

tall, upright pews, kindly supporters of the reverent worshippers standing erect in them during the time of prayer, on which to rest their arms, were now supplanted by those of a costlier sort, of choice, polished wood, with lower backs and fronts, for the better accommodation of such as preferred, while engaged in prayer, to remain seated in their pews, leaning their heads forward, and resting them devoutly on the subordinated summits of these; and for those grand old pulpits, round and narrow, fastened and confirmed high up against the wall, have long since been substituted by others of far wider dimensions, open all around, and placed so low as to have their exposed broad bases brought down to be completely on a level with the tops of the pews, and the preacher's desk to be little elevated above the heads of the people. The durable old walls, to be sure, sustaining these edifices, like the worshippers themselves in their orthodoxy, are still remaining firm and steadfast, but so entirely renovated, remodeled, and overhauled have these structures been— all save one—as now to be utterly unrecognizable. The windows in all of them, save of one, have been narrowed and elongated, and set with immense panes of glass, tall and broad, some of them richly stained and embellished, with names inserted, the presentations of devoted relatives or friends, to serve as lasting and beautiful memorials of the excellent worth and piety of some lamented or perhaps still surviving personages of the congregation. From the main entrances of some of these houses have vestibules of stone been extended outward, and in the walls of others have wide recesses been made for the proper accommodation of the organs lately introduced, or for the pulpits set back, and large apartments have been superadded to many for the purpose of holding in their rooms lectures, Sabbath-schools, and prayer-meetings.

To the main edifice of that one of two stories in Carlisle, besides its wholesale internal renovation, several times repeated, has been superadded a large apartment of hewn stone of the same height, surmounted on the western side by a lofty tower suitable to the whole structure; and that one venerable, consecrated old meeting-house of blue limestone, so long revered, which tops the hill, overlooking, on the northern side, the town of Newville, and, on the southern side, the gently-flowing Green Spring, from which it takes its name, with the graveyard between, has latterly been utterly disguised, and robbed of its antiquity by having cast over it a new coating or discoloration of universal white, extended also over the large apartment of brick of later construction annexed to it, for having held in it Sabbath-schools, prayer-meetings, and other religious assemblies; whereby, to be sure, these two buildings of different ages, but now of the same color, have thus been made outwardly to correspond and assume the appearance of one completely consolidated and established whole.

Indeed, so wholly transformed have these old meeting-houses been, in the course of years, that they are no longer known as such, but are now very appropriately denominated churches, and all that is wanting in the way of fully modernizing them is to have them topped out with lofty steeples, containing bells, to the attainment of which some of them indeed seem already to be aspiring, thus to make them stand on a par, in outward show and importance, with any of the proudest churches of other denominations, or even of a few, of later date, of their own, to be seen towering aloft in any of the neighboring towns or villages.

The only remaining meeting-house that is left without having had any modern innovations made upon it, down to the present time, is that of Rocky Spring. It is located some four or five miles northeast from Chambersburg on a little eminence among limestone ridges cropping out from a stretch of slate land, extending all around it, far and wide; at whose base, at the extreme northern end, is gushing forth, from its rocky source, an exuberant font, from which this meeting-house derives its name. Strange enough, as it may seem, however, this alone of all the meeting-houses of the

spring is the only one not constructed of stone; for when the time had come for the building of such, generally to supersede those of wood, as there was no supply of this solid material to be met with in the whole slate-land country all around, and as to take it from the sacred hill in which were deposited the revered remains of their forefathers, who had held it for their place of worship during the whole colonial times, would have been deemed by their pious descendants, besides destroying the symmetry of the hill itself, a barbarous and sacrilegious act, it was resolved by them to have their new building constructed, saving a stone foundation, wholly of brick, more easily to be conveyed from abroad, or perhaps furnished them ready at hand from some kiln erected and burnt in their immediate neighborhood.

This meeting-house, though only of one story and without a gallery, was very ample and commodious, being capable of having seated within its long and high-backed pews a great many people, gathered from a wide extent of territory. Having been built, too, soon after the Revolution, these people were still somewhat affected by the modes and fashions of its warlike times; not so much those of them arriving from the country, who were still remaining plain enough in their dress and unassuming in their manners, as were more especially those of them coming out from the town, many of whom had been officers in the army, still wearing their regimentals in part, and retaining a stately, martial sort of bearing, which some of them were nothing loth to be showing off to advantage before the assembled multitude. Thus, for instance, as we are told, a certain colonel, on arriving on the grounds, urging his mettled steeds, would sometimes be pleased to be borne, in his handsome vehicle, open on all sides, some two or three times around the meeting-house, perhaps still that of wood, to be seen of all, in his half-military costume, before, handing over the reins to his attendant; and alighting from it, reverently removing from his powdered head with its long platted cue, or shorter pig-tail behind, his three-cornered, or lofty cocked hat, he proceeded thence, with this in hand, in a suitable, solemn, and dignified manner to enter the sanctuary.

