons to the black slaves, and two sermons for the benefit of a charity working school in his parish, for the maintenance and education of orphans, poor children, and negroes. He was justly admired; and his compilation of the Maryland Laws was a notable achievement.

In his sermon preached at St. Peter's Parish Church, October 14th, 1750, in behalf of the charity working school, he spoke of the duty of providing education for the children of the poor, some of whom were as ignorant as the children of the benighted negroes. "Yet even negroes ought not to be neglected. They have souls to be saved as well as others, for the neglect of which let the consciences of their owners answer, as they are accountable for it." He proposed that a master duly qualified be procured from England, approved and recommended by one of the religious societies, who would teach as many poor children as should be determined by the trustees and instruct a certain number of negroes, if required. The number would be rated according to the benefactions received; each subscriber of five pounds per annum would have the nomination of a child. The poor children would be taught to read, write, and account; they would be instructed in the knowledge and practice of the Christian religion, as practised and taught in the Church of England; the negro children would be maintained at the expense of their owners.² Bacon's school

¹Perry, *Historical Collections, Maryland*, pp. 306-307.

²Bacon, *A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of St. Peter's in Talbot County, Md. . . . for the Benefit of a Charity Working School.*

was erected in the parish of St. Peter's, Talbot county, in 1755. It does not appear that the negroes attended; and the school did not long survive Mr. Bacon's death, which occurred March 24th, 1768. A few years later, the building was turned over to the county for a poor house.

On the 5th of February, 1761, the Associates of Doctor Bray decided to open two schools under Mr. Bacon's direction, each to hold thirty negroes. One was to be started at New Town on the Chester River; the other at Annapolis—unless Mr. Bacon should judge some other place more desirable.¹ By this time, Mr. Bacon was hard at work on his codification of the Maryland laws; and the project seems to have failed.

An insight into the relations of owners and slaves in Maryland may be gained from a statement of the Reverend Jonathan Boucher, one of the most prominent of the American clergy, the friend of Washington, and a man who had served the Church in both Virginia and Maryland. In his "Reminiscences of an American Loyalist," he said:

No compliment was ever paid me which went so near my heart as when a gentleman was one day coming to my house, and having overtaken a slave, asked him, as is common, to whom he belonged. The negro replied, "To Parson Boucher, thank God!" And few things affected me more than their condition on my leaving them. Much might be said on this subject. Nothing is easier than to excite compassion by declamations against slavery. Yet I have seldom heard or read things of this sort which carried much conviction to my mind. The condition of the lower classes of mankind everywhere, when compared with that of those above them, may seem hard: yet on a fair investigation, it will probably be found that people in general in a low sphere are not less happy than those in a higher sphere. I am equally well persuaded in my own mind that the negroes in general in Virginia and Maryland in my time were not upon the whole worse off nor less happy than the labouring poor in Great Britain. Many things respecting them no doubt were wrong; but this is saying no more than might be said of the poor of these kingdoms. I used to think it remarkable, but when well considered, it is not

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 147 (L. C.).

perhaps at all so, that the most clamorous advocates for liberty were uniformly the harshest and worst masters of slaves.¹

THE WORK OF THE ASSOCIATES IN PENNSYLVANIA

Early in the eighteenth century, missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts were reporting the baptism of slaves in Pennsylvania. There seems to have been less prejudice against the christianising of the negro in that colony than in the other colonies; and about 1712, we find the Reverend George Ross of Chester (later of New Castle, Delaware) commending a slave-owner for his "endeavours to train up his negroes in the knowledge of religion."² Fifteen years later, the same clergyman reported that little care was taken to instruct the negro slaves. The Quakers left their negroes "to their common principles, the natural light"; the dissenters were "so taken with the doctrine of absolute decrees," that they laid no stress on baptism. "Those few that are baptised belong to Churchmen. The truth is, there is a general indifference in Churchmen, as well as in those of other Sentiments, to make proselytes of their Slaves; the true cause whereof is the want of zeal in Masters, and the untoward haughty behaviour of those Negroes who have been admitted into the Fellowship of Christ's Religion."³ The Reverend Robert Weyman, in 1728, made a similar complaint; he declared that he had often impressed upon the masters the necessity and duty of instructing their slaves, and had offered his services to prepare them for baptism; but could only prevail with one family at Oxford and another at Radnor to bring them to Church.⁴

In November, 1739, the Reverend George White-

¹Boucher, *Reminiscences of an American Loyalist*, pp. 96-97.

²Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. C.*, p. 38.

³Perry, *Papers relating to the Church in Delaware*, p. 48.

⁴Perry, *Historical Collections, Pennsylvania*, pp. 162-165.

field arrived in Pennsylvania, with his friend William Seward. Whitefield was an Anglican clergyman—the most eloquent spokesman of the evangelical movement in the English Church; he had been sent to Georgia as missionary at Savannah. While there he had become engaged in the founding of an orphan's home, known as Bethesda; and he was on a money-raising expedition for that philanthropic enterprise when he visited Philadelphia. His remarkable gifts won him a considerable following, although he succeeded in antagonizing his fellow-clergymen by his criticisms of prominent ecclesiastics and his rather adverse attitude towards his Church. At this first visit, he began to build up a loyal group; and when he returned the next April, he announced his design of taking up land for the erection of a negro school in the province of Pennsylvania. He felt that Pennsylvania would be the best province for such an undertaking. "The negroes meet there with the best usage and I believe many of my acquaintance will either give me or let me purchase their young slaves at a very easy rate. I intend taking up a tract of Land far back in the country and to return to England about the latter end of this year or the beginning of the next in order to raise subscriptions and to bring over assistants for that work." He suggested that the S.P.G. might assist in the enterprise.¹ On the 22nd of April, 1740, he made an agreement for the site, which was to be at the Forks of the Delaware. The site of the school was to be named "Nazareth." Six days later, Seward left for England, intending to solicit funds for Whitefield's charities. While abroad, he was hit on the head, and died October 22nd, 1740. The failure of Whitefield's project was largely due to Seward's death.²

On the 26th of January, 1744, the Reverend Robert Jenney, rector of Christ Church, Philadelphia, wrote

¹Perry, *Historical Collections, Pennsylvania*, p. 213.

²Keith, *Chronicles of Pennsylvania*, I., pp. 359, 363; Gillies, *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield*, 1798 ed., p. 45.

the Secretary of the S.P.G. that the results of the work among the negroes were unsatisfactory, because of the lack of a catechist who could look after them.¹ The Venerable Society responded, April 8th, 1746, by offering a salary of thirty pounds for "settling a catechetical lecturer in the Church in Philadelphia, for the instruction of negroes and others." As a result of this offer, Mr. William Sturgeon, a young man who had been educated at Yale, was sent to England for ordination, so that he might return as catechist to the negroes of Philadelphia and assistant at Christ Church. Mr. Sturgeon was duly ordained and appointed; the vestry agreed to add thirty pounds a year to his stipend and to grant him, as catechist to the negroes, a comfortable maintenance.² He arrived in Philadelphia the last of the year; and proceeded to render excellent service.

