

CIRCULAR LETTER.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

Being appointed by our Association to write the Circular, and as it is your desire that the Report of the Rev. D. Shaw, which appeared in the Minutes of the Central Association, touching the coloured population, ought to be replied to, for the satisfaction of our body, and the various friends in this and the Sister Provinces, and the neighbouring Republic,—also for those of our friends across the broad waters, we have many in old England, where the Central Association Minutes are gone, and where many of ours are sent and received annually,—dear Brethren, it appears to me that Mr. Shaw could have had but very little patience indeed, and far from possessing his soul, or he would have been a little more careful how he spoke. We have heard of Churches of the same faith and order, not a hundred miles from us, and although they do not belong to our Body, and if hearsay is to be credited, they have been sadly neglected by the right sort of men, and wickedly imposed upon by others. Mr. Shaw reports about 21 Churches so called, this side of Tracadie, with a membership of between 700 and 800. In looking over the Central Association Minutes, I find 5 Churches belonging to that body, with a membership of 157, mostly all coloured. In the African Baptist Minutes I find 16 Churches, with a membership of 574. Adding 5 to 16 makes 21 Churches; add 157 to 574 will make 731 members, all told. This seems to correspond so far with Mr. Shaw's Report; therefore I presume to think that he had allusion to our body, which was very much uncalled for,—more especially from Mr. Shaw.

I would wish to state, for the satisfaction of our friends, and for the information of the Missionary Board, that we have at present in the field 4 ordained Ministers belonging to our body, whose labours are much appreciated; we have also several Licentiates,—and we have every reason to be thankful to the Giver of all good gifts that we have help from our Ministering Brethren—Baptist, Presbyterian and Methodist—who are oft times found amongst us, faithfully labouring for the good of souls; for which we feel thankful to Almighty God. Mr. Shaw states, in reference to the African Churches, that they have been sadly neglected by us,