



**Smithsonian Institution**

*Freedmen's Bureau*

## **District of Columbia Education, Fair Copies of Letters Sent, Volume 2 (42) Aug. 2, 1869–Apr. 4, 1870**

Extracted on Mar-29-2024 10:55:00

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house?" The reply was, "You can have the heavy timber for the house from my farm, and my team to haul the other lumber from Washington". But in many places a very bitter prejudice still lingers. While at Poolsville a short time ago, a man said to me, "Are you up here inspecting nigger schools"? Yes sir, said I. "I think you are in great business", he replied. I said but little, not caring to quarrel with him. The passage of the "fifteenth Amendment" will tone down the feelings of many of these people and beget in them a better mind.

One school house has been burnt, located at Slaughter's Neck, Sussex County, Delaware. It was just finished — the plastering nearly dry. They were about moving the school from the old church into it, when it was burned to the ground. I visited the place with Genl. C. H. Howard, Maj. W. L. VanDerlip. The evidence was very strong against some young men who were at a store that night carousing, and who were known to be hostile: some of whose female friends, (professed ladies), had said, "No use to build a nigger school-house; it shall not stand, or it shall be burned down". But the evidence was not sufficient to warrant an arrest: so we promised to aid in rebuilding the house ~~this autumn~~ and ~~this autumn~~ this autumn, and returned. The scholars had not been frightened away, but were in full force, over forty in their old church, — one of the most interesting schools I have visited.

About one hundred and fifty (150) of the schools are aided by Societies, prominent among which are the Pennsylvania and New England Branches of the American Freedmen Union Commission, and the Baltimore and Delaware Associations. The two latter societies have agents in the field, and great praise is due the Delaware Association for the energy with which they have prosecuted their work. The Baltimore Association has sadly missed the services of their former actuary, Mr. Janney who was accustomed to travel through the State — hold meetings among the people, and visit and examine the schools. Very little of this personal inspection has been done by their actuary, Mr. Core, during this year. One reason has been the depleted condition of the Society's treasury. Very few white people are willing to entertain an agent on such business — the blacks are not in a condition to do so respectably, and the hotel-keepers being generally opposed to the work charge roundly.

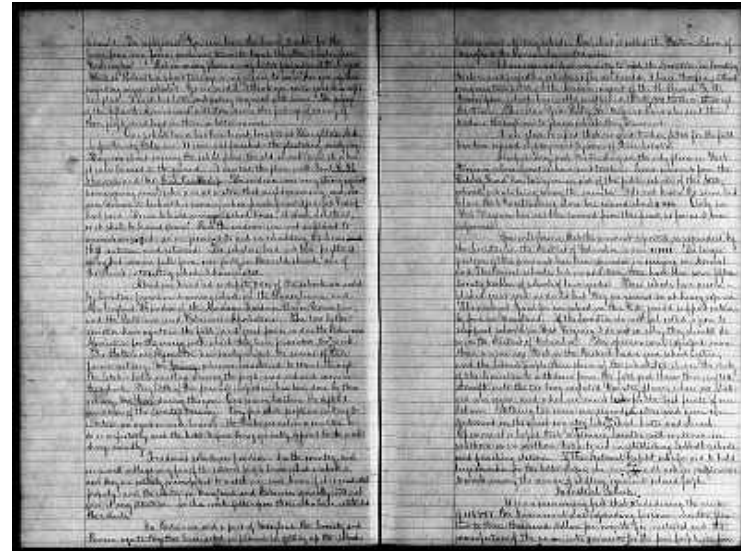
Freedmen's schools are peculiar. In the country, and in small villages very few of the colored people know what a school is, and they are entirely incompetent to watch over and know if it is conducted properly: and the whites in Maryland and Delaware generally will not give it any attention. So this work falls upon those who have established the schools.

In Delaware and a part of Maryland the Society and Bureau agents together have acted as pioneers in getting up the school-

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houses and starting schools. On what is called the Western Shore of Maryland the Bureau has acted alone.

I have regarded it as my duty to aid the Societies in locating teachers



and inspecting schools so far as I could. I have, therefore, without compensation acted as the known agent of the Pa. Branch F. W. Commission, which has nobly sustained thirty (30) teachers through the term. The New York Presby. St. Missions have also sent their teachers through me to places which they knew not.

I am glad to report that no good teacher, fitted for the field has been refused employment by some of these Societies.

Harper's Ferry and Martinsburg are the only places in West Virginia where Societies have sent teachers. Some amount from the "Peabody Fund" has been given in aid of the public schools of this State, colored schools being among the number. I do not know the sum but believe that Martinsburg alone has received about \$1000. Only in West Virginia has aid been received from this fund, so far as I am informed.

You will observe that the amount reported as expended by the Societies in the District of Columbia is over \$10000. The larger portion of this amount has been expended in carrying on Normal and Theological schools, but in addition there have been some fifteen Society teachers of schools of lower grades. These schools have accomplished great good no doubt but they are carried on at heavy expense. The amount paid for one school in this City would support certainly four in Maryland. If the Societies do not feel called upon to support schools in West Virginia I do not see why they should do so in the District of Columbia. The opinion was expressed more than a year ago that as the District had a good school system, and the colored people their share of the school-tax, it was the duty of the Societies to withdraw from the field and throw their united strength into the too long neglected Country places, where no State aid was given, and where we must look for the best fruits of our labors. Nothing too eases our crowded cities and gives contentment in the quiet country like the school-house and church. Of course it is hoped that Missionary Societies will continue in southern as in northern Cities to aid in establishing Sabbath-schools and preaching stations. If the National Capitol asks for aid to build large churches for the better classes, she may ~~as~~ as ~~also~~ also well ask for missionaries to work among the crowds of shifting ignorant colored people.

Industrial Schools.

It is an encouraging fact that while during the winter of 1867 & 8 the Government was expending for some months, from two to three thousand dollars per month for material and the manufacture of the same into garments for the poor people in five

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