Mr. Sturgeon advised the Society, April 29th, 1749, that he catechised about fifty negroes and had baptised some of them after proper instruction. He would read a plain lecture to them on what he had taught them; every Friday after prayers he would catechise the white children, and every Sunday night he would teach the catechism to the negroes of all ages. The vestry showed their approval by collecting a purse of sixty pounds for him; and the Reverend Doctor Jenney commended him for his industry "both in y^e parochial & Catechetical Business," though he felt that the encouragement which he received was not equal to his merit. Therefore, he expressed the desire that the Society would enlarge Mr. Sturgeon's salary.³

In the meantime, the Associates of Doctor Bray had been in correspondence with the Reverend Philip Reading, who had entered on his work at Apoquinick the middle of 1746. They sent that clergyman some books to use for benefitting the negro slaves;

¹Perry, *Historical Collections, Pennsylvania*, pp. 235-236.

²S. P. G. Series B, XVII., #145 (L. C.).

³S. P. G. Series B, XVII., #147 (L. C.).

and he had given about a third to Philadelphia, about a third to the missionary at Perquihoma, and the rest he had reserved for the places under his care. He wrote the Associates, November 24th, 1746, that the masters and mistresses with whom he had talked had promised to encourage the work.¹ More books were forwarded to him—prayer books and copies of a history of the Old and New Testament. October 10th, 1748, Reading reported that he had found difficulty in the conversion of the negroes, because of the prejudices of their masters and the slow apprehension and prejudices of the slaves. "All, without exception, where pinched in Food & Raiment, employ their Sundays in raising Potatoes, Pease, Melons &c., for their own Use."²

Exactly four years later (October 10th, 1752), Reading informed the S.P.G. that the branch of his duty which relates to the conversion of the unhappy slaves afforded the least comfortable prospect.

I have often both publickly and privately recommended it to the masters and mistresses as a duty of the gravest importance to forward as much as in them lies, the instruction of their slaves; all in serious, well-governed families this has had so good effect as to bring some negro adults and many of their children to Christian Baptism; but these Converts bear no proportion to the numbers of those who live as without God in the world. Some even of our own Church who are otherwise well inclined Christians are strongly prejudiced against their slaves being instructed; and I sincerely wish that the slaves themselves by their rebellious behaviour after baptism, had not given too much cause for such prejudice: and for the looser part of mankind it can hardly be expected that those should promote the spiritual welfare of this meanest branch of their families, who think but little (if at all) of their own eternal state.³

It was some time before the Associates took steps to educate the negroes of Pennsylvania in a systematic way. Literature was distributed, as we have seen; but the actual instruction was for the time in the hands

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., Nov. 24, 1746 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, Oct. 10, 1748.

³Perry, *Historical Collections, Pennsylvania*, p. 184.

of Christ Church, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and individual clergymen. On the 6th of April, 1750, Mr. Sturgeon informed the Society that the number of negroes in his care had considerably increased. He continued catechising the white children and the servants every Friday after prayers. Doctor Jenney and the vestry, he remarked, "continue their usual Kindness to me."¹

In 1758, the Associates, who had already been at work in New England and in the South, turned to Philadelphia as a field of operations. Benjamin Franklin was in London that year; and at a meeting of the Associates, April 5th, it was reported that he had recommended the expediency of a school for the instruction of young negroes at Philadelphia; further, he had mentioned the Reverend Mr. Sturgeon as a proper person for the task. It was resolved that the school be opened.² In November, the Associates' school was opened, with Mr. Sturgeon in charge. Mr. Sturgeon agreed with a woman, accustomed many years to teach school, to undertake the charge of the blacks; she was to teach thirty negro children—the boys to read, and the girls to sew, knit, read, and work; and she was to attend church with them every Wednesday and Friday. "All her endeavours are to be directed towards making them Christians." Her salary would be twenty pounds.³

By June 12th, 1759, there were thirty-six pupils; Mr. Sturgeon catechised them every Wednesday. The wife of Benjamin Franklin wrote her husband, August 9th, that she had gone to hear the negro children catechised at church. "There were 17 that answered prettily indeed & 5 or 6 that were too little, but all behaved very decently. M^r Sturgeon exhorted them before & after Catechising. It gave me a great deal of pleasure & I shall send Othello there."⁴

¹S. P. G. Series B, XVIII., #152 (L. C.).

²Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., p. 114 (L. C.).

³*Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 124, 127.

Mr. Sturgeon was able to report by November 25th, 1759, that there were eleven boys and twenty-four girls in the school. Fifteen of the girls were learning to sew and to work with their needle. They were improving in their reading and in the knowledge of religion. It was suggested that the church-wardens be joined in the care and government of the school.¹

It was well that the responsibility should be shared. Doctor Jenney was seized with the palsy, and much of his work fell upon Mr. Sturgeon's shoulders. On the 5th of January, 1762, he died, at the edge of seventy-five. After his death, Mr. Sturgeon and the Reverend Jacob Duché were chosen as assistants of the united parishes of Christ Church and St. Peters. November 1st, 1762, Franklin returned from England, after an absence of five years; he proved of great assistance in the project of the Associates.

During the period when Mr. Sturgeon's duties increased, the school was probably somewhat neglected. The Society suspected as much; and called upon the vestry of Christ Church to examine the matter. The committee, which consisted of the rector (the Reverend Richard Peters) and four vestrymen, reported on the 27th of April, 1763, that Mr. Sturgeon "hath not neglected the exercise of his duty, as catechist to the society for propagating the gospel in foreign parts"; but had "constantly once a week, and sometimes oftener . . . duly catechised and instructed sundry negro children in the principles of the said church."² Still the Society felt justified in the accusation; and Mr. Sturgeon was dismissed. In a letter written November 20th, 1763, he protested against this action. He declared that the duty of the whole parish had rested on him for five years, ever since Doctor Jenney had his stroke; and he had served during that time as one of the ministers of the united churches.

All this time I preached twice every Sunday and read

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., p. 137 (L. C.).

²Dorr, *History of Christ Church, Philadelphia*, pp. 137-138.

prayers and did all other duties of the parish, and on Wednesdays catechised the white children, and on every Friday the negroes, and instructed both in the sense and purport of each part; and for more than 17 years preached every Tuesday at the City Alms House, and once in three weeks during the Summer Season went to a church in the country that has no Minister, and read prayers and preached and did baptize many.¹

Mr. Sturgeon was allowed to continue his services. He wrote the Associates, August 16th, 1763, that on account of bad health he had been unable to attend his school as much as formerly; but Doctor Franklin was doing everything to promote the school.² Two years later, July 31st, 1766, Mr. Sturgeon resigned his duties as assistant minister of the united congregations. He died in 1772.³

On his retirement, Mr. Francis Hopkinson and Mr. Edward Duffield, both of Philadelphia, undertook to superintend the affairs of the negro school. The Associates realised the importance of resting their enterprise on a stable foundation; and at their meeting, May 7th, 1767, they appointed as their attorneys for any lands which they might purchase for their use in Pennsylvania the following gentlemen, all of Philadelphia: Benjamin Franklin, LL.D., the Reverend Jacob Duché, the rector of Christ Church, Francis Hopkinson, David Hall, and Edward Duffield.⁴

On May 5th, 1768, the report of Messrs. Hopkinson and Duffield was read at the meeting of the Associates. The mistress of the school, Mrs. Ayers, gave an account of her work: from her appointment, November 20th, 1764, to March 24th, 1768, 59 negro children had been admitted. At the time of writing, twenty-seven attended; of this number, three were in the Bible, one in the Testament, two were studying the tables, nineteen were learning to spell, and two were mastering

¹Perry, *Historical Collections, Pennsylvania*, pp. 355-356.

²Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., pp. 216-217 (L. C.).

³Dorr, *History of Christ Church, Philadelphia*, p. 157.