When, however, at the beginning of the present century, amid the romantic clump of cedars, within the immediate vicinity of Chambersburg, on the Falling Spring, in place of its preceding structure of wood, had been erected a more commodious meeting-house of stone, many of the gentlefolks of the town, more aristocratical in manners and stylish in costume, and more indulgent to their own ease and comfort, preferred to take their pews and assume their regular sittings on the Sabbath in this more convenient and suitable house of worship. Owing to which, and to the continual emigration, out of the Valley to the far West, of many of the Scotch-Irish, succeeded by the coming in of many German settlers, mostly Lutheran or Reformed, and to the erection besides of other houses of worship in the neighboring towns and villages, there was a gradual falling off in attendance from that venerable, rural old meeting-house of Rocky Spring; which decrease has continued ever since, even down to the present time, so that now it is having religious services held in it only occasionally; but while regretting this, we are yet pleased to be able to state that, during all the while of its declension in members, it has been receiving no modern innovations or improvements, so that now, barring the material of which it is built, it remains for us a sad and solemn, to be sure, but yet highly valued memorial, and piously to be preserved relic and exponent of what those old stone meeting-houses were wont to be, inside and out, during their former, simpler, but far happier times.

One other meeting-house was there, besides, which, up to the time of its demolition, had likewise received no modern innovations or improvements. This was that of Middle Spring, which stood sequestered and alone, some two or three miles below Shippensburg, on a little eminence among its oaks, overlooking the gentle stream from which it had taken its name. Of all the meeting-houses of the valley, it was one of the largest, of two stories in high, substantially built, being designed to stand

for ages. Soon after its erection, however, unfortunately were observed in its hinder wall, directly opposite the pulpit inside, a slight outward bulge, scarcely noticeable, and a small deliquescent crevice in one of its corners, owing, no doubt, to a little sinking of the foundation underneath; and although there had followed, for the whole sixty-six years, during which this house had continued to be standing, no increase whatever of these defects, and this wall seemed now to be most firmly established on its foundation, yet, as on the Sabbath days, before the morning service, or during the intermission at noon, some two or three dismal, prying, and overly officious persons were sometimes to be seen standing behind this defective wall apparently scrutinizing it and commenting on its weakness and instability, thus, from observing their demeanor, was a feeling of distrust and danger gradually diffused and kept alive throughout the whole congregation, its members generally being made to apprehend that this wall, its bulge and crevice gradually increasing, as they falsely imagined, would on some future fatal day of special solemnity, when the house would be densely crowded, suddenly be giving way and come tumbling down with a crash, bearing along with it to inevitable destruction, not only the minister in his pulpit, closely attached to it, which would be bad enough, but, from its falling partially in upon them, a goodly portion of the whole assembled multitude besides. And as there had been, moreover, a continued falling away of its membership from causes somewhat similar to those which at the same time were bringing about a like decrease in that of Rocky Spring, it was finally resolved to have this old meeting-house of stone taken down and another of brick, of a smaller and more suitable size, erected in its place.

Within the confines of the wide district from which this meeting-house received its worshippers, on the slate-land side of the vast valley, remotely situated, it was the happy lot of the present writer to have had the home of his earliest days; but afterward, in pursuit of his regular calling, he was thrown far asunder from it, and made to reside successively at different times in different places. Yet on such casual returns to the old neighborhood as were allowed him, "few and far between," it was always his wont to make at each time a pious pilgrimage to this sacred house of worship, to do it proper reverence and homage.

THE NEGRO ON THE NEGRO.

I.

WHAT EDUCATED COLORED PEOPLE IN THE SOUTH REPORT CONCERNING THEIR MATERIAL CONDITION.

In the great mass of literature about the colored race in the United States, it is remarkable how little there is that is the colored man's own production. Half a dozen of the foremost men of the race have written books, chiefly on the historical side of the subject, many more than half a dozen have spoken prominently both historically and practically, as politicians, as teachers, and as preachers. But these have been the exceptional men of the race. Nowhere has there been presented anything that may fairly be called colored public opinion about the colored people's condition and outlook. Students of the subject have missed the opinion of the average educated Negro on the Negro.

