

of the recent race riot, ninety-five per cent of the taxable property, belonged to the white people and only five per cent to the negroes who mis-raled the city for a time. According to the last statement of the Superintendent of Public Instruction the disparity is not quite as great throughout the State. But according to his report the negroes get out of all proportion to what they pay. I understand that public schools are none too popular here for that very reason. It is claimed by many white men that the negroes are putting forth greater efforts to give their children an education than white men in the same condition. Negro fathers and mothers will slave as white men will not, and a negro child will go to school with simply a piece of corn bread for his dinner when the white boy would not. He will work half a day and go to school the other half, or work one week and go to school the next. I have not had an opportunity to find out whether this is true or not. I know it is disputed and statistics seem to cast some doubt on it, but I am inclined to think that if the emphasis is placed on "the same condition" the statement will stand.

Most of the colored children and very many of the white children are now entirely dependent on the public school for their education, and these are kept open only three or four months out of the year. The Methodists and the Baptists, the two strongest bodies in the State, are committed to the policy of advocating that the State refrain from giving aid for higher education and confine itself to the improvement of the public schools. They claim that higher education may be safely left to voluntary effort and it is not fair to make private educational institutions, and denominational schools, compete with the State aided institutions for the same purpose. Then they claim that it is unjust to tax the many for the benefit of a few favored ones while the elementary education of the masses is neglected because of inadequate provision—even less than the constitution of the State guarantees. This position seems to me very reasonable. Our denominational organ is always advocating the education of the masses and I am inclined to think that the editor would advocate the education of the negro. I am not aware that he has ever said so plainly, but I infer this from some remarks he made a few months since. Such is the indifference about sending the children to school that the Superintendent has recommended that a mild law be enacted to compel parents to send them. Others have advocated the educational qualification for the franchise for this as well as other reasons. When one is asked why the public schools are in such a deplorable condition, and why there is so much illiteracy in the State, it may be difficult to give an answer that would be satisfactory to all. I have no doubt that the majority would say that the schools are poor because the people are poor. But it is fair to ask why the people are poor. Are they poor because they are illiterate, or illiterate because they are poor? Is their poverty due to outside influences or to themselves? "The Biblical Recorder" says that no one is likely to receive thanks for paying so, but that it is true that most of the poverty and illiteracy of the people must be laid at their own doors.

I have heard it stated that the school fund was in some way swept away at the time of the war. I do not know how true that is, I have not seen it confirmed anywhere. But it is more than probable that the condition of the public schools is due simply to the indifference of the people and to their preference for private schools. It is more than probable, I think, that much of this indifference and preference can be traced to the fact that the negro gets such a large share of the public school money, and the majority of the white taxpayers are not in favor of educating the negro with their taxes.

Let it be understood however that all the people are not illiterate. There are as intelligent people here as you will find anywhere, but education is not as general, because the public schools are not as efficient and many of the people cannot pay about a dollar a month for the education of each of their children in private schools. When the public schools are kept open only three or four months in the year and the teacher's income for the remainder of the twelve months becomes very uncertain, first class teachers must be rare. You have already inferred, even if you did not know it before, that the two races have their schools entirely apart. In the north the children of men of all races, creeds and conditions sit side by side in the public schools, but in the south that cannot be. The average southern white man would rather let his children grow up without any education at all than let them mingle in that fashion with the colored children. They are nursed by colored girls and women and sometimes we see the white boys playing with the colored boys in the streets, but they cannot go to school together. I have spoken occasionally of the way we got along with the colored students at Newton Theological Institution, and many have wondered how I got the photographs of my three colored class-mates, but they cannot comprehend how a white man could stoop to associate with "the niggers" in that fashion. One of the most moderate told me one day "I believe I would prefer to go without any education." But we must bear in mind that most of these people have never come in

contact with the best negroes. If all were like the best there would be a very different feeling. Those who live near the negro colonies in Nova Scotia can appreciate the difference, but you have learned to lay emphasis on the merits of the individual rather than on those of the race as the southern people have not, I think. Just here may be the place to say a few words about the word "nigger." It is the common word for a colored man in the south though the colored people themselves object to it and would as soon be called devils as "niggers." But the white man finds it almost impossible to use any other word even when he means to be most polite and kind. The colored people do not object to the word "negro," but the tongue and the ear of the white man are so used to "nigger," that he finds about as much difficulty in saying negro as a Welshman finds in keeping his tongue from saying "Sole" for "Saul," "Pole" for "Paul" or "coal" for "call" when he begins to speak English. In spite of himself the southerner often says "nigger" instead of negro. The colored people will often call each other "niggers" but would not allow white men to call them so if they could help it. I remember while I was at Newton, that one of the white students, without any malice whatever, playfully used the word "nigger" in an essay. As soon as there was an opportunity given for criticisms and suggestions a mulatto said "Professor, I want to inform the ess-ist that there are about eight million people in this country who look upon the term "nigger" which he used, as an insult and least he should use it where they will not let him off as easily as we will here, I call his attention to this fact."

While in Boston more than a year ago Mrs. Lewis and I attended one of the meetings of the Colored Baptist convention. It may be remembered that some of the colored people had become very independent and thought they could manage their own affairs without any aid from the Home Mission Society and the Publication Society. It was a noisy meeting, but all appeared to be in good humor. When the discussion was warmest and about half a dozen or more wanted to get the floor at the same time and when the moderator had very much more use for his fund of good nature and common sense than any "Rules of order," we observed two coal-black negroes on the seat in front of us talking calmly and quietly about the situation. And one said to the other slapping his knee, "These cursed niggers," "these cursed niggers," two or three times. One with very little humor or sense of the ridiculous could hardly keep from laughing outright. A seat or two in front of them a white man, whom I came to know afterwards as President Mesewe of Shaw University, was exchanging ideas with some colored brethren and saying to them, "The trouble with you fellows is that you lay the emphasis on race rather than on manhood, when you lay the emphasis on manhood rather than on race you will come out all right." Good advice to blacks as well as whites and to whites as well as blacks. While I was in Raleigh I heard of two white ladies walking along the side walk and there was a "nigger boy" crying. A poor white boy went to him and said, "What is the matter with you 'nigger'?" The colored fellow soon brushed off his tears and said, "Get away you white trash."