⁴Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 12 (L. C.).

the alphabet. Nineteen of the twenty-seven were slave children; eight were free. Ten were able to say their catechism pretty well.¹

Shortly afterwards, Mrs. Ayers resigned the school; and Mrs. Sarah Wilson was appointed in her place. On the 26th of November, Messrs. Hopkinson and Duffield informed the Associates that the new mistress was doing her duty to their satisfaction. Meanwhile, they were making enquiries regarding the purchase of property.²

The next two years, the school was reported full. Twice a week, the children, whose masters or mistresses were of the Church of England, were taken to the Church and catechised. There were applications for vacancies.³

On the 3rd of July, 1773, the two faithful trustees wrote the Associates that they had found a lot on one of the principal streets of Philadelphia—"very near the Buildings & Improvements in that Street, & which in all probability will soon become very valuable. It stands in the Corner of a Square, & of course has two Fronts, which is a material Circumstance." The lot ran 136 feet on Market, and 360 feet on Ninth street. The Associates agreed, September 2nd, to request Messrs. Hopkinson and Duffield to purchase the same on as advantageous terms as possible, but not to pay more than £600.⁴ The two agents wrote the Associates, May 3rd, 1774, that they had made the purchase, and were ready for instructions as to the disposition of the land. Mr. Hopkinson, who had already requested the appointment of someone in his place, had left Philadelphia; and Mr. Duffield intended leaving the country.⁵

The Associates called on the Reverend Thomas Coombe to superintend their negro school, sometime after Mr. Sturgeon's death. Mr. Coombe was grad-

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 9 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, pp. 14, 21.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 34, 40.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 65ff.

uated in 1766 from the College of Philadelphia. A native son, he was born the 23rd of October, 1747; and had been recommended for ordination by the Reverend Doctor William Smith, the provost of the college. In 1768, he had gone to England to study, till he arrived at the age for taking holy orders. On the 17th of October, 1771, he was given the royal bounty for his voyage to America.¹ Later, he and the Reverend William White, the future Bishop of Pennsylvania, were called as assistants to the united churches of Christ Church and St. Peter's.

On the 21st of September, 1774, Mr. Coombe wrote the Associates, accepting their invitation, and saying that he was sincerely disposed to bear his part in any undertaking that had the happiness of the meanest individual for its object. It would give him pleasure to be made useful to the benevolent designs of the Associates. He would visit the school; but he desired to have a coadjutor joined with him. The deed to the property had been delivered to him, and he would immediately have it recorded.²

He stated in his letter to the Associates, February 10th, 1775, that he had not been wanting in his attention to the school; the same continued full, and it was faithfully cared for by the mistress.³ Another letter, July 18th, confirmed his former report about the diligence of the school-mistress. There were nine negroes in the alphabet, seven in spelling, four in reading, five in reading and sewing, two at the needle and knitting; one was busy with a sampler.⁴

By this time the countries were involved in war; and there was no further communication. But it is to the credit of the little philanthropic body, that after hostilities ceased, the work among the Philadelphia negroes was resumed. For some time, there was corre-

¹Fulham MSS., Missionary Bonds.

²Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 71 (L. C.).

³*Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 77.

spondence about the tract of land which the Associates had purchased; and much of it is of considerable interest.¹

Mr. Hopkinson notified the Associates, October 24th, 1786, that he had agreed with a woman "every way proper for the purpose," at £30 a year, to open the school and attend thirty pupils, each one paying some small sum for winter-firing.² The school was reopened; and in a year's time it was full. There were "many applying for admission. It is conducted to general satisfaction."³ On a visit, about May, 1788, Hopkinson found eleven boys and twenty-one girls. There were fourteen in reading, fifteen in spelling, three in the alphabet; the girls were sewing. There were catechism and prayers every Thursday. "Your Estate is exempted from Taxation which is a very considerable saving."⁴

Doctor William White had been consecrated first Bishop of Pennsylvania, on the 4th of February, 1787; and during his long stay in England, he had familiarized himself with the various agencies of the mother Church. Among other things, he had called on the Associates in London, and had promised to keep them informed of the state of their Philadelphia school. On his return to the states, he notified the Associates, December 1st, 1788, that "those of the Children who have made sufficient Progress in Learning duly & decently attend catechetical Instruction, once in every Month at one of the Churches"; likewise, "they discover not only a sufficient readiness, but also that their Mistress has attended in School to this Branch of their Education." Furthermore, "the general Conduct of the School gives Satisfaction so far as I have been able to learn; & I may say, to observe; for I have sometimes called at it with M^r Hopkinson the Agent of the Society;

¹The several steps in the real estate transactions involving the Associates' property in Philadelphia are described in Pennington, "The Work of the Bray Associates in Pennsylvania" (*Pennsylvania Magazine*, LVIII., pp. 1-25).

²Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 139-140 (L. C.).

³*Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 152-153.

& was pleased with the diligence & order apparent in it.¹

The death of Benjamin Franklin deprived the Associates of a man whose judgment was considered sane and dependable. In a letter written August 30th, 1790, Mr. Hopkinson said that as it was necessary that someone be joined with him "in the management of the Negroe School & charge of the Societies Lot of Ground in the City," in Doctor Franklin's place, he had proposed the matter to Bishop White, who made no objection. "The removal of Congress to the City," he said, "will undoubtedly increase the Value of your Estate." The school, he added, was well attended; more applied than could be admitted. Thereupon the Associates agreed that Bishop White be requested to accept the trust in room of the later Doctor Franklin.²

Bishop White was active in his new responsibility. On the 23rd of May, 1791, he replied to the Associates, accepting the trust. The same letter conveyed the sad news of Mr. Hopkinson's death (May 9th). Three days before he died, Mr. Hopkinson had consulted with him regarding a business proposition connected with the land belonging to the Associates. The Bishop suggested as a joint trustee the Honourable Samuel Powell, at that time a member of the upper branch of the State Legislature, whom he described as "a Gentleman eminent among us for his Integrity his Talents & his Fortune & who besides his other Qualifications for the Trust, has this in a very singular Degree—that he is minutely attentive to whatever Business he undertakes." The Associates agreed, October 6th, that Mr. Powell be requested to accept the trust in the place of their "late very worthy Agent."³

Mr. Powell died in 1795; and Bishop White recommended that the Associates appoint the Reverend Robert Blackwell, D.D., Mr. John Wilcocks, and Mr. Thomas Compton as joint trustees. Property values

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 160-161 (L. C.)

²*Ibid.*, p. 176.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 202-204.

were rising; and it was believed that the rents of the land owned by the Associates would afford a handsome annual income, and admit of a school on a more enlarged plan. The Bishop informed the Associates that the negroes had erected a church of their own, which they called the African Church of St. Thomas; and desired the ordination of one of their own race. The progress which they were making was regarded by the white people with much favour; and the local white clergymen had given their services to the coloured congregation. It was the Bishop's suggestion that the Associates, when the rents of their lots allowed, would contribute to the erection of a schoolhouse and support a school of more ambitious design. In such case, proper persons might be selected, who would inspect the education more minutely than could be done by the trustees themselves. In response, the Associates (January 7th, 1796) agreed that Bishop White be informed, that they would "with pleasure give all reasonable Encouragement to the Building a School House out of the future Profits of their Rent of their Lots in Philadelphia."¹

The rentals justifying expansion, on Bishop White's recommendation, the Associates authorized the establishment of another school in 1797.² Negotiations went ahead in regard to the property. There were some obstacles, however; and transactions were delayed. The proper location was a problem. At length, on the 5th of March, 1804, the Associates decided that another school be established in Philadelphia, "in such a Part of it, and on such a Plan, as the Bishop shall judge proper; but not exceeding in Expence Either of the others of the Society's two Schools now established in that City."³ The second school referred to was doubtless the school established in connection with the negro church of St. Thomas. The arrangements

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 235-237 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, pp. 248-249.