To supply this, THE INDEPENDENT caused an investigation to be made. During the past summer a circular was sent to two hundred representative intelligent colored men and women in all the Southern States "to ascertain the prevailing opinion and feelings of the colored people themselves about the relation of the races and the outlook of the colored race." The following inquiries were made, and answers were requested from both men and women:

I. *Material Prosperity.*—Are the colored people fast accumulating property? What proportion of the families of your acquaintance own their own homes? As regards business transactions, the hiring of laborers, the payment of wages, the credit system, what changes, if any, do the colored people of your community desire?

II. *The Races and the Laws.*—Are there any laws in your State more oppressive to one race than to the other? Is the law administered differently to the two races?

III. *Race Feeling, Schools, and Churches.*—What unfairness, if any, is shown to the colored people because of their color? Do the colored people prefer separate to mixed schools and churches?

IV. *Civil Rights.*—What social customs, if any, are objectionable or oppressive to the colored people?

V. *Greatest Hindrance and Most Pressing Duty.*—What is the greatest single hindrance to the race's advancement? And what its most pressing duty, under present conditions?

VI. *The Mingling of Races.*—Are there more children of mixed blood born now than in slavery? Do present tendencies point to the ultimate general commingling of the races?

Answers have been received to these inquiries from teachers (male and female), preachers, lawyers, editors and merchants, in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Answers to each of these groups of inquiries, which present all shades of opinion expressed in them all, will be presented in the order named. Following are such replies to the first group, concerning the Material Prosperity of the Negro and the Negro's view of it.

THE ACCUMULATION OF PROPERTY.

The colored people are getting property rapidly, and they surpass the "poor whites" as accumulators of property. The reason is, the wives of the whites do not work, while the colored women work more than the men, and they know how to save. Many of them support their whole families. I know of several cases where colored men, aided by their wives, have bought and paid for good homes, raising large families at the same time.—*Virginia.*

They are accumulating property here as fast as could be expected. About three-fifths of the families I know own their own homes.—*Virginia.*

There has been a quite satisfactory advancement made in this regard. Between twenty and twenty-five per cent. of the colored families in Southeast Virginia own their homes.—*Virginia.*

In the towns and cities about one-tenth of the colored people own homes; but throughout the country not more than one in a hundred.—*Eastern North Carolina.*

The colored people are fast accumulating property, real and personal. About forty per cent. of my acquaintances own their little homes. There is yet some feeling among the whites against selling a colored man land; for when he once acquires it, he never sells it.—*Richmond County, N. C.*

They are not accumulating anything very fast. Not more than six per cent. of my acquaintances own their homes. Perhaps this is too low an estimate, generally, but not too low within the range of my acquaintance.—*Guilford County, N. C.*

Under the circumstances, very good progress has been made in acquiring property. I suppose one-third of the families I know, who live in towns and have some education, own homes. Very few colored people who have been content to live right along with the whites have anything more than what the whites chance to give them to eat and to wear. One in three or four hundred in the country owns a small farm.—*Georgia.*

They are doing well in accumulating little properties, and some are awaking to the importance of undertaking joint-stock enterprises. Half the families I know own their homes.—*Atlanta, Ga.*

The accumulation of property is rapid. Perhaps two-thirds of the families of my acquaintance own their homes.—*Atlanta, Ga.*

Rapidly. Three-fourths of the families I know own homes.—*Jacksonville, Fla.*

The Negroes are anxious to acquire property, and they make many sacrifices to procure homes. Often they are poor huts in the unhealthy parts of the town, but they are the best they can do. Their families are too large and their wages too small to buy handsome property. Sixty per cent. of those I know own homes, and all these other property besides. In this state the colored people pay taxes on \$10,000,000 of real estate. In the country land is the last thing offered for sale to a Negro; and yet a large number own farming land.—*Augusta, Ga.*

As many as 90 per cent. of the families I know own their little homes.—*Montgomery, Ala.*

Three-fifths of my acquaintances are property owners.—*Greenville, Miss.*

Few accumulate at all. One in ten owns real estate. There is great room for improvement in the way of frugality.—*Madison Co., Miss.*

Our people are rapidly gaining as property holders. They are industrious and would accumulate faster if they had a fair chance. As