One evening a good brother who has said many a kind word about the negroes and was pleading their cause that very evening, was talking on home missions in our church. While he was talking away and using the word "nigger" freely, a respectable colored man, whom he well knew, came in and seated himself in the rear. The speaker immediately explained that any cultured colored man would understand that he did not use the word in any offensive sense or with any disrespect for the people, but after that he always used the word negro which was often pronounced "nigger." The southern people use the word "nigger" very much in the same way as we use "Quaker" rather than "Friend," "Jew" rather than "Hebrew," and "Campbellite" rather than "Disciple. They do not mean to insult or wound the feelings of the black man by using it, but the word has become imbedded in their language and they generally use it without a thought of anything but making themselves understood. In the same way I often use the word though I have nothing but the kindest feeling towards the negro. It may be a bad plan to do so for the constant use of it may lead me to use it some day where it will give offense and this may hinder my doing some one some good. But one can hardly say that he is one of the southern people unless he uses the word "nigger" occasionally. One hears almost everybody use it and he falls into the habit of using it himself though he knows that it is not an acceptable word to the negroes themselves.

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Worship.

While my thoughts have been hovering around the matter of worship for some time, I have felt keenly the seeming utter disregard of what true worship really implies to the average people supposed to be congregated together for this very purpose. I am not a pessimist but rather of an optimistic turn of mind and have a very hopeful view of the future. I hope no one will be charg-

ing me with indulging in blue ruin sentiments because of viewing things as I at present find them. Too many of us cherish the erroneous idea that if we attend the preaching services every Lord's day and weekly prayer meetings that we are performing acts of worship. Indeed taking the word of God as my guide and measuring everything enacted by the modern congregation with this true standard, I must confess with shame facedness and humility of spirit that very little can be labelled worship. It is true there is a splendid ritual calling for a learned ministry and a fashionable choir, but the idea of worship in its true essence is eliminated, while we become fascinated with a form.

The trend of so-called religious endeavor at the present time aims to bring the people together during the week by appealing to the cravings of the carnal nature in supplying entertainment; and on the Lord's Day sermons are announced with catchy titles, and the singing done by professionals, while the simplicity of the gospel message is left out.

We are living in an age of expediency and the question now is not what is right, but what will be more expedient?

It is not my purpose however to merely attack what I consider a down grade movement that is sapping the vitality of so many of our Baptist churches as to offer a few reflections as to what the Bible teaches as the true attitude of worship in the individual believer and the corporate body.

No one will dispute the statement that very much of the forms of service carried on in our city churches especially, have a tendency to keep the people occupied with themselves instead of Christ, and there is missed what the Psalmist prayed for when he says: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple."—Psalm 27: 4.

He that walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks never intended that churches should become playhouses in order to meet the necessary finances. The assembly of God is gathered together for worship and every movement should be actuated by a desire to offer acceptable praise from the heart by heeding the injunction of the apostle who says: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."—Col. 3: 16-17. "Amateur Dramatics, to please the world and put money in the purse of the church, silence the testimony of the pulpit against the stage, and even promote the interests of the theatre. The theatre has always been a school of immorality, from the time when the Greeks sang and danced around their wine-god, Bacchus, until now, and these performances are training schools for the play house. We can only present a little rude dramatic art, which wets the appetite for the real thing, breaks down barriers, and swells the throng of saints and sinners at the opera and the theatre. The church theatre trains for the world theatre. Indeed, professionals are sometimes employed and books are printed by religious Societies to promote this business."

Let us honestly ask ourselves the question, "what is true worship?" It is simply the soul being occupied with God and the work of his Son in its behalf. It is the believer telling out in the ear of God, the excellencies of Christ, and praising him for his manifested love.

"He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." If I have no faith in God, I cannot worship him. To know God is eternal life and this eternal life puts me into blessed communion with him, and being occupied with him, and the boundlessness of his grace to me, my heart goes out in spontaneous adorable praise, and I offer unto him the fruit of my lips, giving glory to his name.

"God is a spirit and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." In approaching God to worship, the individual believer, or the assembly of God, is not confronted with the unsatisfying experience of merely feeling out after him. There is no compelling power to induce a wandering amid the darkness of nature, and groping in blindness among superstitious religions and their ceremonial obligations, but blessed be God, there is the sweetest of all testimonies "I know whom I have believed." God has come very near to us in the person of that blessed one, Jesus Christ, in order that we may know him to be "more dear, more intimately nigh, than e'er the closest earthly tie." We can have the heart so ravished with him, that we can confide in him, and use him in all our weakness and heart wanderings, and experience, blessed be his holy name, his sustaining grace in every hour of trial. The heart panting after God and realizing that all its springs are in him, and being satisfied that all the horizon of the vision is made transcendently glorious, while feasting on his love, in the work of Jesus Christ in its behalf, is the essence of true worship, and the only beholding of the beauty of the Lord that Christian experience exults in, and the word of God points out.

May God in his infinite mercy, grant to all the congregations of his saints that spirit of devotion and praise, that the words of the mouth and the meditations of the heart, will be always acceptable in His sight, is my humble prayer.

H. S. COSMAN.
St. John. N. B., Nov. 20th.