³*Ibid.*, p. 351.

were evidently entrusted to Bishop White, who seems to have acted without consulting the Associates' financial agents. The last reference to the school in the Associates' second Minute Book is dated 1806.

THE CHURCH AND THE NEGRO IN COLONIAL NEW YORK

A good deal was done by the Church of England among the New York negroes before the Associates of Doctor Bray made any efforts to start a school in that province. The advantages of New York harbour were such that the city forged ahead rapidly; and the philanthropists and altruistic enterprises appeared in due course of time.

The instruction of the negro and Indian slaves, preparatory to baptism and communion, was a primary charge (oft repeated) to every missionary and school-master sent to the American colonies by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; and in addition to the efforts of the missionaries in general, a special provision was made in the province of New York by the employment of sixteen clergymen and thirteen lay-teachers mainly for the evangelisation of the slaves and free Indians, by the S.P.G. during the colonial period. That Society opened a catechising school in the city as early as 1704, under Mr. Elias Neau.¹

Neau was a native of France, whose confession of the Protestant faith had there brought him several years' confinement in prison, followed by seven years in "the galleys." When released, he settled in New York as a trader. He showed much sympathy for the slaves; and he called the attention of the S.P.G. to their spiritual needs.² On the 10th of July, 1703, he wrote the Society that there was a great number of slaves in New York without God, of whose souls no manner of care was

¹Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G.*, p. 63.

²*Ibid.*

taken; and he proposed the appointment of a catechist. He was finally prevailed upon to accept that position himself; and he obtained a license from the Governor, August 4th, 1704. He resigned his position as an elder in the French Church and conformed to the Church of England.¹ In his letter to the S.P.G., embodying his suggestions, he said:

On Sundays while we are at our Devoteons, the Streets are full of Negroes, who dance & divert themselves, for they are kept after the same Mañer as horses, to get from them all the work one can without any concern for their Salvation.

He felt that the government should compel every master to pay six shillings a year to such as would take care to catechize them.² Neau spoke of the masters' entertaining "a vulgar Prejudice . . . that if the *Negroes* were baptized, they would cease to be Slaves."

The S.P.G. allowed Mr. Neau £50 a year for his services as catechist. At first, he went from house to house, persuading the owners to send their slaves every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 4 p.m., to his house, where he would teach them the Lord's Prayer in English, and gradually lead up to the Creed and Catechism. He was handicapped, as the negroes were not allowed ample time for teaching. They were dull and sleepy when the time came, after their hard day's labour; and they were thinking continually about the need of rising early next morning. The accommodations were small and incommodious, as Mr. Neau had to use the uppermost floor of his house. The negroes themselves were discouraged, because of the small regard shown them so far as their religious life was concerned. Marriages, for instance, were performed by mutual consent only, and without the Church's blessing. Commonly their burials were in the field, presided over by one of their own complexion. No attention was paid to their sickness, so that they could be visited.

¹Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, IV., p. 440.

²S. P. G. Series A, I., #106 (L. C.).

Indeed, many people doubted whether they had souls or not. But Neau persevered with zeal; and as a result of his efforts, "many who could not read, could yet by Memory repeat the History of the Creation of the World, the Flood, the giving of the Law, the Birth, Miracles, and Crucifixion of our Lord, and the chief Articles and Doctrines of Christianity."¹ At the time of Mr. Neau's license, there were some fifteen hundred negro and Indian slaves in the city of New York. Some of the masters were well-disposed towards their Christian instruction; and the Society hoped that the example set by the school would cause schools to be erected and catechists employed on a larger scale, and that the legislatures of the different colonies would by law compel all slaves to attend the same.²

The rector of Trinity Church, the Reverend William Vesey, gave hearty support to Mr. Neau's work; and publicly exhorted the masters and mistresses of slaves to send their dependents to the catechist, so that he might teach them the principles of religion. By October, 1705, there were thirty slaves in the school.³ On the 16th of November, 1706, Mr. Neau reported that his scholars were increasing, so that his room could no longer hold them. Therefore, he and Mr. Vesey had resolved to bring them to the tower of the Church for instruction.⁴

To counteract the prevalent objection that conversion implied emancipation, the New York Assembly passed an act in 1706, declaring that freedom did not ensue to a slave because of his baptism.⁵ In New York, however, as in other colonies where similar laws were enacted, many of the slave-owners refused to be convinced; at any rate, their indifference impeded the Church's efforts. Nevertheless this legislation led to an increase in the number brought for instruction. On

¹Humphreys, *Historical Account* . . . S. P. G., pp. 238-239.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 236-237.

³S. P. G. Series A, II., p. 124 (L. C.)

⁴S. P. G. Series A, II., p. 125 (L. C.)

⁵*Colonial Laws of New York*, I., pp. 597-598.

July 24th, 1707, Mr. Neau was able to report over a hundred pupils.¹ A year later, the catechumens were more than two hundred; and Mr. Neau's diligence was commended by Governor Robert Hunter, the Council, the Mayor and the Recorder of the City of New York, and the two chief justices. The scholars were carried to Mr. Vesey for baptism.²

On the 7th of April, 1712, there was an insurrection of the negroes in the city. Although it was soon put down, it created a strong prejudice against Mr. Neau's school, which was said to have been the main cause of the trouble. For some days the worthy catechist scarcely ventured to show himself, so bitter was the feeling of the slave-owners. But on the trial of the conspirators, it appeared that only one of Mr. Neau's scholars—that one an unbaptised negro—was concerned in the plot; also, it was shown that the negroes most guilty belonged to masters strongly opposed to Christian education. Governor Hunter publicly declared his approbation of the school; and in a proclamation recommended that the clergy urge upon the congregations the duty of promoting the negroes' instruction.³

The Reverend John Sharpe, Chaplain to Her Majesty's Forts and Forces in the province of New York, paid a beautiful tribute to Mr. Neau's integrity and industry. In a petition addressed to the archbishops and bishops, July 11th, 1713, he said that Neau is "a Person of great Humility which is the foundation of all Virtue. He can condescend familiarly to discourse with those poor Slaves who are put to the vilest drudgeries and consequently esteem'd the Scumm and offscourings of Men. He can take pains to accomodate his Discourse to their Capacities, whilst he inculcates the great Truths of the Gospel, and the

¹S. P. G. Series A, III., p. 128 (L. C.); Kemp, *Support of Schools in Colonial New York*, pp. 239-240.

²Humphreys, *Historical Account* . . . S. P. G., p. 243.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 241-243.

Dutys required of them." He had won the confidence of the slaves by his complete sacrifice of self and by his sincerity. The slaves "see him hated ridiculed and spitefully used by his Christian Bretheren for this Works sake. They hear their Masters and others confidently upbraid them that they have not Immortal Souls, and observe his Care and Concern for their Salvation. They find him constantly attend his Stated hours of Instruction, be there many or few that come to hear him, and that he stands a Champion for the Christian Religion against all the Insults and Blasphemous Reflections that are made by those who yet pretend to expect Salvation by it. They see him Creeping into Garrets and Cellars and other Nauseous places to Exhort and pray by the poor Slaves when they are Sick."¹

In March, 1718, Mr. Neau was dismissed by the Society, on the ground that he was engaged in trade.² This action was probably induced by some old enemies. Prompt testimonials in his behalf from the Governor, from missionaries and others, caused a reversal of the order; and he was duly reinstated.³ But his work came to an end in the latter part of 1722, when he died; and the Reverend Mr. Vesey applied to the Society for the appointment of a successor who might both catechise and assist in the services at Trinity Church.⁴

The Reverend James Wetmore was appointed by the S.P.G. in his place, at a stipend of £50 from the Society. Mr. Wetmore was one of the Yale men who had joined the Church of England in 1722, along with Timothy Cutler, to the great consternation of the conservative element of New Haven. He was a native of Middletown, Connecticut. He arrived in New York, September 24th, 1723; and proceeded to discharge his duties. He catechised the negroes every

¹MS. Clarendon, 102, fol. 217 (L. C.).

²S. P. G. Journal III., p. 348; Kemp, *Support of Schools in Colonial New York*, p. 244.

³S. P. G. Series A, XIII., p. 49 (L. C.).

⁴MS. Rawlinson, B., 376, fol. 298 (L. C.).

Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday evening in his house, besides the instructions he gave them before the Sunday evening service in the Church. Sometimes he had nearly two hundred children and servants present.¹ He has left an interesting account of his methods, in a letter to the Society, written December 3rd, 1726, after his removal to Westchester:

When I first came to New York I consulted M^r Veasy concerning the proper methods of performing my Catechetical office, & followed his Directions, excepting that I catechized on Sunday Evenings, which he thought was more than any body could expect from me, and would be too great a burthen, after reading prayers in the morning, Catechizing at Noon & preaching in the afternoon. But thus I proceeded, I catechized at my own house Wednesdays about half an hour before Sunsett I began, & Frydays at Eight o'the Clock at Night, Sundays before Evening Service in the Church, and also at my own house after Church. I had many small children for whose sake I attended Wednesdays before it was dark and for the benefit of Negro Servants on Frydays at Eight o'th' clock. My Method of Instruction was to ask the Church Catechism over & over and also some part of M^r Lewis's Exposition to as many as I could get to learn it, and I have had some that made good proficiency in it one that learned it through; sometimes I asked short questions to be answered from the Catechism and spent some time in trying their readiness and to lead them to understand as well as learn the Catechism; sometimes I gave them Expositions, and such discourses as I thought proper for their state & Capacities, when I had Unbaptized Negroes I used to discourse concerning the Evidence & Excellence of the Christian Religion, the Nature of Baptism and the Qualifications for it and the obligations lying upon Christians to Universal holiness; I commonly read the Psalms of the day, and sang part of a Psalm & concluded with prayers.

It was evident that the white people were afraid of any assembling of the negroes. Mr. Wetmore admitted that "most of them are so Vitious, that people dont care to trust them in Companies together, and some have under pretence of going to Catechizing, taken opportunity to absent from their Masters service many days." Hence some of the masters declared that they chose to instruct their servants at home,

¹*The Wetmore Family in America*, pp. 170-172.

rather than venture them abroad. They even said that the negroes learned more mischief than good.¹

Mr. William Huddleston, who was in charge of the Society's school in the city of New York, died in August, 1724. While not appointed specifically for the negro work, he had carried out some of Mr. Neau's efforts since his death; and he had catechised Indian and negro children thrice a week without pay. Huddleston taught continually in New York for thirty-five years; for fifteen years, he had received a stipend from the S.P.G. He was doubtless a prominent figure in the city, and a considerable influence notwithstanding his poverty.²

Before Mr. Wetmore's removal, the number of his negro catechumens considerably dwindled. On the 14th of May, 1725, he informed the Society that his catechumens were chiefly white children; and he had but few slaves who attended regularly.³ After he left New York, the rector and vestry of Trinity Church importuned the Society (July 5th, 1726) for another catechist. They represented that there were about fourteen hundred Indian and negro slaves; "and the Number dayly increasing by Births and Importations from Guiney and other parts." A considerable number had already received instruction and baptism; and since Mr. Wetmore's appointment, they had observed on Sundays upwards of a hundred English and negro servants attending him in the Church, and singing Psalms at the close of the catechetical instruction.⁴ The Reverend Thomas Colgan was appointed in 1726, to succeed Mr. Wetmore. During the remainder of the Society's connection with the colony, the school-master's post was continued under an ordained missionary. In 1732, Mr. Colgan took charge of the vacant parish of Jamaica.⁵

¹S. P. G. Series B, I., #72 (L. C.).

²S. P. G. Series A, XVI., p. 212 (L. C.); S. P. G. Series B, I., #86 (L. C.).

³S. P. G. Series B, I., #98 (L. C.).

⁴S. P. G. Series B, I., #73 (L. C.).

⁵Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G.*, p. 65.

In the meantime, a school for negroes was started at Albany. The Reverend John Miln, missionary there, had recommended John Beasley to the Society as a school-master. Beasley asked the negroes if they were willing to learn the Catechism and the Christian faith; they appeared willing, and in a short time his house was filled with them. They continued attending, especially on Sundays; and the Society gave Beasley a gratuity for his services.¹

Probably most of the clergymen were solicitous for the moral welfare of their own slaves, if they were owners themselves. The Reverend Robert Jenney, of Rye, New York, afterwards rector of Christ Church, Philadelphia, wrote the S.P.G., November 19th, 1725, that it had always been his practice to use all proper motives he could think of, to bring his own negro slaves to a regular practice of the moral duties (in which most of their colour were very loose). He possessed two adult negroes—a man and a woman. “These I oblige constantly to be present at our family devotion: And the two Adults to attend y^e publick service of y^e Church by turns, & take the Child along with them. . . . This I doe to try whether good influence our own & y^e practice of others will have upon them, to bring them not only to y^e Knowledge, but also y^e practice of Religious Dutys: But all this together with my private Instruction in y^e family, have not had so good success as to influence me to give them the Benefit of Baptism as yet. But as to y^e children, altho born of unbelieving parents, I have always been of opinion that they ought to be baptised, provided their Masters & Mistresses will engage for them: which is my practice in my family.”

As to my parish, There are very few Slaves in it, & y^e people generally so poor that they are not able to purchase any. And amongst the few that we have, I know of no more than two (both men) that are baptised. . . . In those y^e have Negroes I find littel or no Disposition to have them baptised; But on the contrary an Aversion to it in some, & in most an Indifference: Some are so profane as to say that they do not think that

¹S. P. G. Abstract, 1733, p. 58.

Baptism will be of any service to them, And there are many that think it does them hurt by giving them better Notions of themselves than is consistent with their state of Slavery & their duty to their Masters.¹

After Mr. Colgan moved from New York, the Reverend Richard Charlton entered on his term of faithful and diligent service as catechist to the negroes and assistant at Trinity Church. He evinced great interest in his teaching and in the care of souls. From 1732 to 1740, he baptised 219 negroes, including twenty-four adults; frequently afterwards, the yearly baptisms were from forty to sixty.² As often as the masters permitted their slaves to attend his instruction, that is, chiefly on Sundays, he taught them and made them repeat a part of the Church's Catechism, which he afterwards explained, "in such a manner as is best suited to their Capacities." A great many of the negroes were able to repeat the Catechism in its entirety and to give a tolerable account of their faith; some were admitted to the Lord's Supper.³ On the 30th of October, 1741, Charlton notified the S.P.G. that he had over a hundred and fifty catechumens under instruction. Forty-three were learning Psalmody with Mr. Clemm, the organist of Trinity Church. The Friday catechumens exceeded ninety. He was sure that he would have had a larger number, "had not that wicked plott . . . been set on foot here."⁴ (The plot to which he referred was of a serious nature. It was alleged—though not proved—that the slaves had arranged a plan to murder all the white people and burn the city. As a result, there had been many executions).

Fortunately, Mr. Charlton's endeavours were not permanently retarded. On the 30th of September, 1745, he wrote that he was preparing several negro catechumens for baptism and others for the reception

¹S. P. G. Series B, I., #78 (L. C.).

²Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G.*, p. 68.

³S. P. G. Abstract, 1741, p. 58.

⁴S. P. G. Series B, IX., p. 62 (L. C.).

of the Lord's Supper. "Of late I have got our Clark to raise a Psalm when their instruction is over, And I can Scarce express the Satisfaction I have in Seeing near 200 Negroes and White Psons with heart and voice glorifying their maker."¹ In a subsequent letter, he declared that the singing of a Psalm had produced a good effect: it had engaged many of the negroes to a closer application in learning to read, and enabled them to join with decency in the worship.²

In November, 1747, Mr. Charlton was chosen for the rectorship of St. Andrew's, Staten Island. He resigned his post as catechist, and moved to his new charge. There he gave thirty years of faithful service; he died October 7th, 1777.³ His successor in New York was the Reverend Samuel Auchmuty, who was born in Boston, January 6th, 1722. He arrived in New York, January 28th, 1748; and promptly assumed his duties. Between his own classes and his labours as assistant to the rector of Trinity, there were weekly catechetical instructions given by him to both white and negro children in the new school erected in New York in 1749.

Mr. Auchmuty reported to the Society, October 2nd, 1750, that his black catechumens were daily increasing. They "seem to be fonder of becoming Christians than they were when I first came among them. . . . The Masters of the Slaves in this place have also become more desirous than they used to be, to have their Servants baptized & instructed in the principals of our most holy Religion."⁴

At the same time, Joseph Hildreth, the master of the Society's school in New York, was assisting in the training of the negroes in addition to teaching the white children. He wrote to the Society, March 28th, 1751, that about twenty negroes reported to him in the evenings for instruction in singing the Psalm tunes.⁵

¹S. P. G. Series B, XIV., #104 (L. C.).

²S. P. G. Series B, XIII., #219 (L. C.).

³*New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, October 13, 1777.

⁴S. P. G. Series B, XVIII., #98 (L. C.).

⁵S. P. G. Series B, XIX., #68 (L. C.).

It was in the latter part of 1760 that the Associates of Doctor Bray at last found it possible to open a school for negroes in New York. There were other places more in need of their assistance; and at best their funds were limited. The school was opened on the 22nd of September, that year. In a little more than four months, it was full. The numerical limit of thirty was reached. Mr. Auchmuty visited the school frequently; he and the scholars read and said prayers together. His Sunday lectures were attended.

An advertisement in the local paper, *The New-York Mercury* of September 15th, announced the opening of a free school for thirty negro children, from five years up. They were to be instructed in reading and the principles of Christianity, in sewing and knitting. The school, it was said, was to be "entirely under the Inspection and Care of the Clergy of the Church of England in this City: Those Persons therefore that have the present Usefulness, and future Welfare of their young Slaves at Heart . . . are desired to apply to any one of the Clergy, who will immediately send them to the aforesaid School, and see that they be faithfully instructed." A note was added, as follows:

All that is required of their Masters or Mistresses, is that they find them in Wood for the Winter. Proper Books will be provided for them gratis.¹

A few days before, an advertisement had appeared, for "a sober Woman, of a fair Character and Qualifications," to keep the school, which "will be chiefly supported by a Charitable Society of worthy and well disposed Christians in England."²

It was difficult to find a proper mistress; finally one was found in the person of Mrs. Lourier. The school began with two pupils. Mr. Auchmuty said that the necessity, and usefulness of such a school, was already seen by many pious owners of young slaves. "Prompt-

¹*New York Mercury*, September 15, 1760.

²*Ibid.*, August 4, 1760.

ed by Duty, Inclination, & requested by the Associates, I frequently visit the School, hear the Scholars read, say their prayers, & catechise, & then give them such Instructions & Advice, as they require. Besides this, I order them to attend my Lectures constantly on the Lords Day, & Catechise them & the Adults together; by which means, I hope, as they grow up, to perfect them in the great and important Doctrines of our most holy Religion, and to lead them, by the blessing of God, upon my poor endeavors, to happiness hereafter. I must confess I can't help being very sanguine in my Expectations from this little Flock, as they are early instructed in their Duty to God & man. They have already made a very considerable progress in sewing, knitting, Reading &c and will I make no doubt, with proper management & care answer the truly pious designs of the worthy Associates."¹

On the 8th of August, 1761, Mr. Auchmuty reported that the school was full; and, if the place would allow, many more might in a few days be added to it. The mistress was proving very industrious, and the scholars were showing considerable progress in learning. Some of the big scholars were constantly importuning him for psalters.²

Mr. Auchmuty had some sixty or seventy catechumens under instruction; but he found time to supervise the Associates' school in addition to his regular duties. He wrote the Associates, October 18th, 1762, that their school was still flourishing; that the mistress was very industrious; and that the children were improving. He had been compelled to make a rule that no more children would be admitted, without the assurance of their masters or mistresses that they would continue till they were perfectly instructed in the principles of religion. The pupils had their usual instruction from the school-mistress; they attended his catechetical lectures on Sundays; and they received training in

¹S. P. G. Series B, II., #1 (L. C.).

²Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., p. 157 (L. C.).

Psalmody from the master of the Society's charity school.¹

On the 29th of March, 1764, the faithful priest could look back over seventeen years of service and say:

It affords me no small pleasure to reflect, that not one single Black, that has been admitted by me to the holy Communion, has turned out bad; or been, in any shape, a disgrace to our holy profession.²

A few months afterwards, Samuel Auchmuty succeeded to the rectorship of Trinity Church; still his interest in the negro did not lag. His concern for the future welfare of the Associates' school was expressed in one of the first letters written after accepting the call to heavier responsibilities. He thanked the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, September 10th, 1764, for their bounty to him, as their catechist to "the poor Negro's, which important trust I have executed with fidelity, and what is very pleasing to me, Success." He said that he would have to get his assistant to take charge of the negro work, as his parish duties were so great; and he hoped that the Society would provide a catechist for the poor slaves. "There is a Negro School in this City founded by the worthy Associates of the late D^r Bray, which is in a thriving & promising way, owing greatly to the Care of the Societys Catechist. This School will always want such a person to inspect & govern it."³

While the catechising of the negroes was turned over to Mr. Auchmuty's assistant, the rector continued to visit the Associates' school. On the 31st of May, 1765, he wrote of a visit he had paid. He had found that everything was going as well as one could wish; there were thirty-seven scholars—well instructed. In his absence, the Reverend John Ogilvie, his assistant, visited the school.⁴ Three years later, May 9th, 1768, he could give an encouraging report. "The

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., p. 184 (L. C.).

²S. P. G. Series B, II., #7 (L. C.).

³S. P. G. Series B, II., #8 (L. C.).

⁴Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., p. 230 (L. C.).

mistress of school is extremely honest & careful in the Discharge of her Duty. At present the School is full, and the poor little Things are very orderly and attend the School & Church punctually. The Mistress seems to be very happy with her employment, & I am convinced conscientiously discharges her Duty."¹ Another letter, March 30th, 1769, was quite optimistic. "The Children improve very fast and are a decent pretty Flock."²

All the while Mr. Auchmuty's obligations were growing more complex. The Church of England was under constant fire; and a disagreeable controversy had arisen, which kept the clergy in a state of agitation. The war clouds were beginning to lower. On the 30th of January, 1770, Mr. Auchmuty asked the S.P.G. to appropriate ten pounds sterling for a catechist for the New York negroes. "Myself & my Assistants are so fully employed that we can't attend them, as often as we could wish. I have hitherto been a faithful Servant to them, and have dayly great trouble with them. It now becomes too heavy for me."³ Still he supervised the activities of the Associates' school. His letter of September 28th, 1772, declared that the school was full and thriving. "It could not succeed better—the mistress is diligent & the Scholars regular in their Attendance upon their Duty."⁴ Exactly two years later (September 28th, 1774), he reported that the school continued full; that several of the children read very well and knew their Catechism. The diligent mistress was in declining health.⁵

The faithful school-mistress died October 19th, 1774; and the next day Mr. Auchmuty wrote the Associates, commending her Christian character and voicing his feelings regarding the future of the school. He said that he would by no means throw any ob-

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 13 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, p. 24.

³S. P. G. Series B, II., #35 (L. C.).

⁴Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 53 (L. C.).

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 72.

stacle in the way of continuing the same, but his conscience obliged him to say that the possessors of slaves in New York were opulent and well able to put their children in school and pay for the instruction. He believed that some would do so, though not generally. "The future welfare of the poor Negroes hath been One of the principal Objects of his Attention for a Number of Years; from Ten Communicants which he found when he first took the Charge of them, He can now, with pleasure, see, at one time, near sixty; Besides a Sunday Evening Lecture for the Benefit of the Negroes. He hath at the Request of a Number of good Christians set on foot another (lecture?) at the House of an amiable Man, one M^r Beckman, a merch. of Opulence, on Thursday Evenings. This Lecture he attends occasionally. In his Absence One of the Blacks, a sincere good man, reads such part of the Church service as the D^r directs, & then such Sermons as seem best adapted to their Capacities; by this means The Blacks are kept in very good Order." Mr. Auchmuty thought that, instead of reviving the school, it might be better to bestow the salary formerly given upon some honest good Christian, who would constantly attend upon the slaves at their meetings, read for them, visit them when sick, and inform him of everything relating to the conduct of those who were Christians. Such a plan might answer the design of the Associates in a more satisfactory way than a school. Thus the blacks would have an able instructor and would soon be qualified to instruct their own children.¹

March 2nd, 1775, the Associates agreed to recommend to Doctor Auchmuty, whether it might not be more eligible to appoint some serious good Christian man to be a school-master for the benefit of such negro children as should appear proper objects. Such a person, they felt, might also instruct the adult negroes on Thursday at their meetings, visit the sick, and perform other duties. In that case, his salary could be

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 72-73 (L. C.).

fixed at not more than £20 a year.¹ In all probability, this letter never reached its destination. The war soon started; and the Associates' zealous efforts in New York came to a close.

THE ASSOCIATES' ACTIVITIES IN NEW ENGLAND

Although Doctor Bray's Associates devoted their attention largely to the negro, they did not cease their library activities. The Reverend Jonathan Arnold, an itinerant missionary in Connecticut, received a donation of books soon after he began his labours in the new world. He was appointed missionary, February 20th, 1736.² He made his home at New Haven; but he covered a good deal of the surrounding territory. An entry in the Associates' Minutes of May 15th, 1736, shows that the catalogue of books delivered to him for a parochial library was presented at the meeting, as well as Mr. Arnold's bond for preserving the same for his successor's use.³

The Reverend Ebenezer Miller, of Braintree, Massachusetts, was voted a gift of books to the value of five pounds, for promoting the instruction of negroes in his parish and neighbourhood. This was done, February 13th, 1748.⁴ In the meantime, the clergy of New England were doing their utmost to impress the slave-owners with their obligation to promote the spiritual welfare of the blacks; and there are many references in the missionaries' letters to the efforts made, and the results.

Such examples as the following illustrate the clergyman's recognition that the negro was entitled to instruction, notwithstanding the indifference of the slave-owner. The Reverend Doctor Timothy Cutler, of Boston, reported to the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Octo-

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 73-74 (L. C.).

²Fulham MSS., Conn. #7 (L. C.).

³Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., May 5, 1736 (L. C.).

⁴*Ibid.*, Feb. 13, 1748.

ber 10th, 1727, that the negro and Indian slaves belonging to his parish were about thirty-two. "Their Education & Instruction is according to the Houses they belong to—I have baptized but 2. But I know of the Masters of some others, who are disposed to this important good of their Slaves, & are preparing them for it; however here is too great a remissness upon this article."¹ The Reverend Matthias Plant, of Newbury, mentioned (October 25th, 1727) the case of a negro slave in his parish, who was "desirous of Baptism, but denied by her Master, a woman of wonderful sense & prudent in matters of equal knowledge in Religion with most of her sex, far exceeding any of her own nation that ever yet I heard of."²

The Reverend Roger Price, of Boston, concluded that the conversion of negro slaves was "almost impracticable in the present state of religion." In a letter dated July 28th, 1740, he stated that "till masters can be persuaded to have a greater value for their own souls, we have but small hopes they will be very anxious about the salvation of their negroes."³

It was in Rhode Island, however, that we see the Associates at work in the face of lethargy and opposition. The Reverend Thomas Pollen, of Christ Church, Oxford, had been appointed S.P.G. missionary to Newport, where he arrived in May, 1754.⁴ During his six years' stay, he was concerned over the problem of the negro. On the 4th of September, 1755, he wrote the Associates that the unwillingness of the masters to have their negroes baptised was the chief hindrance to their conversion to Christianity. He said that he had declared to several negroes his readiness to instruct them in religious principles.⁵

In 1760, the Associates of Doctor Bray considered the extension of their work among the negroes on a

¹Perry, *Historical Collections, Massachusetts*, p. 231.

²*Ibid.*, p. 233.

³*Ibid.*, p. 341.

⁴*S. P. G. Abstract, 1755*, pp. 43-44.

⁵*Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I.*, p. 95 (L. C.).

larger scale. At a meeting held January 17th of that year, Benjamin Franklin recommended Newport, Rhode Island, as one of the proper places for establishing a school; and the Reverend Mr. Pollen was suggested as one of the fit persons to take care of such proposed institutions. The Associates agreed that a school capable of accommodating thirty negro children should be opened with all convenient speed at each place named. In the meantime, Mr. Pollen had severed his connections with the Church of Newport; and the Reverend Marmaduke Browne, the son of the former rector there, was in charge. Browne was a native of Providence, having been born there in 1731. He had been educated at Trinity College, Dublin; and, after receiving deacon's orders, had served as assistant to his father (Arthur Browne) in the province of New Hampshire. The Associates' appointment fell on him; and on the 9th of January, 1763, he reported to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts that "at the Instance of the Associates of the late Dr. Bray," he had opened a school for fifteen negro children.¹

Progress was slow. On the 6th of November, 1764, he wrote the Associates that he could not give as favourable an account of the negro school as at the first opening. The church-wardens and vestrymen had not fulfilled their engagements upon the opening of the same. Some of them had children who might have been sent there for instruction, but they were not so disposed. There had been complaints regarding the school-mistress, although they were without foundation; in fact, she was chosen by the vestry. Mr. Browne suggested that a "smart letter of Complaint" be sent over, intimating that the failure of the school was due to the rector, wardens, and vestrymen; he hoped that such a communication would arouse the mistress and incite the vestry to fill the school. In

¹Sprague, *Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit*, pp. 79-80; *S. P. G. Abstract*, 1764, pp. 62-63.

spite of discouragements, however, some good had been accomplished. There were usually from twenty to twenty-five children; some eight or ten were able to repeat the Catechism without missing a word, and some showed proficiency in reading and sewing.¹

The Associates fell in line with the minister's strategy. On the 1st of August, 1765, Mr. Browne informed the Associates that, on receipt of their letter, he had called a meeting of the vestrymen and had shown them the letter. Thereupon, he "had the Satisfaction to observe them deeply affected & promised to exert themselves for the future in procuring the Number of Children required and in affording such other Assistance as might tend to promote the religious Instruction of the poor Blacks."² Four months later, he stated that a considerable alteration for the better had taken place: the mistress was more careful and diligent, and the vestry had discovered a becoming zeal for filling the school with children. A committee of three had been chosen to see that this was done. There were twenty-six scholars at the time.³

Two years afterwards (June 10th, 1768), Mr. Browne was able to report that the school was in a prosperous way, that it was constantly full. Though not satisfied with the conduct of the mistress, he had been able, "by frequent visiting & reprimanding her for negligence," to keep her at her duty. He would dismiss her, however, if he could find a properly qualified successor. Several children had been taught to read tolerably well; several girls showed proficiency in sewing and knitting. They were well instructed in the prayers and Catechism. Yet the lethargy of the slave-owners was discouraging; and Mr. Browne feared that "the good Seed sown, will thro y^e Negligence & contempt of those whose property they are, bring forth little fruit unto perfection."⁴

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book I., pp. 219-220 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, p. 234.

³*Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁴Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 14-15 (L. C.).

A letter from Mr. Browne, dated October 5th, 1769, reported that the school was full; that the scholars were making good progress in learning. The mistress, unfortunately, was not so diligent and attentive in her duty as he could wish. When this letter was read, the Associates voted their thanks to the clergyman, and expressed their desire that he appoint another mistress, unless the present one proved more diligent.¹ On the 14th of December, 1770, he wrote that the school had its full complement of children and was in as flourishing a condition as he had known it any time. There was no mention of the mistress or her work.²

Mr. Browne died on the 19th of March, the following year. He was only forty years old. His place was supplied by the Reverend George Bisset, who had served as a schoolmaster in Newport since 1767. Mr. Bisset was formally elected rector of the Church, October 28th, 1771; and continued there until the evacuation of the island in 1779. He was a strong loyalist; and suffered considerable embarrassment because of his sentiment. Doctor Samuel Peters said that he was "a very sensible man, a good scholar and compiler of sermons, although too bashful to appear in company, or in the pulpit."³ The new incumbent pledged his support to the pious enterprise of the Associates. On the 23rd of November, 1771, Mr. Bisset assured the Associates that he would co-operate with them upon every occasion in everything that would make the negro school in Newport as useful as possible.⁴ April 30th, 1772, he reported that there were thirty-one negroes in the school.⁵

Mr. Bisset had many responsibilities, besides the little school. The S.P.G. had withdrawn support from his parish, as Newport had been represented as a prosperous community, fully able to support its church

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 29-30 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, p. 45.

³Sprague, *Annals of the American Episcopal Pulpit*, p. 80.

⁴Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 48 (L. C.).

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 52.

without help from abroad; and it was felt that the missionary funds could be better expended in other places. But Mr. Bisset's letter of the 27th of October, 1772, shows that he had taken time to appraise the school situation more fully. On that day, he wrote the Associates that, on first visiting the negro school, he had found everything out of order. The mistress had been sick, and only two or three young negroes attended regularly. When the mistress recovered, he had represented to her in the strongest terms the absolute necessity of doing her duty; he had told her that should he find her deficient, he would appoint someone in her stead. His remarks had their effect, and she was taking more pains. He promised to visit the school often, to examine the progress made by the pupils, especially their improvement in the great truths of religion. In spite of all his endeavours, public advertisements and private recommendations, the number of pupils was not yet complete. No more than seventeen or eighteen constantly attended; and he feared that there would be no increase in the winter—"any having negroe Children, choosing rather to keep 'em at home than incur the small Expence of allowing Fire wood."¹

The following spring, April 8th, Mr. Bisset, though much discouraged by the declining state of the school during the winter, was glad to report that the school was pretty full; and that he had the strongest assurance from some persons of consequence that they would "warmly interest themselves in its support." The mistress was "as diligent as ever she hath been"; but should she fail, he would take proper notice, "as he hath nothing more at heart than to serve the Interests of Religion, and merit the confidence reposed in him."²

By November 17th, the number of pupils had increased to forty. The negroes had attended regularly

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 55 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, p. 59.

during the past six months; but they were showing signs of dropping off, on account of the approach of winter. The minister said that he would try to keep as many at school during the winter months as possible. The mistress was more diligent and attentive than heretofore.¹ After the usual intermission, due to cold weather, the school increased fast. It seems that the school was closed during the winter months; but by the 21st of May, 1774, there were thirty-eight in attendance—as many as one person could properly manage.²

April 12th, 1775, Mr. Bisset reported that the school was going on “pretty nearly in the same way he formerly described.” Last summer, it was about as full as could be expected. “Untill Masters are realy in earnest about the Instruction of the Young Blacks and Untill a Mistress can be found as attentive to her Duty as to the Profit annexed, He utterly despairs of seeing Effects worthy of the Generosity of the Associates.” But he promised all the attention which he could spare from the duties of a large parish. He advised that the church-wardens and vestrymen be requested by the Associates to take upon themselves the inspection and care of the school jointly with him. Such a measure would cause them to exert themselves more.³

But men's minds were turning to other things. The war had started. The minister found himself in disrepute because of his zeal for his native country. Besides, all communication with England was practically stopped. The Associates of Doctor Bray could effect no further service in Rhode Island; but they had made a noble gesture.

EPILOGUE

On the 1st of April, 1777, the Associates of Doctor Bray, at their meeting, passed the following resolution:

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., p. 65 (L. C.).

²*Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

The pious Designs of the Associates in supporting Negroe Schools on the Continent of America being at present interrupted by the unhappy Disputes between Great Britain and her Colonies, and there being little Prospect of resuming the same, till an amicable Accommodation shall take place.

Agreed, that in order to answer the pious Intention of our Association it will be adviseable to adopt some other Plan or Charity of a similar Nature, and this Board are of Opinion, the Establishment and Support of Schools in England for the Instruction of poor Children in such Places as shall appear to stand most in need of such Charitable Institutions will best correspond with the Intentions of this Society.¹

The little organization, never wealthy, had given an impetus to the colonization of Georgia; it had served to stimulate interest in the welfare of the poor negro, and had set an example of perseverance and unselfishness. How much the softening of the negro, so recently transplanted from his primitive state, may be traced to their ministrations, we shall never know; but we are sure that many enduring seeds were planted, and that there still linger traces of their zealous struggle for a great ideal.

¹Dr. Bray's Associates: Minute Book II., pp. 78-79 (L. C.).

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